

Institutionalizing Ideology and Leadership: Baitul Arqam, Darul Arqam, and Cadre Formation in Muhammadiyah

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Abstract

This article examines Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam as institutional mechanisms of cadre formation in Muhammadiyah. Using qualitative document-based and institutional-pedagogical analysis, it interprets official cadre-system guidelines and selected empirical studies published no later than 2021. The analysis focuses on program purposes, participant positioning, curriculum, residential and communal pedagogy, instructor authority, evaluation, and post-training continuity. The findings show that both programs translate Muhammadiyah's religious ideology into organized learning, but they operate at different levels of intensity. Darul Arqam is designed as a more comprehensive formation process combining ideological consolidation, leadership preparation, organizational competence, and disciplined communal practice. Baitul Arqam functions as a shorter and more adaptable format for leaders, employees, lecturers, students, and members of Muhammadiyah institutions. Empirical studies generally report improved understanding, commitment, morality, or participation; however, most rely on short-term evaluation, self-report, attendance, and immediate cognitive measures. The article argues that episodic training cannot by itself produce durable cadres. Its effectiveness depends on selection, qualified instructors, institutional mentoring, task assignment, repeated participation, and evaluation of conduct after the program.

Keywords: *Baitul Arqam; Darul Arqam; cadre formation; Muhammadiyah; organizational socialization.*

INTRODUCTION

Cadre formation is not a peripheral educational activity in Muhammadiyah. It is the mechanism through which a large religious movement attempts to reproduce its interpretation of Islam, organizational identity, leadership practices, and capacity for social action across generations. Muhammadiyah's schools, universities, hospitals, charitable agencies, autonomous organizations, and territorial branches require people who do more than work inside institutions carrying the Muhammadiyah name. They require actors who understand the movement's theological orientation, accept its organizational discipline, and can connect professional responsibility with the mission of da'wah and tajdid. The distinction between personnel and cadres is therefore fundamental: personnel may perform assigned functions, while cadres are expected to carry, interpret, and renew the movement's mission (Fachruddin, 2009; Majelis Pendidikan Kader Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah [MPK PPM], 2016; Nashir, 2010).

Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam occupy a central position in this reproductive architecture. Both are classified within Muhammadiyah's principal or standardized cadre education, rather than merely functional training tailored to a temporary technical need. Their nomenclature evokes the house of al-Arqam ibn Abi al-Arqam, remembered in Islamic history as a protected site of early Muslim learning, commitment, and collective

preparation. The historical analogy is pedagogically important. Cadre education is conceived not only as the transmission of information but as formation in a bounded learning community where belief, discipline, fellowship, and readiness for public responsibility are cultivated together (MPK PPM, 2016, 2017).

The two programs are related but not identical. Darul Arqam is generally presented as the more comprehensive and intensive form, with a stronger emphasis on ideological consolidation, leadership, organizational competence, and an integrated sequence of learning activities. Baitul Arqam is a modification or simplification that preserves core ideological purposes while adapting duration, content, and implementation to the circumstances of leaders, members, employees, lecturers, students, and personnel in Muhammadiyah institutions. In practice, however, the names are used across heterogeneous settings. Universities organize Baitul Arqam for students and employees; territorial leaders conduct Baitul Arqam for branches and charities; autonomous organizations employ their own cadre terminology, including Darul Arqam Dasar in Ikatan Mahasiswa Muhammadiyah. This proliferation can create conceptual confusion unless the specific institutional system, participant group, and curricular authority are identified (Ilham et al., 2019; Marwanto, 2021; Putra, 2019).

Existing studies commonly describe these programs in affirmative terms. Baitul Arqam is reported to strengthen understanding of Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyahan, morality, loyalty, interpersonal competence, and work performance. Program evaluations often classify context, inputs, processes, and products as good or very good. Qualitative studies also emphasize participant enthusiasm, communal worship, discussion, and the symbolic power of intensive residence. Yet positive reports do not settle the more difficult question of cadre formation. A participant can complete a program, obtain a certificate, demonstrate short-term knowledge, and still fail to develop the sustained judgment, organizational loyalty, ethical courage, and public competence expected from a cadre. Immediate satisfaction and post-test scores are evidence of program reception, not proof of durable ideological or leadership formation (Kartini, 2017; Junaidi et al., 2020; Santoso et al., 2021).

