



## Wayang Da'wah and Religious Moderation in the Reconstruction of Contemporary Integrative Islamic Education

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### Abstract

Religious moderation has become a strategic issue in contemporary Islamic education in Indonesia, particularly in response to the growing challenges of intolerance, extremism, and the weakening integration between religious learning and local cultural contexts. In this regard, wayang dakwah emerges as a cultural medium capable of bridging Islamic values, local wisdom, and socio-religious education in a more contextual manner. This study aims to analyze the role of wayang dakwah in internalizing religious moderation values and to reconstruct a paradigm of integrative Islamic education grounded in cultural approaches. The research employed a qualitative case study design conducted in Boyolali Regency from July to December 2025, involving ten dalang as participants, with Ki Sri Setyo as the key informant. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing techniques. The findings indicate that wayang dakwah functions not only as a traditional performance art but also as an effective medium of cultural da'wah that facilitates the internalization of key moderation values, including tolerance, nonviolence, justice, deliberation, and respect for local traditions. Furthermore, the dalang play a strategic role as value educators, cultural-religious mediators, public communicators, and agents of religious moderation who connect Islamic teachings with social realities. This study concludes that wayang dakwah offers a relevant and transformative foundation for strengthening religious moderation while contributing to the reconstruction of contemporary integrative Islamic education that is more contextual, humanistic, and culturally grounded.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia represents a complex socio-religious landscape characterized by diversity in religion, ethnicity, language, culture, and local traditions. Within such a context, religious moderation cannot merely be framed as a normative slogan but must be understood as an ethical and pedagogical framework for fostering peaceful, just, and civilized coexistence. In recent years, global challenges such as social polarization, extremism, and the fragmentation of religious discourse have intensified, particularly with the rapid development of digital media that facilitates the spread of radical ideologies (Conway, 2021; Ohls et al., 2024). These dynamics indicate that religious education must go beyond the transmission of doctrinal knowledge and instead cultivate inclusive, balanced, and dialogical religious worldviews. Contemporary studies further highlight that religious moderation has evolved as a response to the increasingly complex interaction between religion, culture, and technology in modern societies (Yuminah & Si, 2024; Zaluchu et al., 2025). Therefore, education plays a crucial role in shaping moderate religious attitudes as a foundation for social harmony.

In the context of Islamic education, the urgency of religious moderation becomes even more significant, as educational institutions serve as primary arenas for shaping the reasoning, attitudes, and religious behaviors of younger generations. Islamic education is expected not only to build theological understanding but also to promote intercultural dialogue and social sensitivity (Cooling,

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2020; Johannessen & Skeie, 2019). Empirical studies demonstrate that values such as tolerance, justice, and nonviolence can be effectively internalized through structured and collaborative learning processes (Mulyana, 2023). Moreover, character education approaches have been increasingly emphasized as they integrate cognitive, affective, and moral dimensions of learning (Harrison et al., 2020; Peterson, 2020). However, in practice, religious education often remains focused on cognitive and normative aspects, with limited engagement in broader social experiences. This condition suggests the need for more contextual and transformative approaches in Islamic education.

Empirical evidence indicates that efforts to promote religious moderation in Indonesia have largely been dominated by formal strategies, such as curriculum development, institutional policies, and school-based activities. In reality, within culturally rich societies, the formation of religious attitudes does not occur solely in formal educational settings but also through everyday social interactions and cultural practices. Cultural approaches are particularly effective because they bridge religious values with lived experiences in a natural and meaningful way (Harahap & Harahap, 2024). Furthermore, religion is increasingly understood as a social practice that is shaped and expressed through everyday interactions rather than merely through abstract doctrines (Ammerman, 2020). The rise of digital technology has also transformed how individuals access and interpret religious teachings, further emphasizing the need for adaptive and contextual educational approaches (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020). Consequently, strengthening religious moderation requires approaches that are not only normative but also cultural and experiential.

