

EXPANDING THE INDONESIAN *TARBIYAH* MOVEMENT THROUGH *TA'ĀRUF* AND MARRIAGE

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Abstract

This paper will shed light into the most current phenomena of how Islamist groups create and expand their influence and membership. In view of the Islamists like the Indonesian Tarbiyah movement, Islamisation of society and the state is the ultimate goal to be achieved. Families become the most important means of Islamisation. If all families have been successfully made "Islamic", people and the country will follow suit. Preparing the family as the basis of making up society and the establishment of an Islamic state is, therefore, urgent. One of the ways is to match young men and women to get married through ta'āruf or "Islamic introduction", which goes against the very popular trend of dating among youths nowadays. In addition to be practiced within Tarbiyah members, marriage is also promoted to the larger public. This group of Islamists use most contemporary modern media to expand their influence. By doing so, this kind of movement will have a tremendous and strong socio-political implication in the long run of Indonesian politics.

[Tulisan ini mengkaji fenomena kontemporer tentang bagaimana sebuah kelompok (Gerakan Tarbiyah) membentuk dan meluaskan pengaruh serta keanggotaannya. Kelompok Islam tersebut melihat bahwa Islamisasi masyarakat dan Negara merupakan tujuan utama yang harus dicapai termasuk yang terpenting adalah keluarga. Mereka menganggap bahwa jika unit keluarga sudah menjadi 'Islam' maka masyarakat dan Negara secara

otomatis akan mengikutinya. Oleh karena itu keluarga perlu disiapkan sebagai pondasi menuju masyarakat dan Negara yang Islamis. Salah satu cara paling awal adalah dengan memperkenalkan konsep Ta'aruf bagi muda mudi yang ingin menikah, sekaligus sebagai tandingan terhadap konsep 'pacaran' yang saat ini populer. Untuk mempromosikan konsep tersebut ke kehalayak yang lebih luas, mereka pun menggunakan media yang paling modern dan masif. Sehingga gerakan mereka tampak kuat implikasinya dalam peta perpolitikan di Indonesia.]

Keywords: *Tarbiyah* movement, proselytization, Indonesian political Islam, demographic jihad

A. Introduction

Various efforts to implement Islamic teachings as recommended or performed by a group of people or certain Islamic organizations very often exceed the goal-setting (*taklif*) law itself. In addition to involving the context of each, which makes us continue to check where and when a law is implemented, highly viscous seen that there are certain political purposes that are superimposed with the possession of a group that tries to put it into implementation.

Looking from socio-political perspective, this article discusses a process of implementation of marriages among *Tarbiyah* Movement (*baraka tarbiyya*) preceded by *ta'aruf* or the introduction of two prospective brides through their guide or mentor in *Tarbiyah* (called *murabbī* for male or *murabbiya* for female). An escort by *murabbī* and *murabbiya* since the introduction until the completion of the process of marriage, even to the bride and groom run their life, is useful to ensure that the family established run according to the principles of *Tarbiyah* movement that they see fit to "Islamic law". When newly formed families have been ensured to be "Islamic", they will naturally give birth to children and descendants who are also "Islamic" and this will in turn shape and influence the society to become "Islamic". Going beyond the purpose of forming a new family, the process of marriage among *Tarbiyah* has a long-term agenda of Islamisation of society and the state, the family becomes the most important means in the Islamisation process.

Different from many previous studies that concentrated on the political expression of *Tarbiyah* Movement,¹ which emerged especially after the state presented itself ready to accommodate political Islam after the New Order regime fell in 1998,² this article focuses on everyday life as practiced by *ikhwān* and *akhawāt*, designations for the exponents of *Tarbiyah* Movement, in the way they have taken to find a mate to get married and settle down and ends of building an Islamic state. Based on a reading of a number of texts literature on *Tarbiyah* Movement, in-depth interviews, as well as field observations, this article argues that the Islamisation of society and the state which are the ultimate objectives of the Movement of *Tarbiyah* Movement continues at the grassroots level, in this case by means of marriage and family, in addition to the attempted passing lane practical politics with the vehicle and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) as has been widely studied.

To arrive at these arguments, this article is divided into several sections. Following the introduction, it will present a brief history of the rise of the Movement of *Tarbiyah* Movement in Indonesia and the Islamisation agenda that are being run. Because the Islamisation-based family is the smallest unit of society (and the state), the following sections focus on the topic as well as the process of forming a family

¹ Ali Said Damanik, *Fenomena Partai Keadilan: Transformasi 20 Tahun Gerakan Tarbiyah di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2002); Aay Muhamad Furkon, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera: Ideologi dan Praksis Politik Kaum Muda Muslim Indonesia Kontemporer* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2004); Yon Machmudi, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera: Wajah Baru Islam Politik Indonesia* (Bandung: ĥarakatuna Pub., 2005); Yon Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2008); M. Imdadun Rahmat, *Ideologi Politik PKS: Dari Masjid Kampus ke Gedung Parlemen* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2008); Ahmad-Norma Permata, "Islamist Party and Democratic Participation Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia 1998-2006", Ph.D. Dissertation (Germany: Universität zu Münster, 2008); Ahmad Ali Nurdin, "Islamic Political Party and Democracy: A Comparative Study of PKS in Indonesia and PAS in Malaysia (1998 - 2005)", Ph.D. Dissertation (Singapore: National University of Singapore, 2009); Farish Ahmad Noor, *The Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS) in the Landscape of Indonesian Islamist Politics: Cadre-Training as Mode of Preventive Radicalisation?*, Working Paper, no. WP 231 (Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, NTU, 2011); Noorhaidi Hasan, "Islamist Party, Electoral Politics and Da'wah Mobilization Among Youth: The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia", *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, vol. 6, no. 1 (2012), pp. 17–47.

² Julie Chernov Hwang, *Peaceful Islamist Mobilization in the Muslim World: What Went Right* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2009).

through marriage preceded with *ta'aruf* process. Various dynamics within *ta'aruf* will also be presented. Before closing, it will put forward different promotional *ta'aruf* vigorous once it is done by the Tarbiyah exponents not only for their internal use, but also for the larger community outside the Tarbiyah Movement.

B. Tarbiyah Movement and Its Islamisation Agenda

It has long been believed that the networking or good relationships formed through the pilgrims and students who traveled to the Middle East have a considerable influence on the dynamics of Islam in the archipelago.³ The bankruptcy and eventual collapse of the Ottoman Empire as a representative of the Islamic Caliphate in the early 20th century, which gave rise to pan-Islamic movements in some populous Muslim nations, also helped bring the dreams of reviving or establishing a new Islamic state in some circles of Muslim youths in Indonesia. After the independence war that were primarily motivated by the urge of religion or jihad, ahead of Indonesia's independence in 1945, the debate about the concept of the country began. If Panitia Sembilan (the Committee of Nine), the majority of its members are Muslims, who were given the task of preparing for independence, which agreed to form the new state which was not based on Islam but by what was later called Pancasila, it was not the case for a significant a few of the Muslim elite. In addition to the hard response to form the new state that was clearly indicated by the Darul Islam (DI), the latter armed rebellions in some areas, soft response and more constitutional played among others by some Muslim figures to establish Majelis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia (Masjumi), a political party which became a path of struggle supporting the implementation of Islamic Shari'a.⁴

Although it seeks to establish an Islamic state, Masjumi "open to compromise on what the character that state should take and how sharia

³ Among the best studies of this network is the work Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern "Ulama" in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004); Michael Francis Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma Below the Winds* (London; New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003).