The analytical problem is therefore one of conversion: how are normative commitments converted into dispositions, competencies, and organizational practices? A formal curriculum can state that participants should understand Muhammadiyah ideology, practice worship according to tarjih guidance, exhibit integrity, lead institutions, and engage society. But the achievement of these aims depends on participant selection, instructional quality, pedagogical congruence, communal experience, mentoring, institutional incentives, and opportunities to practice responsibility after training. Cadre education is not a single pedagogical event; it is a sequence linking recruitment, formation, placement, supervision, and regeneration (Furqoni, 2016; MPK PPM, 2016).

This article analyzes Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam as institutional-pedagogical mechanisms rather than as isolated events. It asks three questions. First, what conception of the Muhammadiyah cadre is embedded in the design of Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam? Second, how do curriculum, residential practice, communal discipline, instruction, and evaluation attempt to produce that cadre? Third, what limitations can be identified from

documentary and empirical evidence available up to 2021? The central argument is that the programs provide a coherent mechanism for ideological and organizational socialization, but their transformative capacity is frequently weakened when training is compressed, ritualized, detached from post-program assignments, or evaluated only through immediate outputs.

METHOD

This study employs qualitative document-based institutional and pedagogical analysis. It is not a systematic literature review. It does not claim exhaustive database coverage, calculate study quality scores, or aggregate effects statistically. The objective is interpretive: to reconstruct the institutional logic of Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam and to compare that logic with selected evidence on implementation. The unit of analysis is the cadre-formation mechanism, including normative aims, program architecture, learning processes, evaluation, and organizational follow-up.

The evidence cutoff is 31 December 2021. No source published after 2021 is used in the analysis or reference list. The core primary documents are the Sistem Perkaderan Muhammadiyah, the implementation guidelines for Muhammadiyah cadre education, the guidelines for cadre formation in Muhammadiyah higher education, the Pedoman Hidup Islami Warga Muhammadiyah, and relevant organizational rules (MPK PPM, 2016, 2017; MPK PPM & Majelis Pendidikan Tinggi Penelitian dan Pengembangan PPM, 2017; Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, 2000, 2005). These documents are treated as statements of intended design, not as evidence that implementation necessarily conforms to the design.

The secondary corpus was selected purposively to represent different implementation settings and analytical problems. It includes evaluations of Baitul Arqam for university employees and lecturers, studies of the Baitul Arqam learning model for students, research on Muhammadiyah cadre education, an analysis of the Darul Arqam Dasar curriculum in Ikatan Mahasiswa Muhammadiyah, and historical studies of Muhammadiyah's movement culture. The corpus is deliberately heterogeneous because Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam operate at the intersection of religious education, organizational socialization, adult learning, and leadership development (Kartini, 2017; Ilham et al., 2019; Junaidi et al., 2020; Putra, 2019; Santoso et al., 2021).

The documents were coded through seven dimensions. The first was normative purpose: the qualities, commitments, and capacities attributed to an ideal cadre. The second was differentiation: how participant category, organizational level, and program intensity shape the distinction between Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam. The third was curriculum: the balance among Islamic understanding, Kemuhammadiyahan, ideology, leadership, organizational knowledge, social analysis, and professional responsibility. The fourth was pedagogy: lecture, dialogue, group work, worship, reflection, simulation, residential discipline, and peer interaction. The fifth was instructional authority: the role and

competence of instructors, facilitators, and resource persons. The sixth was evaluation: how completion, knowledge, affect, conduct, and program quality are measured. The seventh was continuity: the relationship between the training event and subsequent mentoring, task assignment, organizational participation, and leadership succession.

This framework draws on organizational socialization and situated learning. Socialization concerns how newcomers and existing members acquire the values, language, expected conduct, and role understandings of an organization (Schein, 2010). Situated learning emphasizes that identity is formed through participation in a community of practice, not through abstract instruction alone (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Experiential and adult-learning perspectives also help assess whether participants merely receive doctrine or actively interpret experience, solve problems, and connect learning with their roles (Brookfield, 1986; Kolb, 1984). These theories are used as analytical tools rather than external standards that replace Muhammadiyah's own normative vocabulary.