Within this framework, local culture holds significant potential as a medium for promoting religious moderation. Wayang, a traditional Javanese performing art, has long functioned not only as entertainment but also as a medium for education, communication, and value transmission. Wayang dakwah represents a creative synthesis between Islamic teachings and local cultural expressions, enabling religious messages to be conveyed in a persuasive, humane, and contextually relevant manner (Afif, 2025; Muslimin, 2025). Through narratives, symbols, humor, and character representations, wayang effectively communicates values such as tolerance, justice, and social harmony in ways that are easily understood and accepted by the community (Kontu et al., 2025). This approach aligns with culturally responsive educational models that emphasize the importance of local context in meaningful learning processes (Hodgkinson-Williams & Trotter, 2018). Therefore, wayang dakwah can be viewed not only as a form of cultural expression but also as a pedagogical tool for fostering moderate religious consciousness.

A review of the literature reveals that studies on religious moderation in Islamic education have grown significantly in recent years. Most research has focused on the role of curricula, teachers, and institutional environments in promoting moderation values (Musyahid, 2023; Sugianto et al., 2024). Other studies have examined the relationship between religious moderation, social harmony, character education, and national identity (Agung et al., 2024; Jupri et al., 2026). Previous studies also indicate that social media significantly influences students' attitudes toward religious moderation (Baedowi & Chamadi, 2025). Additionally, local wisdom has been increasingly recognized as an effective approach for fostering tolerance and preventing social conflict (Sakti et al., 2024). From a global perspective, research also emphasizes the importance of inclusive education and social justice in addressing inequalities and identity-based conflicts (Marginson, 2016). Overall, the literature suggests that religious moderation is best understood as the result of the interaction between education, culture, and social practice.

However, these studies still exhibit several limitations. Most research tends to emphasize formal and institutional approaches, with limited attention to the role of cultural media as dynamic spaces for value internalization. Furthermore, the integration of religious education and cultural practices has not been sufficiently explored as a basis for reconstructing educational paradigms. In fact, recent studies highlight that culture-based approaches offer strong potential for developing contextual and sustainable forms of religious understanding (Jeniva & Tanyid, 2025). This gap indicates the need for research that explicitly connects religious moderation, Islamic education, and cultural media. Therefore, examining wayang dakwah as a pedagogical laboratory for internalizing moderation values becomes highly relevant. This study seeks to address this gap by proposing an integrative perspective that bridges religion, culture, and education.

Based on the above considerations, this study aims to analyze the role of wayang dakwah in strengthening religious moderation and to formulate a reconstruction of an integrative Islamic

education paradigm grounded in cultural practices. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Islamic education by integrating cultural, social, and religious dimensions into a cohesive framework. Practically, it offers a foundation for developing educational models that are more contextual and responsive to societal needs. Furthermore, this study expands the understanding of cultural media as effective tools for value internalization in religious education. In this regard, Islamic education is positioned not merely as a process of knowledge transmission but as a transformative process of character formation and social awareness. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that religious moderation can be more effectively cultivated when conveyed through cultural media that are meaningful, contextual, and deeply embedded in the lived experiences of society.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was selected because the study aims to obtain an in-depth understanding of the meanings, practices, and social constructions of wayang-based cultural da'wah in the internalization of religious moderation, as well as its implications for reconstructing contemporary integrative Islamic education. This approach allows the researcher to explore phenomena holistically within their natural context, enabling a comprehensive understanding of social, symbolic, and cultural realities (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Moleong, 2017). The case study design was adopted because the research focuses on a bounded system characterized by a specific setting, time frame, and group of actors, namely the practice of wayang dakwah in Boyolali Regency. This design is particularly appropriate for capturing contextual complexity and generating rich, in-depth insights (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018).

The study was conducted in Boyolali Regency, Central Java, Indonesia, which was selected due to its active preservation of Javanese cultural traditions and its relevance as a setting for wayang dakwah performances. The region represents a socio-cultural environment where the integration of religious values and local cultural practices remains dynamic and observable. The research was carried out over a six-month period, from July to December 2025. This time frame was chosen to align with the schedule of wayang dakwah performances and to allow sufficient immersion in the field for comprehensive data collection.