⁴ Hwang, *Peaceful Islamist mobilization in the Muslim world*, p. 48.

should be implemented.”⁵ Its most important leader, Mohammad Natsir, expressed its commitment to the path of constitutional and democratic by saying, “the Masyumi party wishes to achieve its purpose through the democratic and parliamentary way, not with violence.”⁶

After becoming the second winner of the 1955 elections and Natsir was sitting in several important positions, the party of “the staunchest proponent of Western style democracy” is dissolved by Sukarno in 1960 for refusing Guided Democracy⁷ and was regarded to be involved in the uprising of Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia/ Struggle of the People of the Universe (PRRI/Permesta).⁸ In 1965 political turmoil took place which ended with the downfall of Sukarno and Suharto’s rise with his New Order to power. Interestingly, despite the regime change, Masjumi and Natsir were still unable to attain the chance to re-enter the political arena, in an effort by the government to prevent Islamic groups to take part in the new regime. To avoid pressure from Soeharto and to avoid political deadlock and triggered the conversion to Christianity and Catholicism massively after the events of 1965, Natsir soon established the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII) in 1967 with the primary mission of preventing Christianization.⁹ To achieve that mission, DDII moved in the cultural level by collaborating with institutions in Saudi Arabia and later targeting campuses as an important propaganda targets. In the campus mosques like Masjid Salman at Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB) and Masjid Salahuddin at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta, some training cadres were held for dakwah propaganda prepared to spread the ideal Islam. New Order policies that apply political accommodation and normalization of Campus Life/Campus Coordinating Board (NKK/BKK), which prohibits students to get involved in politics, also contributes to the spread

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Thohir Luth, M. Natsir, *Dakwah dan Pemikirannya* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1999), pp. 52–3.

⁹ On this mission, see R. William Liddle, “Skripturalisme Media Dakwah: Satu Bentuk Pemikiran dan Aksi Politik Islam Masa Orde Baru”, *Ulumul Qur’an*, vol. 3, no. 4 (1993), pp. 53–65.

of a cultural movement that is often called the Tarbiyah Movement in many campuses in Indonesia.¹⁰

Derived from the Arabic word, *tarbiyya* means education, this movement is characterized by four things by Martin van Bruinessen:

They are highly critical of the secular state and believe that only a state based on sharia can be just. They are relatively closed. Consist of groups and avoid contact with outsiders. They assert that Islam is a total way of life and demand that Reviews their members conform to Islamic norms in all aspects of life. They exercise strict control of Reviews their members and demand high standards of Islamic morality.¹¹

As mentioned, Tarbiyah Movement is not purely Indonesian by its origin, but it was influenced and inspired by Islamist movements in the Middle East, especially the Muslim Brotherhood (IM) in Egypt. Ideologies texts of IM, particularly works of Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, and Yusuf al-Qardhawy, have been widely read among members of Tarbiyah Movement. Similarly, organisational patterns of IM emphasis on personal piety, the provision of public services, and the formation of closed groups to create spaces for Islamic system known as cell (*usrah*), considered as an ideal stage of Islamisation of society and the state that was possible to be applied in the middle of the repression by the New Order regime.¹² At this time, such Islamic aspiration that were social and cultural within study groups and *halaqa* were allowed, while political expressions did not obtain adequate channels. Under these conditions, although “Islam and the state were considered as two things that cannot be separated”, Tarbiyah implemented a gradual way by taking things that were possible and did not conflict with or hiding from the state suspicion:

Echoing al-Banna’s approach, Islamisation of the state was seen as a gradual process that must begin with greater pietism within society. Until Islamic law and principles were well understood by Muslims, a viable Islamic state would be difficult to establish. Nonetheless, an Islamic state

¹⁰ Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militansi, dan Pencarian Identitas di Indonesia Pasca-Orde Baru*, trans. by Hairus Salim (Jakarta: LP3ES dan KITLV Jakarta, 2008), pp. 45–58.

¹¹ Hwang, *Peaceful Islamist mobilization in the Muslim world*, p. 56.

¹² Anthony Bubalo and Greg Fealy, *Joining the caravan?: the Middle East, Islamism and Indonesia* (Double Bay, New South Wales: Longueville Media, 2005), pp. 66–7.

was seen as the endpoint of the struggle.¹³

Transitional regime of the New Order to the Reformation in 1998 was marked by a change in the strategies of Islamist groups, from the cultural origin to the structural one. In politics, Tarbiyah Movement which was initially took place in campuses and *halaqa* activities then established a political party and participate in elections as well as into the structure of the state to influence policy and to fight Islamist ideas.¹⁴ The Justice Party (PK) that was established with an aim to channel these ideas seemed to fail to wade political test because it only gained 1.36 percent of the total votes in the first elections of 1999. However, after changing its name to the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) as well as becoming more open to also nominate a candidate for the legislature from among non-Muslims to areas with minority Muslim population and offers a program that not only launches Islamic rhetoric in the campaign, the party gained a significant increase in votes.¹⁵ By getting over 6 percent in the next three elections (2004, 2009, and 2014), PKS became one of the few parties with most consistent and strong roots of Islam.

In addition through practical politics, in this new era of Tarbiyah Movement also move or “preaching” into many fields of social concerns. For example, in education, Tarbiyah established formal schools and incorporated their ideas into the curriculum—something which was unimaginable during the New Order era. Formal schools owned by the movement have grown rapidly and are favored by the public.¹⁶ Tarbiyah activism also encompasses Islamic philanthropy through the institutions of *zakat* and *sadaqah* (alms), which is very popular and attains great success. The funds are netted and then used for social services such as

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁴ Damanik, *Fenomena Partai Keadilan*; Furkon, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*; Machmudi, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*; Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesia*; Rahmat, *Ideologi politik PKS*.

¹⁵ Burhanuddin Muhtadi, *Dilema PKS: Suara dan Syariah* (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2012); Mark Woodward et al., “Getting Culture: A New Path for Indonesia’s Islamist Justice and Prosperity Party?,” *Contemporary Islam*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2013), pp. 173–89.

¹⁶ This school is under a network called Network of Integrated Islamic School (JSIT). Noorhaidi Hasan, *Islamizing Formal Education: Integrated Islamic School and New Trends in Formal Education Institution in Indonesia*, Working Paper, no. 172 (Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, NTU, 2009).

scholarships for poor students, mass circumcisions, and disaster reliefs. Individuals in Tarbiyah also make and campaigning organizations and voluntary movements such as education and social services. In all such activities, Islamist vision remains attached and unforgettable. Any party or group who gains access to their activities or certain groups who they make as targeted group are recruited into *usrah*. Because the targeted groups are young people, most of whom are not married or a newly formed family, to them it is important to campaign or emphasize the formation of an Islamic family which will support the Islamisation of society and then the state which are the main agenda of Tarbiyah Movement.