Three interpretive safeguards were applied. First, official statements of purpose were separated from empirical findings. Second, participant satisfaction and short-term test improvement were not treated as equivalent to long-term cadre effectiveness. Third, terminological distinctions were maintained. Darul Arqam in Muhammadiyah's general cadre system and Darul Arqam Dasar in an autonomous organization may share historical symbolism and formative aims, but they are governed by different curricular systems. Evidence from one setting is therefore used to illuminate mechanisms, not to claim organizational uniformity.

Table 1. Analytical dimensions for examining cadre formation

Dimension	Core question	Indicative evidence
Normative purpose	What kind of person is the program intended to form?	Ideology, worship, integrity, leadership, service, professional responsibility
Program differentiation	Why is Baitul Arqam or Darul Arqam selected?	Participant group, organizational level, duration, curricular depth
Curriculum	What knowledge and capacities are prioritized?	Al-Islam, Kemuhammadiyahan, manhaj, organization, leadership, social issues
Pedagogy	How is learning organized?	Residence, worship, lecture, dialogue, group work, reflection, simulation
Instructional authority	Who interprets and models the curriculum?	Instructor selection, facilitation skill, ideological and professional competence
Evaluation	What counts as success?	Attendance, test scores, participation, conduct, performance, institutional change
Continuity	How does formation continue after the event?	Mentoring, task assignment, follow-up study, organizational participation, succession

Source: Author's analytical construction based on MPK PPM (2016, 2017) and organizational-learning literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Cadre formation as organizational reproduction

Muhammadiyah's cadre system begins from a problem faced by every enduring movement: founding ideas cannot survive through documents and buildings alone. They require people capable of interpreting inherited commitments under new conditions. The cadre is therefore imagined as both bearer and developer. He or she must preserve the movement's Islamic orientation while exercising *tajdid*, manage institutions without reducing them to bureaucratic routines, and act publicly without dissolving Muhammadiyah's identity into partisan or personal interests. This dual expectation distinguishes cadre formation from indoctrination. Repetition of official formulations is necessary for shared language, but insufficient for judgment and renewal (Nashir, 2010; MPK PPM, 2016).

Historically, Muhammadiyah combined doctrinal reform with institution building. Its durability was supported by schools, associations, publications, welfare institutions, and patterned leadership rather than dependence on a single charismatic lineage (Alfian, 1989; Nakamura, 2012; Noer, 1973; Peacock, 1978). This organizational form created a permanent demand for regeneration. As the movement expanded, the social distance between formal membership, employment in an *amal usaha*, and active ideological commitment also widened. A teacher, physician, administrator, or lecturer could enter a Muhammadiyah institution primarily through professional recruitment. Cadre education became the institutional bridge through which occupational inclusion could be connected to the movement's mission.

The official cadre system addresses several overlapping populations. It must prepare leaders for the *Persyarikatan*, ensure ideological continuity among members, form personnel within charitable enterprises, and coordinate with autonomous organizations that develop cadres within age, gender, student, youth, and professional constituencies. This layered system is rational because a mass organization cannot rely on one pathway. It is also vulnerable to fragmentation. Different units may use identical labels for programs of unequal duration and quality, while participants may interpret cadre training as an administrative requirement rather than a formative obligation (MPK PPM, 2016; Furqoni, 2016).

Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam answer the need for standardized principal cadre formation. Their standardization is intended to protect ideological coherence across decentralized institutions. Curriculum, learning stages, instructor requirements, participant obligations, and assessment provide an organizational grammar that can be reproduced. Standardization, however, should not be confused with uniformity. The guidelines also assume adaptation to participant level and institutional setting. The difficult task is to preserve non-negotiable formative purposes while allowing contextual problems to shape examples, cases, and assignments.

2. The differentiated architecture of Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam

The relationship between Darul Arqam and Baitul Arqam is best understood as differentiated intensity within one broad logic of formation. Darul Arqam represents the fuller architecture. It is intended to integrate ideological understanding, religious practice, organizational knowledge,

leadership competence, and collective discipline through a longer and more structured process. Its design assumes that participants are not merely being introduced to Muhammadiyah but prepared for consequential roles. Time is pedagogical: a longer sequence allows movement from orientation to interpretation, from interpretation to practice, and from individual learning to collective responsibility (MPK PPM, 2016, 2017).