The participants consisted of ten dalang (traditional puppet masters) selected through purposive sampling. This sampling technique was used to ensure that the participants possessed relevant experience and expertise in wayang dakwah practices. The inclusion criteria included professional experience as a dalang, frequency of performances, mastery of da'wah content, level of social influence, and active involvement in disseminating religious values through cultural media. Among the participants, Ki Sri Setyo was identified as the key informant due to his prominent role in developing wayang dakwah, his ability to integrate traditional puppetry with Islamic teachings, and his wide influence across the Solo Raya region and Central Java. The selection of participants aimed to ensure the richness, relevance, and depth of the data collected.

The research instruments included semi-structured interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation protocols. The interview guidelines were designed to explore participants' perspectives on religious moderation, cultural da'wah, and the role of wayang in Islamic education. Observations were conducted to capture the context of performances, including the use of symbols, language, interaction patterns, and the delivery of religious messages. Documentation was used to complement primary data, including performance archives, scripts, photographs, and digital recordings. The indicators of these instruments were developed based on theoretical frameworks of religious moderation, Islamic education, and cultural da'wah, ensuring alignment between conceptual constructs and empirical data collection.

The validity and trustworthiness of the data were ensured through multiple strategies, including source triangulation, methodological triangulation, and member checking. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from different participants, while methodological triangulation involved the integration of interviews, observations, and documentation. Member checking was carried out by verifying the findings with participants to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of the interpretations. In addition, prolonged engagement and direct involvement in the field strengthened the credibility of the data. These procedures were

implemented to ensure the reliability, consistency, and scientific rigor of the research findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The data collection process was conducted systematically in several stages. The first stage involved preparation, including a literature review, instrument development, and the identification of research sites and participants. The second stage consisted of fieldwork, including in-depth interviews, direct observation of wayang dakwah performances, and the collection of supporting documents. The third stage involved data organization, including transcription of interview data and categorization of field notes. The process was iterative and flexible, allowing the researcher to adapt to emerging findings and capture the phenomenon comprehensively.

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994). During data reduction, raw data were selected, simplified, and organized according to the research focus. Data were then presented in the form of descriptive narratives and thematic categorizations to facilitate interpretation. The final stage involved drawing conclusions through continuous interpretation throughout the research process. The analysis also incorporated coding procedures, theme identification, and the integration of empirical findings with relevant theoretical frameworks, ensuring a systematic and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

This study adhered to ethical research principles by ensuring that all participants provided informed consent prior to their involvement. Participant confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, except in cases where individuals explicitly consented to be identified, such as Ki Sri Setyo as a public figure. All data were used solely for academic purposes and handled with strict confidentiality. Furthermore, the researcher maintained objectivity, transparency, and integrity throughout the research process, ensuring that the findings are credible and ethically sound.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

This section presents the primary findings of the study on the role of wayang dakwah in strengthening religious moderation and its contribution to the reconstruction of contemporary integrative Islamic education in Boyolali Regency. The results are organized to highlight key dimensions of the phenomenon, including the construction of cultural da'wah, the processes of value internalization within wayang performances, and the strategic role of the dalang as a socio-religious educator. Overall, the findings demonstrate that wayang dakwah functions as a dynamic cultural medium that integrates religious teachings with local traditions in a contextual, communicative, and transformative manner, thereby providing a meaningful foundation for developing culturally grounded and socially relevant Islamic education.

#### ***The Construction of Wayang-Based Cultural Da'wah in Boyolali Regency***

The findings of this study indicate that the construction of wayang-based cultural da'wah in Boyolali Regency functions not merely as an artistic performance, but as a dynamic space where religious messages, local cultural heritage, and contemporary social realities intersect. Based on in-depth interviews with ten dalang, wayang is understood as a medium of da'wah that possesses strong emotional, symbolic, and pedagogical dimensions. The dalang integrate narratives, local Javanese language, humor, social criticism, religious advice, and current social issues into a unified communicative performance. This integration enables religious messages to be conveyed in ways that are accessible and meaningful to the audience. The findings show that cultural da'wah operates through adaptive and contextual strategies rather than rigid doctrinal approaches. As a result, religious teachings are experienced as part of everyday life rather than as abstract concepts. This indicates that wayang serves as a living medium that bridges religious values and social reality.