C. The Family as the Base of Islamisation

It is clear that the Islamisation of the country pursued by Tarbiyah Movement is through a gradual process, not revolutionary let alone through the use of force and violence.¹⁷ In the treatises movement which has become a guide for members of Tarbiyah Movement, *Majmū'at al-Rasāil* (collection of treatises) written by IM founder, Hasan al-Banna, stated that the ideals that aimed to grasp the movement is «the realization of a Muslim individual, the Muslim family and the Muslim community».¹⁸ The three goals could not be achieved simultaneously, but shows the steps or stages of Islamisation: towards the Islamisation of individual families and then from families to the Islamisation of society or the state.

By that stage, the first step that must be taken in the form of Tarbiyah Movement is to form ideal Muslim figures. These figures have diligently worship profile, qualified in terms of knowledge or intellect, have a noble character, as well as physically strong.¹⁹ If individuals in the Tarbiyah Movement have reached the ideal figures, the next stage is the improvement of the family and then the community:

Improvements in the individual scale will take effect for the improvement

¹⁷ Hassan al-Banna, *Majmū'at al-Rasāil* (Himpunan Risalah), Indonesia edition (no publisher, no date), p. 386. It has to be mentioned here works of Al-Banna, Al-Qardhawy and Qutb which are referred here in the rest of this article are Indonesian versions in stead of the original ones of the works because those are the ones being used and mostly free within Tarbiyah circle.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 394.

of the family, because the family is a collection of individuals. If the family members of righteous men and women (*sālih sālihah*)—both are the pillars of family—then they will be able to build an ideal family, according to the benchmark that has been guided proportionally by Islam. If a family has built up a righteous, the people will be *sālih*, because the *umma* is a collection of family. In other words, the real family is a miniature of the people, while the people are a large family.²⁰

The three stages are of course not just a process, but also a prerequisite. A precondition of establishing an Islamic family is made up of ideal Muslim individuals. Likewise, the Islamic society is not possible to be formed when families in it do not follow Islamic principles. The three stages of Islamisation was clearly tailored to the problems of modern life who, as identified al-Banna, namely “Persons have lost composure, the family has lost stability and sense of intimacy or attachment, society loses her grip and balance, and the world is losing the security and serenity.”²¹ Furthermore, these problems arise because human beings implement a system and rules of their own, called the “secular” system, while in truth God has prepared a system “the best” in Islam.²² Al-Banna believed that if man-made systems can only be spread and eventually became the state system, such as communism, Islamic system can also be enforced through the last three stages of Islamisation: individuals, families, and communities.

The so-called Islamic system in the view of al-Banna goes beyond the territory of the country. When discussing the level of activity (*‘amāl*) that must be assigned to a Muslim, al-Banna mentions seven stages. After the first three that is to improve the personality self (*ta’līm al-fard*), forming a Muslim family (*ta’līm al-usrah*), and perform community guidance (*iriyād al-mujtamā’*)—exactly three stages in the Islamisation of Muslim—while the four further Muslim duties are to free the homeland off any non-Islamic rulers politically, economically, and morally (*taḥrīr al-waṭan*); improve the conditions of the government in order to become a proper Islamic governments (*islāh al-ḥukūma*); establish a caliphate

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 392–3.

²¹ Yūsuf Qaraḍāwī, *Pendidikan Islam dan Madrasah Hasan al-Banna: Yusuf al-Qardhany* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1980), p. 62.

²² *Ibid.*

(*binā' al-ḵhilāfā*); and control the world (*ustāẓiyat al-'alām*).²³ If the first three are the activities carried personally, the latter four, which are "the hardest tasks and objectives of the greatest", according to Qutb, are the responsibility of Muslims in the congregation (*jamā'ah*).²⁴ With seven of these tasks, which cling to the vision of 'Tarbiyah originally taken from IM are not just to Islamize society and the state, but also to establish the Islamic caliphate in order to rule the world.

As the stages of conversion of Islamisation, the establishment of Islamic family of course is very important. Qutb notes,

If the system of "family" became the main principle in the formation of communities, and the family was forged over the principle of division of duties between husband and wife, division of tasks in carrying out the work, and the family was giving full attention to the problem of forming new generation of children and education; then that the society becomes a society that is civilized; for families in this form, under the protection of Islamic program, is a footprint and a base in which the values of "humanity" was processed and supplied, formed and nurtured, to become guide for the younger generation, because the values may not be processed and formed except within a family unit.²⁵

In addition to the different stages of the Islamisation agenda of the country and/or even the world, the importance of family in the Tarbiyah Movement appears in the form of use of the term *usrah* (literally family) which is the central concept of this movement. Going beyond its literal sense, *usrah* here means the groups consisting of approximately ten of Tarbiyah Movement members (called *mutarabbi*, learners) led or guided by a senior member of the so-called *murabbi* or *murabbiya* (mentor). Each *usrah* usually holds a meeting (*liqā'* or *ḥalaqa*) on a periodic basis, such as once a week, in order to study Islam in congregation. The process of transferring ideas in *usrah* was called *tarbiyya* (education), which became the name of the movement.

Such a system in multilevel marketing or cell proliferation patterns

²³ Hassan al-Banna, *Majmū'at al-Rasā'il* (Himpunan Risalah), pp. 9–10. Compare with Qaraḍāwī, *Pendidikan Islam dan madrasah Hasan al-Banna*, p. 74.

²⁴ Qaraḍāwī, *Pendidikan Islam dan madrasah Hasan al-Banna*, p. 75.

²⁵ Saiyid Quṭb, *Petunjuk Sepanjang Jalan*, Indonesia edition (Batu Caves: Crescent News, 2003), p. 102.

in biology, each *murabbī* or *murabbiya* is also a member *liqā'* or become *mutarabbi* of a more senior *murabbī* or *murabbiya*. Similarly, a *mutarabbi* is emphasized to recruit tens member or to make a new *usrab* where he serves as *murabbī* or *mutarabbiyah*. With such cell system, it is then possible to breed *Tarbiyah* movement so fast, and *usrab* are in the frontline of the Islamisation process with three stages mentioned earlier.

The question is, why is the set of approximately ten *Tarbiyah* members who involved in learning (*tarbiyya*) together is called family or *usrab*? What is the importance of using this term? Based on the sacred texts of Islam, the ideologues IM believe that all Muslims are basically brothers or one family. That is why in the *Tarbiyah* circles, they call each other with the greeting *akhi* or *ikhwan* and *ikhwah* or *akhawāt*, which means “brother” and “sister”, and its parent organization in Egypt called *ikhwān al-muslimīn* (the Muslim Brotherhood). Kinship was made exemplify by the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims who migrated from Mecca and can be bound and united with the people of Medina, but they are not a family in the true sense.²⁶ Taking the spirit of *hijrah*, which is also central to the concept of *Tarbiyah* Movement as a rite of passage²⁷ before and after the entry of *Tarbiyah* Movement, the movement is expected to be solid as a real family.²⁸

To get a sense of strong kinship in *usrab*, there are three things that must be met with its members, that is a sense of knowing each other (*ta'āruf*), mutual understanding (*tafāhum*), and bear one another's burdens (*takāful*).²⁹ The three senses certainly do not appear so, but must be nurtured for a long period of time through periodic meetings of *usrab* called *liqā'* or *ḥalaqa*. Therefore, in *liqā'* or *ḥalaqa*, the first thing to do is devote mutual problems facing each member to be assisted by other members. Obviously this is to generate a sense of brotherhood among members of *usrab*. Two next things are learning about Islam and study books that are considered important.³⁰ In addition to *liqā'*, to add to the

²⁶ Hassan al-Banna, *Majmū'at al-Rasā'il* (Himpunan Risalah), p. 225.