Baitul Arqam is a condensed and adaptive form. Its shorter duration makes it feasible for leaders with limited time, employees in hospitals and universities, lecturers, teachers, students, and members whose institutional obligations make extended residence difficult. Condensation does not mean that its objectives are trivial. Baitul Arqam is still expected to create shared understanding, commitment, integrity, and a Muhammadiyah-oriented way of acting. The central risk is curricular overload. When a program attempts to cover theology, worship, Muhammadiyah history, organizational identity, leadership, and professional ethics within a compressed schedule, presentation can displace reflection and certification can displace formation (Ilham et al., 2019; Junaidi et al., 2020).

The distinction is also functional. Darul Arqam should deepen the capacity of actors who will interpret, lead, and reproduce the organization. Baitul Arqam often serves as ideological orientation and consolidation for broader or institution-specific constituencies. In universities, it may function simultaneously as AIK learning, campus cultural orientation, employee induction, or leadership training. The same flexibility that enables large-scale reach can blur the boundary between cadre formation and institutional onboarding. A university may legitimately require all employees or students to participate, but universal participation produces a mixed group: committed activists, nominal members, new professionals, and participants with no prior Muhammadiyah background. Pedagogy must therefore address unequal starting points rather than assume a homogeneous cadre identity.

Terminological discipline is especially necessary when discussing autonomous organizations. Ikatan Mahasiswa Muhammadiyah uses Darul Arqam Dasar as a primary formal stage for forming Muslim intellectual cadres. Its curriculum contains specific organizational objectives, identity language, and progression within the IMM cadre system. Putra's (2019) analysis of Qur'anic character values in the DAD curriculum demonstrates the importance of ideological and moral foundations, but it should not be used to claim that every Muhammadiyah Darul Arqam has identical curricular content. The shared symbol of the house of al-Arqam signifies disciplined formation; the specific program must still be located within its governing organizational system.

Table 2. Comparative institutional logic of Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam

Element	Baitul Arqam	Darul Arqam
Institutional function	Condensed ideological orientation, consolidation, and role alignment	Comprehensive ideological, organizational, and leadership formation
Typical participants	Leaders, members, lecturers, teachers, employees, students, and AUM personnel	Selected cadres and leaders prepared for wider or higher responsibility
Duration and intensity	Shorter and more adaptable; vulnerable to compression	Longer, more sequenced, and more dependent on residential continuity

Element	Baitul Arqam	Darul Arqam
Curricular emphasis	Core Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah, identity, integrity, institutional role	Deeper ideology, manhaj, movement analysis, leadership, organization, and strategic responsibility
Pedagogical strength	Accessibility and scale across varied institutions	Immersion, group formation, extended dialogue, and leadership practice
Primary risk	Administrative formalism and excessive content in limited time	Elitism, resource intensity, and weak transfer if post-training roles are absent

Note: The comparison describes ideal-typical functions. Actual implementation varies across Muhammadiyah units and autonomous organizations.

3. Curriculum: ideology, religious practice, leadership, and institutional roles

The curriculum reflects a multidimensional conception of the cadre. First, a cadre requires religious grounding: tawhid, worship, morality, Qur'anic and Prophetic orientation, and an understanding of Islam as a comprehensive commitment. Second, a cadre requires Kemuhammadiyah: history, identity, the meaning of tajdid, the movement's organizational structure, and its position within Indonesian society. Third, a cadre requires competence: communication, leadership, problem solving, institutional management, and the capacity to act in a particular field. These dimensions are not independent subjects. In the ideal design, religious conviction provides moral direction, movement ideology supplies collective orientation, and competence enables responsible action (Arifin, 2015; Baidarus et al., 2020; Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, 2000; MPK PPM, 2016).

This integration is difficult to realize pedagogically. Ideological material is often delivered as a body of correct formulations, while leadership material is delivered as generic management knowledge. If the two remain separate, participants may learn Muhammadiyah vocabulary without applying it to decisions about staffing, finance, academic integrity, patient care, political neutrality, or public service. Conversely, professional training without ideological interpretation may produce efficient managers whose institutional choices are disconnected from the movement's normative purposes. Effective cadre curriculum must therefore use role-specific ethical problems. A hospital leader, school principal, lecturer, branch chair, and student activist need a common ideological foundation but different cases through which that foundation is exercised.