The findings further reveal that the primary strength of wayang dakwah lies in its ability to bridge the gap between normative Islamic teachings and the lived experiences of society. Informants emphasized that rural and semi-urban communities in Boyolali are more receptive to religious messages when they are presented through familiar cultural symbols and narratives. In this context, wayang functions not only as a vehicle for da'wah but also as a framework through which individuals interpret and internalize religious values. The use of culturally embedded storytelling enhances emotional engagement and strengthens audience receptivity. This indicates that the effectiveness of

da'wah is closely related to its cultural relevance. Furthermore, the findings show that learning and value formation occur beyond formal educational settings and are embedded within socio-cultural interactions. Consequently, wayang dakwah serves as an alternative educational space that complements formal religious education.

Another significant finding highlights the role of Ki Sri Setyo as a central figure in the development of wayang dakwah in Boyolali. He is recognized by other informants as a dalang who successfully adapts traditional wayang structures into contemporary da'wah narratives. His performances maintain the essence of Javanese culture while incorporating relevant social issues and Islamic values. Rather than positioning religion and culture as opposing forces, he integrates them into a coherent interpretative framework. This integration allows wayang to operate simultaneously as a medium for cultural preservation, religious transmission, and social reflection. The findings indicate that such an approach enhances the relevance of da'wah in addressing contemporary challenges. It also demonstrates that cultural adaptation is essential for maintaining the sustainability of traditional media in modern contexts.

The communicative aspects of wayang dakwah are also evident in the strategic use of language, humor, and everyday symbols. Informants consistently emphasized that the use of local language and humor plays a crucial role in reducing the perceived distance between the speaker and the audience. Humor functions not only as entertainment but also as a pedagogical strategy that facilitates audience engagement and reflection. Through narrative and symbolic expression, complex religious ideas are conveyed in subtle and persuasive ways. This approach minimizes resistance and enhances acceptance among diverse audiences. The findings suggest that effective da'wah relies on communicative strategies that prioritize empathy and cultural sensitivity. As such, wayang dakwah represents a communicative model that emphasizes persuasion rather than coercion.

The findings also show that wayang-based da'wah is capable of contextualizing religious values within real-life social issues. Dalang frequently incorporate themes such as justice, leadership, poverty, social harmony, and youth challenges into their performances. This transforms the wayang stage into a space for social articulation rather than merely artistic expression. Informants noted that audiences tend to respond more positively to social criticism delivered through symbolic narratives than through formal sermons. This indicates that wayang dakwah has a transformative function in shaping social awareness and ethical reflection. The findings highlight the role of cultural media in facilitating critical engagement with societal issues. Consequently, wayang dakwah serves as both a medium of communication and a tool for social interpretation.

In addition, the study reveals that wayang dakwah is not confined to traditional performance settings but has expanded into digital platforms. Dalang, particularly Ki Sri Setyo, actively document and disseminate performances through online media. This development indicates a shift from localized cultural performances to broader public engagement. Despite this transformation, the core cultural and symbolic elements of wayang remain intact. The findings suggest that wayang dakwah has evolved into a hybrid model that combines traditional values with modern communication strategies. This adaptability enhances its relevance in contemporary society. Overall, the construction of wayang-based cultural da'wah in Boyolali is characterized by cultural legitimacy, communicative effectiveness, and transformative potential.

### ***The Internalization of Religious Moderation Values***

The findings demonstrate that the internalization of religious moderation values through wayang dakwah occurs through gradual and communicative cultural processes. Values are not delivered in explicit doctrinal forms but are embedded within narratives, characters, symbols, and emotional interactions. This approach enables audiences to engage with religious values in a reflective and experiential manner. The dalang play a central role in shaping how these values are interpreted and understood. The process of internalization involves both cognitive understanding and emotional engagement. As a result, religious moderation is experienced as a lived practice rather than a theoretical concept.

The study identifies several key values of moderation, including tolerance, nonviolence, justice, deliberation, and respect for local traditions. These values are conveyed implicitly through storylines and character development rather than direct instruction. Audiences learn through observing moral conflicts, character behavior, and narrative outcomes. This process encourages

reflection and critical thinking about social and religious issues. The findings indicate that storytelling is an effective method for value transmission. It allows audiences to internalize values without feeling coerced or instructed.