²⁷ Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. by Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

²⁸ Hassan al-Banna, *Majmū'at al-Rasā'il* (Himpunan Risalah), p. 457.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 23–5.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

strength of family ties, each *usrah* recommended holding joint travel, joint *sunna* fasting a day or two days a week, morning prayer together in the mosque once a week, as well as sleep and nightly worship (*qiyām al-layl*) together also once a week.³¹

Aside from being a media to transfer Islamist ideas, *usrah* carried out in continuously and strictly manner, which is also served to establish loyalty and solidarity among Tarbiyah members as well as a means of effective supervision and discipline. With supervision can be equated with panopticon prison in Foucault's idea,³² it's not easy for a person who has entered into *usrah* to exit. There are a variety of psychological stresses in particular that would happen, that does not just come from the *murabbī* or *murabbiya*, but also from fellow members of *usrah*. Because of the strong family bond that exists in *usrah*, in many cases members of Tarbiyah Movement are also more concerned than the Tarbiyah Movement family in the real sense. For them, the family within *usrah* is the real family in all sense. Based on the story of Noah, who splited with his wife and children, Abraham with his father, Lot with his wife, as well as Muhammad with some of his uncles, Qutb mentions that essential family is a family in the faith and Islam,³³ in this case is *usrah* in Tarbiyah Movement. Therefore, many suggestions in this movement are more respected than those that are recommended by family members such as parents who gave birth to them, including in choosing a mate for marriage.

D. *Ta'aruf* to Establish an Islamic Family

The importance of family in the Islamisation agenda of Tarbiyah makes this movement to be very concentrated on the process of forming a family through marriage. They set a separate unit called *Lajnah Munakabat* (committee or marriage bureau), which is usually located in a district or a city. In the National Coordination Meeting of PKS on August 28, 2006, this unit became part of the deputy cadre, precisely located

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

³² Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977).

³³ Qutb, *Petunjuk Sepanjang Jalan*, pp. 128–31.

under program *tarbiyyah aliyah* (family education),³⁴ with the name of the Coordination Bureau for Happy Family Welfare (BKKBS). Therefore, in addition to the name of the *Lajnah Munakahāt* that is more popular among Tarbiyah Movement, the unit sometimes referred to as *Lajnah Tarbiyyah Aliyah* (LTA) or BKKBS. Although different denominators, they are the same, with the members of the bureau are also the same, with the principal task of guaranteeing the marriage among the Tarbiyah members to be conducted in Islamic way, ranging from the selection of a spouse or partner, making a proposal, wedding and party until after they live with their marriage and have children.

Since it became one of the subject matters within *usrah* and is a must, every member of Tarbiyah Movement who wants to marry will convey the desire to their *murabbī* or *murabbiya*. The *murabbī* or *murabbiya* then asked this member to fill out a form containing complete biographical data or curriculum vitae (CV) such as date and place of birth, education, work, hobbies, traits or certain physical signs, photographs, as well as the criteria for the desired partner. The form which is also called marriage proposal was collected through *murabbī* or *murabbiya* henceforth be submitted to the *Lajnah Munakahāt* who matches with another form proposed. The result is a collection of potential mates of Tarbiyah members who have been selected based on the desired criteria and the suitability or appropriateness (*kafā'a* or *kefī*).³⁵

Through *murabbī* and *murabbiya* respectively, a prospective mate that has been determined is then conveyed to do introductions or *ta'arūf*, the

³⁴ Setiawati Intan Savitri and Faturachman, "Politics and Marriage among Islamic Activists in Indonesia", in *Changing Marriage Patterns in Southeast Asia: Economic and Socio-Cultural Dimensions*, ed. by Gavin W. Jones, Terence H. Hull, and Maznah Mohamad (New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 63.

³⁵ Based on the Hadith of the Prophet, "Choose (a place) for your semen, and marry people who are worth it, and marry (to a woman) with people who are worth", see Muḥammad ibn Yazīd Ibn Mājāh, *Sunan Ibn Majāh* (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-`Ilmiyah, 1990) No. 1968; Imam Al Hafizh Ali bin Umar Ad-Daraquthni, *Sunan Ad-Daraquthni*, ed. by Majdi bin Mansyur bin Sayyid Asy-Syura (Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam, 2007) No. 3788; Muḥammad ibn Abd Allāh Ḥākim al-Nisābūrī, *al-Mustadrak alā al-sahībahayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 2009) No. 2687; Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, ed. by Muhammad Abdul Qodir 'Atho (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 2010) No. 13758. Many scholars like Syafiyah call *kafā-ah* as criteria in the selection of a mate as required. Even so, *kafā-ah* is not a pillar or a precondition of marriage.

order in which is gender bias for putting men first. First, the biodata of prospective wife *murabbi* is conveyed to members of Tarbiyah men. In the biographical data provided, address and contact information are removed to avoid the man seeking additional information beyond the official way. Second, if the bride proffered is approved by the man, his *murabbī* then submits it to the woman's *murabbiya*. If it is not approved, the process is returned to *Lajnah Munakahat*. Third, *murabbiya* submits biodata of prospective husband who had approved her as a bride to the members of Tarbiyah Movement women. Address and contact information are also eliminated. Fourth, if the woman agreed, her *murabbiya* immediately contacts her future husband's *murabbī* to arrange a meeting. If she does not agree, biodata of both are returned to *Lajnah Munakahat* for the exchange of new biodata as what happens to first process mentioned earlier. Fifth, the meeting of prospective husband and wife candidate accompanied by *murabbī* and *murabbiya* respectively. If there was one party or another changed his or her mind after the meeting the cancellation can be done. If the two candidates agreed and there is no cancellation, the process is continued by making a direct proposal (*khitbah*) for arranging weddings.³⁶

Ta'aruf as mentioned above which is considered by Tarbiyah as matchmaking process towards marriage is believed to be the most accordance with Islamic teaching. Mediated by *murabbī* and *murabbiya*, a man and woman who wants to get married will be spared from illegal seclusion or committing wrong doing on their own.³⁷ In many instances, this movement also denounced the trend of courtship among young people as to draw closer to adultery which is strongly forbidden in Islam.³⁸

In making a proposal and marriage, the role of *murabbī* and *murabbiya* is also striking. They are decisive and arranging meeting for both families by inviting the two of them. In some cases, we even found a male member of Tarbiyah Movement that will woo a woman whose parents

³⁶ Interview with Ay and Da, members of Tarbiyah, August 1 and 3, 2016. Compare to Savitri and Faturachman, "Politics and Marriage among Islamic Activists in Indonesia", p. 69.

³⁷ A Hadith of the Prophet says, "Let not a man alone with a woman, but the third of them would be demons" Muḥammad ibn Īsā Tirmidhī, *Jami' At-Tirmidhi*, trans. by Abu Khaliyl (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007) No. 2165.