The empirical Baitul Arqam literature shows strong attention to Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah. Ilham et al. (2019) report cognitive, affective, and psychomotor scores after training for lecturers, while Ilham et al. (2020) emphasize ideological understanding, identity, commitment, and integrity among university lecturers. Junaidi et al. (2020) recommend consolidated learning materials, clearer requirements, pre-tests and post-tests, worship-related content, and attendance thresholds. These studies confirm the importance of structured content and evaluation, but they also show the tendency to treat the curriculum as a package to be delivered and measured within the event.

A broader conception of curriculum includes the total formative environment. Scheduled worship, punctuality, shared accommodation, group responsibility, interaction with instructors, and

informal discussion communicate expectations that are not reducible to modules. This hidden or enacted curriculum can be more powerful than lectures. Participants observe whether instructors model humility, discipline, intellectual openness, and organizational ethics. They also observe whether rules are applied fairly and whether dialogue is genuinely permitted. A program that teaches collegial leadership through authoritarian facilitation creates a contradiction between explicit and enacted curriculum.

4. Residential and communal pedagogy

The residential or quasi-residential design is one of the programs' most distinctive pedagogical features. By temporarily separating participants from ordinary routines, the program creates an intensive social environment. Time is reorganized around prayer, study, discussion, rest, and collective tasks. This arrangement can produce concentration, emotional bonding, and a sense of entering a serious commitment. It also enables instructors to observe participation and conduct across formal and informal situations. In situated-learning terms, participants do not only hear about a community; they enact membership in a temporary community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

Communal worship is central to this design. Prayer, Qur'an recitation, night worship, and disciplined daily routines connect cognitive material to embodied practice. The objective is not to turn visible piety into a performance metric detached from ethical life. Rather, shared worship creates a rhythm in which religious commitment is understood as the basis of organizational responsibility. Problems arise when ritual compliance becomes the dominant indicator of passing while honesty, cooperation, critical judgment, and service receive less systematic observation. Junaidi et al. (2020), for example, propose requirements concerning participation in worship and learning sessions. Such requirements can protect seriousness, but they must be complemented by evidence of reflective and organizational competence.

Group discussion and simulation provide a second mechanism. Adult participants bring institutional experience, conflict, doubt, and professional knowledge. Lectures are efficient for establishing common concepts, but dialogue is required to expose assumptions and connect ideology with practice. Freire (1970) warns against reducing education to one-way deposit, while Brookfield (1986) argues that adult learning becomes meaningful when experience is critically examined rather than merely affirmed. Kolb's (1984) experiential cycle similarly suggests movement among experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation. Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam can operationalize this cycle through institutional cases, role play, field analysis, and action plans. Yet the empirical literature indicates that lecture remains prominent, and active methods vary with instructor competence (Ilham et al., 2019; Santoso et al., 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic tested the dependence of Baitul Arqam on physical co-presence. In 2020 UHAMKA implemented online Baitul Arqam for new students using synchronous and asynchronous platforms, group facilitation, digital materials, monitoring, and parental involvement. The adaptation demonstrated organizational resilience and enabled large-scale participation. It also exposed a conceptual challenge: an online program can transmit content and sustain group interaction, but it cannot fully reproduce residential observation, embodied communal rhythm, or informal peer socialization. The lesson is not that digital Baitul Arqam is

invalid. It is that designers must identify which formative mechanisms are lost, which can be redesigned, and which require subsequent face-to-face reinforcement (Suara Muhammadiyah, 2020a, 2020b).

5. Instructors as interpreters and models

The instructor is not a neutral conduit. Instructors select emphasis, interpret doctrine, manage discussion, respond to disagreement, and model the relationship between authority and collegiality. Their role requires at least four capacities: substantive mastery of Islam and Muhammadiyah, understanding of the participant's institutional field, adult-learning and facilitation skill, and personal credibility. A person may possess strong ideological knowledge but lack the ability to facilitate professionals or youth. Another may be an engaging trainer but reduce Muhammadiyah ideology to motivational slogans. Standardization therefore depends as much on instructor formation as on written modules (MPK PPM, 2016, 2017).