³⁸ "And do not commit adultery for, behold, it is an abomination and an evil way." Quran, 17:32.

were in a very far away, due to cost considerations, choose not to invite her parents but does include his *murabbī* instead. When the wedding and party favors (*walimah al-‘urs*), *murabbī* and *murabbiya* and *Lajnah Munakahat* will be a committee who determine how the wedding should be arranged or taken place, what are the details of the wedding activities, as well as arranging seating guests with men and women placed separately.³⁹

The role of *murabbī* and *murabbiya* is so large as in the pairing, making a proposal, up to the wedding and the party, in many perspective to replacing the traditional role of the family in marriage. In the past when a dating trend among young people was not popular, arranged marriage of two people will get married normally become the responsibility of their parents, including making a proposal and marriage. Although the determination of changes in courting a mate, to be a personal choice young men and women who are getting married, parents remain actively involved in making a proposal and marriage. In *ta‘āruf*, the role of parents and families become much more passive because of the involvement *murabbī* and *murabbiya* and *Lajnah Munakahat*. It seems clear that the family in the *Tarbiyah* Movement (*usrah*) is much more important than the real family in its traditional sense.

Of course if both man and woman to get married are members of *Tarbiyah* Movement, which preceded *ta‘āruf* wedding will run smoothly and did not encounter any obstacles. The problem is when it is only one of those who is follower of *Tarbiyah* Movement, while the prospective partner is not. This usually happens because they already know each other or even dating each other before one of them meet a member of *Tarbiyah* Movement. Though after one of them participated in *Tarbiyah* dating may not like the old days, they still promise to get married.

To such a “irregularities”, *murabbī* or *murabbiya* and *Lajnah Munakahat* would of course prevent its members to perform the marriage. The reason is to maintain the purity of propaganda and movement. However, the prohibition against “heart or love concern” is not always easy to be obeyed. If the members persist in refusing her choice and obedient, while at the same time *Tarbiyah* does not want to also lose members, there is still a compromise in the form of several stages to go through. Firstly, members are given the opportunity to bring or invite prospective

³⁹ Interview with Ay and Da, August 1 and 3, 2016.

partner to become a follower of Tarbiyah Movement. If the candidate is a non-Tarbiyah member who agreed to join Tarbiyah movement, the problem is resolved. This means that they are married together as members of Tarbiyah Movement. In some cases even the members who wanted to get married Tarbiyah own its own candidate Tarbiyah fellow members, and *murabbī* or *murabbiya* and *Lajnah Munakahat* would just prepare the proposal and later would arrange the marriage wedding. This is allowed.⁴⁰

Second, if the candidate is a non-Tarbiyah Movement member and had refused to enter the movement, while the potential partner who is Tarbiyah remains adamant to marry him or her, which means that the marriage between members of Tarbiyah Movement and non-Tarbiyah Movement can not be avoided, they are required to make a statement on the stamp that is enforceable. The contents of the statement for the bride who is a member of Tarbiyah Movement is that he will continue to preach in Tarbiyah even after wedding takes place. While the core statement of potential partners who are not-Tarbiyah is that once they were married, he would not ask his / her spouses to leave Tarbiyah and will not hinder her activity in Tarbiyah Movement.⁴¹

Although the effectiveness of such a statement needs to be tested further as well as whether it will truly entail a violation of law if, for Tarbiyah Movement, strict rules it is useful to keep movements to a pure and unshakable. As *usrab*, strict rules enforced all this movement to its members in *ta'aruf* towards marriage, in Foucauldian perspective, into a kind of surveillance equipment and disciplinary.⁴² The point is that they attempt to direct its members as tightly as possible to be cadres of the best movements that will develop and produce Islamic families. In turn, families which are born out of *ta'aruf* will be leading the Islamisation of society and the state, as the ultimate goal of this movement.

E. Promoting *Ta'aruf*

In addition to the obligations imposed to its members through all the required strict rules, a marriage that starts with *ta'aruf* according to Tarbiyah style is also promoted to a broader audience far beyond their

⁴⁰ Interview with Ay, August 1, 2016.

⁴¹ Interview with Ay, August 1, 2016.

⁴² Foucault, *Discipline and punish*.

inner circle. Because members of this movement is city young educated people, mostly from public campuses, their enthusiasm and ability lead them to produce a variety of promotional tools and to spread them in a very adequate way. We identify some of the media campaigns as below:

1. *Popular Publications*

Along with the growth of Islamic movements in many public colleges since the 1970s as well as the development of Islamic universities, the need for the educated Islamic readings are strengthened. Some Islamic book publishers sprung up like Mizan in Bandung, Salahuddin Press in Yogyakarta, and Gema Insani Press in Jakarta. During financial crisis in the mid-1990s that led to the fall of the New Order in 1998, Islamic publications were among the earliest to rise with the success of the economic recovery and the mounting of expression of Islam in the public sphere of post-liberalization. In big cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya, new Islamic publishers were established with very promising prospects, including by Islamists such as Tarbiyah.⁴³ Publication by this group includes Pro-U Media in Yogyakarta, Lingkar Pena Publishing House in Jakarta, and Era Adicitra Intermedia in Solo, Central Java.

Publishers belonging to Tarbiyah exponent publish Islamic books that correspond to their ideology, including the topic of marriage *ta'aruf* idealized by the group in forming "Islamic" families. The books in question, among others by Ari Pusparini, *Agar Ta'aruf Berbuah Pahala: Pintu Menyemai Cinta Menuju Mahligai Rumah Tangga (Hope that Ta'aruf Will be Rewarded: A Door for Harvesting Love To Start a New Family Life)* (Pro-U Media, 2012); Jauhar al-Zanki, *Kupilih Engkau karena Allah (I Choose You Because of Allah)*, (Pro-U Media, 2013); Leyla Imtichanah, *Taaruf Keren, Pacaran Sorry Men*, (Lingkar Pena Publishing, 2005); Asri Widiarti, *Tak Kenal Maka Ta'aruf: Panduan Lengkap Proses Ta'aruf hingga Pernikahan Aktivis Dakwah*, (Era Adicitra Intermedia, 2010); and Cahyadi Takariawan,

⁴³ Further discussion on Islamic publishing in contemporary Indonesia, see C.W. Watson, "Islamic Books and their Publishers: Notes on the Contemporary Indonesian Scene*", *Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2005), pp. 177–210; Phillip J. Vermonte, "Penerbitan Islam di Indonesia: Menuju Sebuah Print Culture?", in *Gerakan dan Pemikiran Islam Indonesia Kontemporer*, ed. by Rizal Sukma and Clara Joewono (Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2007).

Di Jalan Dakwah Aku Menikah, (Era Intermedia, 2005).

The best-selling books of 'Tarbiyah-style Islam which is partly due to the niche readers of this group is large, make many other publishers race to find manuscripts of writers of Tarbiyah Movement, including in this case the general Islamic publishers and even "secular" ones. Publishers which include Mizania (teenager line of Mizan) and Qultum Media and Quanta-Elex Media Komputindo, Islamic publication line of Group Agromedia and Kompas Gramedia Group (KKG) whose owners are Catholic. Their publications related to *ta'aruf* eg Felix Y. Siauw and Emeraldia Noor Achni, *Udah putusin Aja! Jaga Kebormatanmu Raih Kemuliaanmu* (Keep Your Honor Earn Glory), (Mizania, 2013); Leyla Imtichanah, *Taaruf: Proses Perjodohan Sesuai Syari Islam (Taaruf: Matchmaking Process Under Islamic Syari)* (Quanta-Elex Media, 2012); @Tausiyahku, *Tausiyah Cinta: No Khalwat until Akad (Tausiyah Love: No Seclusion until Getting Married)* (Qultum Media, 2013); @Muslimah_Talk, *Ta'aruf is My Way: Sebab Cinta Saja Tidak Cukup (Ta'aruf is My Way: For Love Is Not Enough)* (Jakarta: Qultum Media, 2014); and @Sobat_Loversh, *Triangle of Love: Allah, Aku, dan Kamu. Menunda Hati Terikat sampai Tiba Akad (Triangle of Love: God, I and You: Delaying Tied Love until Getting Married)*, (Qultum Media).