Instructor authority contains a productive tension. Cadre education requires normative clarity; participants are not attending a completely open seminar in which every organizational commitment remains undecided. At the same time, *tajdid* requires reasoned engagement and the capacity to respond to changing realities. If instructors suppress questions in the name of ideological discipline, they may form compliance without understanding. If they treat every commitment as optional, they dissolve the shared orientation that cadre education exists to protect. Good facilitation distinguishes between explaining the movement's established positions, discussing the reasoning behind them, and identifying areas where contextual judgment or further *ijtihad* is required.

Santoso et al. (2021) identify the need for qualified educators and strategic planning in the Baitul Arqam model at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Their finding is significant because it shifts attention from participant deficiency to institutional capacity. Weak outcomes are often blamed on participants' lack of commitment, although the program may have poorly sequenced materials, inconsistent supervision, or facilitators who are unable to connect content with campus life. Cadre formation should hold both participants and organizers accountable.

6. Evaluation evidence through 2021

The available empirical evidence generally portrays Baitul Arqam positively. Kartini's (2017) CIPP evaluation of a university employee program classified the context, input, process, and product dimensions as good or very good. Ilham et al. (2019) reported good average scores across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions among lecturers. Junaidi et al. (2020) associated participation with good morals and high performance among lecturers and employees and proposed concrete improvements to materials and assessment. Marwanto (2021) described principal cadre education and functional activities as media for developing loyalty and militancy among employees in Muhammadiyah charitable enterprises. These studies provide evidence that the programs are institutionally valued, feasible, and capable of producing immediate learning and positive participant responses.

The evidence also has clear limitations. First, many studies examine one institution and a relatively small participant group. Second, several combine program implementation with evaluation by organizers or closely affiliated researchers, which can encourage affirmative interpretation. Third, outcome indicators are often immediate: attendance, satisfaction, test performance, participation, and self-reported understanding. Fourth, causal attribution is weak. Employees who display good morality or performance after Baitul Arqam may have possessed these qualities beforehand or may be influenced by workplace selection and culture. Fifth, few studies track participants into later organizational assignments or compare those who received different levels of follow-up.

Santoso et al. (2021) provide a particularly important negative finding: supervision was concentrated during the program, while maintenance after Baitul Arqam was not adequately conducted. This finding identifies the central weakness of event-based cadre education. Short-term intensity creates a temporary normative environment, but participants return to institutions governed by existing incentives, routines, leaders, and peer cultures. If those institutions reward individual performance while ignoring Muhammadiyah mission, the training message loses force. If supervisors do not discuss action plans or provide roles, participants may remember the event without changing practice.

The literature on Darul Arqam is more limited and terminologically dispersed. Putra (2019) demonstrates curricular congruence between Qur'anic character values and IMM's Darul Arqam Dasar, but this is a normative curriculum analysis rather than an outcome evaluation. Reports of Darul Arqam emphasize ideology, leadership, militancy, and organizational continuation, yet robust longitudinal evidence is scarce. The asymmetry matters. Darul Arqam makes stronger formative claims than a short orientation, so it requires stronger evidence concerning leadership behavior, organizational retention, ethical decision making, and the participant's capacity to train others.

Table 3. Recurrent strengths and evidentiary limitations in studies available through 2021

Observed area	Recurrent finding	Analytical limitation
Program relevance	Strong institutional need for AIK, identity, integrity, and role alignment	Need is often inferred from official mission rather than participant diagnosis
Immediate learning	Improved knowledge, participation, affective response, or reported understanding	Limited evidence of persistence after participants return to ordinary settings
Program process	Generally positive assessment of organization, facilities, and learning activities	Organizer proximity and satisfaction measures may produce favorable bias
Morality and performance	Participants are reported to show good conduct and work performance	Baseline, comparison groups, and causal mechanisms are usually absent
Continuity	Recommendations frequently call for supervision, follow-up, and integrated environments	Post-program mentoring and task-based evaluation remain weakly documented
Digital adaptation	Online Baitul Arqam sustained access during the pandemic	Residential, embodied, and informal socialization mechanisms were reduced

Discussion

1. From ideological transmission to identity formation

Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam should be interpreted as organizational socialization with explicitly theological content. Socialization is not manipulation by definition. Every institution communicates what it values, how members should act, and what roles mean. The critical issue is whether the process produces reflective commitment or merely outward conformity. Muhammadiyah's concept of *tajdid* requires cadres who can reason within the movement's normative tradition, not actors who depend on memorized slogans for every new problem. Ideological clarity and intellectual agency must therefore be treated as mutually reinforcing rather than opposing outcomes.