In addition to through nonfiction books, promotional *ta'aruf* also be done through the publication of books of literature, especially novels and short stories. Books of fiction genre of this group even attained great success and some become the best seller. Novels by Habiburrahman El Shirazy like *Ayat-ayat Cinta* (Verses of Love), (Republika, 2004); *Ketika Cinta Bertasbib* (*When Love Praises God*) (Republika, 2004); and *Dalam Mibrab Cinta* (*Inside mibrab of love*) (Republika, 2007); novel *Jodoh untuk Naina* (*A Candidate of Spuse for Naina*) written by Mumtaz (Elex Media Komputindo, 2015); as well as the short story collection such as *Ketika Mas Gagah Pergi* (*When Mas Gagah is Away*) by Helvy Tiana Rosa (Pustaka Annida, 1997) and *Jatuh Bangun Cintaku* (*The Fall and Rise of My Love*) by Asma Nadia, et. al. (Lingkar Pena Publishing House, 2005) have been very well received by readers and have been printed for several times.

Books on *ta'aruf* above, both fiction and non-fiction genre, generally question dating of youth nowadays and denounced it as an undue, while offering *ta'aruf* which is then seen as a step towards the ideal marriage in

Islam. The books authored by Tarbiyah kept popping up with works in stock as if inexhaustible, mainly because of the central role of Forum Lingkar Pena (FLP). Established in 1997, this group of authors has so far become the largest in Indonesia. With guidance patterns which is similar to *usrah* cells, FLP has been so productive to produce works spawned in the form of novels, short stories, and nonfiction as well have been able to master popular publications such as newspapers and magazines thanks to the delivery of the message through the slang language and easily digestible targeting young children. In 2005, it was recorded that FLP had 5,000 members, including branches in Egypt, Europe, Japan, Hong Kong, US, Singapore, and the Netherlands; 400 book titles have been published and established cooperation with more than 20 publishers. The slogan of teen magazines of *Annida*, which became the basis of the establishment of this group, is very suitable to describe their work: intelligent, sociable, and *syar'i*. With such works, FLP has become an alternative of Western popular culture since the 1970s which dominated the public spaces of young people in Indonesia.⁴⁴

2. *Popular Movies and Soap Operas*

Popular works by members of Tarbiyah which have gained a large readership as mentioned above attract many people to divert them into films, especially works of fiction such as short stories and novels. The novel *Ayat-ayat Cinta* (Verses of Love) which sold over 100,000 copies, which attained fantastic sales figures for the size of the book in Indonesia that are typically under 5,000 copies, filmed by MD Pictures in 2008. As what happened to the book, the film also attained great success, being watched by more than 3,7 million in just over a month since the premiere.⁴⁵ This success also made many directors and film production

⁴⁴ Najib Kailani, "Kami Adalah Mujahidin Berpedang Pena: Suatu Gerakan Dakwah Forum Lingkar Pena Yogyakarta", Master's Thesis (Yogyakarta: Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2009); Monika Arnez and Eva F. Nisa, "Dimensions of Morality", *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia*, vol. 172, no. 4 (2016), pp. 449–78; Monika Arnez, "Dakwah by the Pen", *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol. 37, no. 107 (2009), pp. 49–52.

⁴⁵ Lukman Hakim, "Conservative Islam Turn or Popular Islam? an Analysis of the Film *Ayat-ayat Cinta*", *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 48, no. 1 (2010), p. 104; H. Hariyadi, "Finding Islam in Cinema: Islamic Films and the Identity of Indonesian

houses turning other novels written by Habiburrahman into films. It was later noted among others that *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* (*When Love Praises God*) (SinemArt Pictures, 2009); *When Love Praises God II* (*When Love Praises God II*) (SinemArt Pictures, 2009); *Dalam Mibrab Cinta* (*Inside mibrab of love*) (SinemArt Pictures, 2010); and *Cinta Suci Zabra* (*Holy Love of Zabra*) (SinemArt Pictures, 2012) were also later filmed. Some of the films were even presented in the form of soap operas, namely *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* and *Dalam Mibrab Cinta*, which aired on the most popular TV stations in Indonesia, Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia (RCTI), during the hours of the main (primetime) in Ramadan ahead of the Muslims break their fast and during dawn meal (*sabur*).

Besides the works of Habiburrahman, works by other authors who were also filmed later, for example, novel own by @TweetNikah, *Aku, Kau dan KUA* (I, you and KUA [district office of Ministry of Religious Affairs]) (filmed by Servia, 2014) which is comedian by genre. There are also films made not out of novel, but they were rather adapted from the nonfiction book, namely *Tausiyah Cinta* (*Tausiyah Love*) (Bedasinema Pictures, 2015). From September 2008 to September 2009, Televisi Pendidikan Indonesia (TPI) aired the show titled *ta'aruf* (manufactured Soraya Intercine Films, 2008-2009).

As many movies and soap operas popular in Indonesia, the central topic in movies and soap operas on a love story or a mate searching young people are full of herbs Islam. Some films call the partner search process in the light of the terms *ta'aruf*, while some others are not. Nevertheless, everything rests on the central theme that the courtship is popular among young people in general as something that should not be feasible for a Muslim. Instead, they offer movies and soap operas or matchmaking *ta'aruf* either through intermediaries or directly, but without seclusion as the ideal way. The films are made as motives as well as guidance on how to find a partner and get married by “Islamic” way.⁴⁶

Interestingly, if the consumers of book publication with *ta'aruf* themes, especially genre fictions such as novels and short stories, are young boys or girls who may have been looking for a life partner,

Muslim Youths”, *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 51, no. 2 (2013), p. 449.

⁴⁶ Hakim, “Conservative Islam Turn or Popular Islam?”, pp. 112–5; Hariyadi, “Finding Islam in Cinema”, pp. 452–3.

after having been filmed the segment of audience extends to parents.⁴⁷ It has been regarded that when films are adapted from the novel Habiburrahman El Shirazy like *Ayat-ayat Cinta* (Verses of Love) were broadcasted, cinemas appeared to be a place of *pengajian* by the presence of *majlis ta'lim* members of mature Muslim females who watched it. If previous largest segment of the movie audience were teenagers or young ages, age segmentation can no more be enforced because of so many older audiences.⁴⁸ The question is whether or not after seeing the film in the theaters, the members of *majlis ta'lim* would hope that their children would use *taaruf* or an expectation of getting son-in-law in a way *ta'aruf*, still remain unanswered.