The house-of-al-Arqam symbolism captures this duality. The early Muslim community learned revelation, formed solidarity, and prepared for public action under pressure. In the Muhammadiyah context, the symbol authorizes intensive learning and fellowship, but historical analogy should not romanticize enclosure. Contemporary cadres operate in plural universities, professional fields, state institutions, digital networks, and democratic politics. Formation must prepare them to communicate Muhammadiyah's commitments without sectarian isolation and to cooperate publicly without losing ethical direction.

Identity formation occurs when participants connect three statements: what Muhammadiyah believes, who I am in relation to that mission, and what I must do in my institutional role. Programs often cover the first statement well and the second symbolically. The third requires more systematic work. A lecturer should leave with commitments concerning academic honesty, inclusive teaching, research ethics, and service. A hospital manager should connect *amanah* with patient access, professional standards, and financial accountability. A branch leader should connect *tajdid* with local problem diagnosis. Cadre education becomes concrete when ideological language structures decisions.

2. The problem of episodic formation

The strongest conclusion from the evidence is that an intensive event cannot substitute for a cadre ecosystem. Even excellent training is temporary. Durable formation requires a chain: recruitment based on potential and integrity; diagnostic assessment; participation in Baitul Arqam or Darul Arqam; mentoring; assignment to real organizational work; reflection on performance; advanced formation; and eventual responsibility for developing others. When any link is missing, the system becomes either educational without organizational consequence or organizational without adequate formation (MPK PPM, 2016; Santoso et al., 2021).

Certification can intensify the problem. Making Baitul Arqam a requirement for employment, promotion, graduation, or organizational eligibility ensures participation and communicates institutional seriousness. It also creates instrumental motivation: participants attend because the certificate is necessary. Instrumental entry is not fatal; many educational processes begin from external obligation. The design must nevertheless create opportunities for internalization. This requires meaningful dialogue, credible role models, fair assessment, and post-program

environments in which Muhammadiyah values are visibly practiced. A compulsory program inside a cynical institution will be interpreted as ceremonial compliance.

Post-training assignments are particularly important. Identity develops through legitimate participation in meaningful work (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Participants should be given manageable responsibilities in teaching, branch service, social programs, research, disaster response, or institutional improvement. Mentors can then assess whether participants cooperate, communicate, solve problems, observe ethical boundaries, and learn from feedback. Such evidence is more valid than asking whether participants enjoyed the program or can reproduce definitions immediately after it.

3. Standardization, adaptation, and organizational inequality

Muhammadiyah's scale makes standardization necessary. Without common guidelines, cadre education can be captured by local personalities, partisan interests, narrow theological preferences, or improvised motivational training. Standard curricula protect a minimum identity and create portability across regions. They also permit instructor preparation and evaluation. Yet rigid standardization can ignore participant diversity and institutional problems. The solution is a layered curriculum: a protected core of theology, ideology, movement identity, and organizational ethics; contextual modules linked to participant roles; and action projects addressing local challenges.

This model also addresses inequality among Muhammadiyah units. A well-resourced university can develop digital materials, train facilitators, provide residence, and conduct multi-wave programs. A rural branch or small school may have few instructors and limited funding. If the same formal standard is imposed without support, poorer units may shorten duration or convert the program into lectures while retaining the name. Central and regional cadre councils therefore need an enabling function: instructor pools, shared modules, mobile teams, mentoring networks, and evaluation assistance. Quality assurance cannot consist only of rules.

Adaptation should be documented. Organizers need to state which elements were preserved, modified, or omitted and why. The pandemic-era online Baitul Arqam illustrates this need. Digital delivery was a reasonable emergency adaptation, but it altered observation, worship, interaction, and residence. Explicit documentation enables later evaluation and prevents emergency compromises from becoming unexamined permanent standards.