3. *Courses and Seminars Premarital*

Before carrying out the wedding, every bride and groom couples will have to undergo marriage courses held by the Religious Affairs Office (KUA), a unit under the Ministry of Religious whose duty is to note the inter-Muslim marriages in Indonesia. These courses usually contain information about the legal and ethical rules of Islam on marriage as the pillars of marriage, the legitimate requirements of marriage, and the etiquette of husband and wife in domestic life. Taking a little time in meeting approximately 2-4 weeks before the ceremony, the courses by KUA's attempt to introduce the policy or views about Islamic marriage.⁴⁹

Different from the course that is specifically designed for brides who already have a partner, the participants of pre-marriage course that was held by the Movement *Tarbiyah* is more open for public. It is organized in the form of seminars, anyone who is pleased to participate are welcome, including those that do not have the intention to get married in the near future, and married couples. Although sometimes the participants require to pay, it is free of charge, the figure of which is

⁴⁷ Ariel Heryanto, *Identity and Pleasure: The Politics of Indonesian Screen Culture* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2014), pp. 52–3.

⁴⁸ Eric Sasono, “Fenomena *Ayat-ayat Cinta*”, *Koran Tempo* (29 Mar 2008).

⁴⁹ See, more detail, “Peraturan Direktur Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam Nomor DJ.II/542 Tahun 2013 tentang Pedoman Penyelenggaraan Kursus Pra Nikah” (Regulations of The General Director of the Islamic Community Guidance No. DJ.II / 542 Year 2013 on Guidelines for the Implementation of Pre-Marriage Course).

very small in amount, that is only Rp. 15,000. Sometimes too, seminar is a sub-event of an activity that is much larger and part of public concern, such as a festival or exhibition of Islamic books. From several wedding seminars that we observed in Yogyakarta and Jambi, we noted that the number of participants is considerably big. One seminar can be attended by more than 200 participants. Although it is open for public, the average participants are young men and women.

As a seminar, every pre-marital courses raise a particular topic that can be classified as follows. The first is topic on *ta'aruf* itself, for example "Taaruf Dulu Nikah Kemudian" (*the first is ta'aruf and then marriage*), "Izinkan Aku Mengenalmu: Panduan Lengkap Proses Taaruf" (*let me know you: complete guide on ta'aruf process*), "Kriteria Calon dan Taaruf yang Nyunnah" (*criteria of candidates and ta'aruf that according to prophet tradition*), "Jurus Taaruf Gak Pake Lama" (*how to make simple ta'aruf*), "ATM: Amati, Taaruf, Menikah" (*know, ta'aruf, marriage*), and "Taaruf Qurani" (*ta'aruf according to the Quran*). The second topic is preparation for marriage, for example, "Sucikan Cinta Raih Bahagia" (*purify love, achieve happiness*), "Pantaskan Diri Raih Bahagia" (*Prepare Yourself to Achieve Happiness*), and "Menuju Menikah dengan Penuh Berkah: Mengikhlaskan, Memantaskan, Menghalalkan" (*Getting Married with Full of Blessings: Making Sincerity, Matching, Permissible*). The third, the topic is around the criteria for the ideal partner, for example, "Akulah Jodoh yang Kau Cari" (*I am the Real Partner You've Been Looking for*) and "Menjemput Jodoh Terbaik" (*Picking up An Ideal Life Partner*). Although the topics seem to differ for general audience, the material presented in the seminar is usually similar: how to establish a family through an Islamic way, not going out as what is mostly done young men and women nowadays.

The invited speakers in the seminars are usually leaders or preachers who are leading Tarbiyah, authors of popular books about marriage as discussed in the previous sections, and people who have specialized themselves to become motivators of wedding in Tarbiyah Movement. To attract the masses, sometimes the speakers are brought in from outside the region, for example, player of *ta'aruf* movies as discussed above or artist who had practiced *ta'aruf*.

Such an open seminar format is a strategy to encompass a broader audience to be involved in the activities of Tarbiyah and is hoped to be

able to attract brother members of Muslim community to join activities of this movement with hidden goal to attract them to join the movement. In fact, sometimes the seminar is a strategy to build a community or a new organization under *Tarbiyah*. Premarital Seminar in Jambi in October 2016, for example, was intended to establish a community to get ready for marriage. Before entering the event, each participant is asked to fill in a form similar to a marriage proposal, completed with a personal biography and his or her plan when to get married and mate like what is desirable. By filling in the form, participants will later be contacted to engage in premarital advanced seminars or other activities because they have become part of Ready for Marriage community. These communities will be media of *ta'aruf* among participants of such seminar. In the seminar application form, there is a checklist of interests in social activities that must be selected by the applicants. By choosing one of them, they will also be captured to be part of social activities in many smaller social organizations which formed by the *Tarbiyah* Movement.⁵⁰

As has been elaborated earlier, the course or *ta'aruf* seminar sometimes has other more distant objectives or goals. Similar to the establishment of family in *Tarbiyah* for broader Islamisation, marriage courses often become bridging-activity to recruit new members of this group from various backgrounds, not merely from university students but also those who have already got job in various private and government offices.

4. *Marriage Consultation Service*

Marriage and domestic life off course are not always smooth but full of dynamics. Sometimes marriage tinged disputes that when the taper can lead to divorce. The Government through the Ministry of Religious Affairs prepared a Development Agency, Advisory, and Preservation of Marriage (BP4), which is under KUA (district offices of Ministry of Religious Affairs), to provide consultation about marriage. Outside the state-owned, private individuals can also provide similar consultations, including in this case a lot of wedding consulting agencies which are

⁵⁰ As suggested by al-Banna, *Tarbiyah* Movement has a lot of charity projects and social institutions, such as those dealing with philanthropy, education or disaster relief. On this suggestion, Hassan al-Banna, *Majmū'at al-Rasā'il* (Himpunan Risalah), pp. 61–5.

formed or initiated by members of the Tarbiyah Movement.

In general, consultative institutions of Tarbiyah divide their services into three categories, namely premarital training, training harmonious family, and family consultations. As a consultative agency, premarital training is important because knowledge and expertise (skills) to prepare a wedding is rarely offered in formal educational institutions neither both in private and government educational institutions. In fact, the challenges being faced by two young couples who just have got married or shared life is not simple or easy. For example, in the last few years, divorce rate is getting higher and higher and shows a continuing trend to increase, narcotics and drugs, stalking children and youth, domestic violence happens everywhere, as well as many threats of pornography and online crimes.

In addition to those who come to the center for consultation, premarital training programs provide senior high school students, university students, and other stakeholders through seminars and courses, as described in the previous section. Classes are held by members or organizations under Tarbiyah by inviting other institutions which belong to the exponents of Tarbiyah, which also include wedding consultants as a coach or trainer.⁵¹ As what is believed by leaders of this movement, to those who come to seminar and marriage consultative agencies are advised or suggested that the ideal marriage in Islam is that through *ta'aruf*. Other than through formal meetings, many Tarbiyah marriage consulting agencies open their services by making use of many media, including the Internet and social media.