4. Evaluating durable cadre outcomes

A more credible evaluation model should separate four levels. The first is program quality: relevance, instructor competence, facilities, process fidelity, and participant safety. The second is immediate learning: knowledge, interpretation, skills, and reflective commitment. The third is transfer: whether participants apply learning in their institutional roles over the following months. The fourth is organizational contribution: retention, ethical leadership, service innovation, conflict management, recruitment of new cadres, and capacity to facilitate subsequent formation. CIPP evaluation remains useful for program quality, but it should be combined with longitudinal and task-based evidence (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007).

Assessment should also avoid reducing ideology to political or rhetorical loyalty. A cadre may speak frequently in movement vocabulary while violating trust, resisting accountability, or failing professionally. Conversely, a quiet professional may express commitment through reliable service and ethical judgment. The evaluation framework must integrate belief, knowledge, conduct, competence, and contribution. No single score can capture these dimensions; portfolios, supervisor observations, peer feedback, reflective reports, and documented assignments are more appropriate.

Longitudinal comparison is feasible without turning cadre education into an experimental laboratory. Institutions can collect baseline information, document participant goals, assign mentors, and review progress at three, six, and twelve months. They can compare cohorts receiving different forms of follow-up, while attending to differences in role and prior experience. Such evaluation would answer the practical question that current studies rarely resolve: not whether Baitul Arqam or Darul Arqam was successfully conducted, but whether the program increased Muhammadiyah's capacity to act ethically and effectively.

5. A proposed cadre-formation continuum

The evidence supports a continuum rather than an event model. At the entry stage, Baitul Arqam can provide orientation, shared language, and an initial experience of Muhammadiyah community. At the consolidation stage, repeated functional activities, study circles, mentoring, and institutional practice strengthen role-specific identity. Darul Arqam can then serve selected participants whose responsibility requires deeper ideological interpretation, leadership formation, and strategic capacity. Advanced cadres should receive facilitator education and opportunities to reproduce the system. The sequence is developmental, but not mechanically hierarchical; prior experience and responsibility should shape placement.

This continuum resolves an apparent contradiction between mass reach and cadre selectivity. Muhammadiyah needs broad ideological literacy among personnel and members, but it also needs intensive investment in actors who will lead, interpret, and regenerate the movement. Baitul Arqam should not be dismissed as superficial merely because it is shorter, and Darul Arqam should not be assumed effective merely because it is longer. Each succeeds when its participant group, objectives, pedagogy, and follow-up are aligned.

The continuum also clarifies the relationship between principal and functional cadre education. Functional training in teaching, finance, health, media, disaster management, or organizational administration should not operate as an ideologically empty technical stream. Nor should principal cadre education attempt to teach every technical competence. The two must be connected. Principal education supplies moral and movement orientation; functional education develops field competence; supervised practice tests their integration.

CONCLUSION

Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam are central instruments through which Muhammadiyah attempts to institutionalize religious ideology, organizational identity, disciplined practice, and leadership regeneration. They share a formative logic but differ in intensity and typical function. Baitul Arqam is a condensed, adaptable mechanism that can reach

diverse constituencies in Muhammadiyah institutions. Darul Arqam represents more comprehensive preparation for ideological, organizational, and leadership responsibility. Their value lies in integrating doctrine with communal learning, worship, reflection, and organizational roles.

The evidence available through 2021 supports cautious rather than triumphalist conclusions. Studies generally report positive immediate outcomes, favorable process evaluation, and stronger understanding of Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah. They do not yet demonstrate consistently that participation produces durable cadres, improved leadership, or sustained organizational contribution. The dominant weaknesses are short-term measurement, self-report, small institutional samples, weak baselines, and limited post-program observation.

The decisive issue is therefore not whether Baitul Arqam and Darul Arqam should continue, but how they are embedded in a complete regeneration system. Selection, diagnostic assessment, qualified instructors, active and role-relevant pedagogy, institutional mentoring, real assignments, repeated formation, and longitudinal evaluation are required. Without these elements, cadre education risks becoming certification and symbolic compliance. With them, it can function as a disciplined process through which Muhammadiyah preserves its identity while preparing people capable of interpreting and renewing its mission in changing social and professional environments.

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