5. *Social Media*

According to the Indonesian Internet Service Provider Association (APJII), 132.7 million or half of the total population of the Indonesian population, amounting to 256.2 million in 2016, has Internet connections.⁵² Other data says, most of the consumption of the Internet is for social

⁵¹ See, for example, profile of Wonderful Family Center in <http://wonderfulfamily.org/>

⁵² Yoga Hastyadi Widiartanto, "2016, Pengguna Internet di Indonesia Capai 132 Juta", *Kompas* (24 Oct 2016).

media such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram and Youtube.⁵³

Having most of its members graduated from higher education, members of Tarbiyah Movement are of course very accessible in using the Internet. For them then their ability is used as a means of Islamic propagation that is important,⁵⁴ including spreading the contents on *ta'aruf* in various social media. Through multiple accounts, which is either coordinated or not, the contents are distributed and reposted that often go viral on social media.

A Twitter account, @TweetNikah, for example, followed by nearly 200,000 followers. In its tweets, this account, among others, disseminates a lot of information about premarital course or seminar held by Tarbiyah Movement and posts contents of *ta'aruf*. Every follower who get married after being inspired by calls from @TweetNikah, usually post their photos of their weddings with a tag to the account. These various tweet accounts, in turn, become very popular and retweeted by many of its followers. Later, various tweets by the account were transformed into a book, *Aku, Kau dan KUA* (me, you, and KUA [district office of Ministry of Religious Affairs] by Elex Media Komputindo (2013). The book has been reprinted in more than eight times. In 2014, the book was filmed and screened in big cinema networks in various cities in the country.

Besides @TweetNikah, other Twitter accounts that also promote *ta'aruf* and have become very popular are @Tausiyahku, @Muslimah_Talk, and @Sobat_Loversh. The postings of these three accounts have also been recorded and sold a lot in Indonesia.

Besides being a disseminator of ideas of *ta'aruf*, social media which has a two-way interaction is also made as a means of consultation. Many accounts that promote *ta'aruf* provide various answers to questions which are posted by readers or followers who want to know more about the stages of the wedding. Everything is free of charge and these people do not need to pay anything for any aspect of consultation.

⁵³ Oik Yusuf, "Hampir Semua Pengguna Internet Indonesia Memakai Facebook", *Kompas* (15 Apr 2016); "Mayoritas Konsumsi Internet di Indonesia untuk Media Sosial | itempo | tempo.co", *Koran Tempo* (29 Apr 2016).

⁵⁴ Merlyna Lim, "The Internet and Everyday Life in Indonesia: A New Moral Panic?", *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde* / *Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia*, vol. 169, no. 1 (2013), pp. 142–3.

F. Concluding Remarks

What has been presented in the above sections can be analyzed from two perspectives: the social-religious capital and demographic jihad for greater political gains for the shake of short and long future time. The theory of social capital has been well established and used in order to comprehend how various forms of networks of individuals and groups of people have some kinds of positive impacts on economic and political development in given societies or countries. One standard definition of it as being suggested by Robert Putnam ‘...social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks, and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them’. Coleman argues that social capital resides in bonding relations between people that entail some measure of affinity, trust, obligation and expectation, such as families, kinship groups, ethnic groups or religious groups.⁵⁵ On this definition and others, Christopher Baker and Greg Smith suggest that Putnam and others have differentiated “between bonding social capital which describes intra-group networking, bridging social capital describing horizontal linkages to other groups, and linking social capital describing vertical relationships to centers of resources and power.” In addition Bourdieu argues that social capital is one of many forms of capital deployed by individuals or groups to their own advantage in struggles over power and resources.⁵⁶

In the case of *ta’aruf* and any activities initiated by *murabbī* or *murabbīya* bonding social capital draws on religious teachings and practices in order to generate political resources over the foundation of marriage relationships. Such marriage relationships will be much stronger than any other relationships or issues or interests in human life. Thus, these kinds of relationships will be stronger than political bonding and therefore will be very potential to be used for political gains. In the future, not only such Tarbiyah movement will gain political benefits from those couples who

⁵⁵ James S. Coleman, “Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital”, *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 94 (1988), pp. S95–120.

⁵⁶ Christopher Baker and Greg Smith, “Spiritual, Religious and Social Capital: Exploring their dimensions and their relationship with faith-based motivation and participation in UK civil society”, *Changing Face of Christianity in the 21st Century* (University of Edinburgh, 6 Apr 2010), p. 7 accessed 10 September 2016.

have been helped to get married but those couple can also gain political benefits from this movement. It will become mutual benefits either for those who have helped or those who have been helped.

Because there are *mutarabbi* or *mutarabbiyah* who have made use of ta'aruf which were due to their failure of getting candidates of spouses or who failed to join other religious-political movement in the country by themselves, the efforts of Tarbiyah to "help" them become so meaningful for them. Tarbiyah has helped them to bridge bonding of those who come from different backgrounds of family strata, ethnicity, social-religious movement, government and non-government agencies, work places and others. This kind of Tarbiyah strategy in getting new members will get larger and larger networks but with far stronger bonds and will potentially last much longer as how religious people will maintain their family relations. It will last for the whole life in most cases.

In addition, from Demographic Jihad perspective, *Ta'aruf* can be seen as an attempt to struggle (to conduct jihad) in order to win competition by means of peaceful way. Up to a relatively recently, discussions on jihad has been very much connected to struggle against infidels, injustice and wrong doings of human beings, either from the perspective of greater jihad or lesser jihad.⁵⁷ Since there have been so many cases where Islamist movements are defeated due to less networks in terms of variety of backgrounds and combined with abundant of data where Islamist are trying to gain sympathy for a long future with more or less peaceful ways, jihad has been connected to expansion of family size, area distribution of Muslims and expansion of networks. This is called demographic Jihad, a jihad by means of multiplying family members and networks in order to dominant over the others, either Muslims of different schools or groups or those of other religions at large.

According to Natan, Demographic Jihad is the effort to establish hegemony over a region by all methods short of a classic Jihad.⁵⁸ The effort of Demographic Jihad uses a long list of legal or what he calls as Lawful Islamism and illegal methods. By legal methods of Demographic

⁵⁷ David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (California: University of California Press, 2015), pp. 32–48.

⁵⁸ Yoel Natan, Demographic Jihad by the Numbers: Getting a Handle on the True Scope, <http://yoel.info/demographicjihad.htm>, accessed 1 Dec 2016.

Jihad, Natan includes immigration, large family sizes, conversion of the natives through evangelism (*dawa*), and a long process of ethnic cleansing.⁵⁹

Efforts through Demographic Jihad by Islamist movements are believed to be an alternative of what other efforts of jihad, such as politics, have failed so far against Islamist competitors in the postmodern and globalization world. In addition, Demographic Jihad is also considered to be peaceful jihad⁶⁰ as an alternative against violent jihad as has been carried out by many Islamist groups. As an Islamist group that has used campuses for spreading their Islamist ideology, the Tarbiyah movement has been fully aware that it has to find as many alternatives as possible in order to spread their ideology and in order to gain more and more memberships and sympathy from members of other Islamic community at large. The end goal of this strategy is to win political competition in a democratic world by means of Demographic Jihad.⁶¹

Whether or not this effort of Demographic Jihad will be successful in order for Islamist movements to be dominant over other ideological, political and social forces in this globalization era will remain open for further research.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Ronald Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad: Negotiating Identity and Modernity in Muslim Java* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

⁶¹ With a little bit different site of analysis, see for example, Abigail Esman, *Radical State: How Jihad is Winning Over Democracy in the West* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger Security International, 2010).

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