Tolerance emerges as one of the most prominent values in wayang dakwah performances. It is represented through characters that demonstrate respect for diversity and the ability to coexist peacefully. Differences are portrayed as natural and not necessarily sources of conflict. The dalang emphasize attitudes such as empathy, restraint, and mutual respect through dialogue and narrative. This approach fosters a broader understanding of tolerance beyond mere acceptance. Instead, tolerance is framed as an active engagement with diversity.

Nonviolence is another significant value highlighted in the findings. Violent behavior is consistently portrayed as a consequence of negative traits such as arrogance and uncontrolled desire. Characters who exhibit patience and self-control are depicted as morally superior. This narrative structure reinforces the idea that nonviolence is a fundamental ethical principle. The findings suggest that moral oppositions within narratives serve as powerful tools for value internalization. Audiences are guided to evaluate actions and consequences through symbolic representation.

### ***The Role of the Dalang***

The findings indicate that the dalang plays a multidimensional role that extends beyond artistic performance. He functions as an educator, communicator, cultural mediator, and moral authority. His influence is rooted in his ability to interpret and convey religious values through culturally relevant narratives. The dalang's authority is reinforced by his mastery of language, storytelling, and audience engagement. This positions him as a key figure in shaping public understanding of religious values. The roles of the dalang identified in this study are summarized in the following table.

**Table 1.** The Roles of the Dalang in Wayang Dakwah and Their Relevance to Integrative Islamic Education

<b>No.</b>	<b>Role of the Dalang</b>	<b>Manifestation in Field Practice</b>	<b>Relevance to Integrative Islamic Education</b>
1	Value educator	Incorporating messages of morality, tolerance, nonviolence, justice, and deliberation into narratives, dialogue, and moral advice	Connects the cognitive, affective, and ethical dimensions of Islamic learning
2	Cultural-religious mediator	Reworking <i>wayang</i> symbols and stories so that they align with Islamic messages without negating local culture	Encourages integration between religious texts and cultural context
3	Public communicator	Employing local Javanese, humor, satire, and everyday idioms so that messages are more easily received	Makes Islamic education more communicative, contextual, and grounded
4	Agent of religious moderation	Emphasizing harmonious coexistence, self-restraint, respect for difference, and the rejection of violence in the name of religion	Strengthens balanced and non-extreme religiosity
5	Guardian of tradition	Preserving the conventions, symbols, and cultural values of <i>wayang</i> while providing them with new and relevant meanings	Positions local tradition as a source of learning rather than an obstacle to education
6	Interpreter of social reality	Relating <i>wayang</i> narratives to current issues such as leadership, social conflict, youth, and public ethics	Makes Islamic education responsive to contemporary problems

7	Social role model	Being regarded publicly as a figure whose words are emulated and whose conduct is closely observed	Brings exemplarity to the fore as the core of Islamic character education
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## Discussion

The findings reveal that wayang dakwah operates as a cultural medium that transforms religious communication into a contextual and experiential learning process. This supports the theoretical perspective that religious moderation is not merely a doctrinal construct but a socially embedded practice shaped by interaction and cultural expression (Ammerman, 2020; Jeniva & Tanyid, 2025). The integration of narrative, symbolism, and emotional engagement demonstrates that learning occurs through lived experiences rather than abstract instruction. This aligns with the concept of culturally responsive education, which emphasizes the importance of contextual relevance in knowledge transmission (Hodgkinson-Williams & Trotter, 2018). Compared to previous studies that focus on formal educational settings, this study highlights the significance of informal cultural spaces as alternative pedagogical environments. This finding extends existing literature by demonstrating that cultural media can function as effective tools for internalizing complex religious values. It also suggests that educational strategies must move beyond institutional boundaries to remain relevant in contemporary society.

The communicative nature of wayang dakwah supports the argument that effective religious education requires dialogical and participatory approaches. The use of humor, local language, and symbolic narratives reflects a shift from authoritative teaching to interactive engagement. This is consistent with research emphasizing that intercultural dialogue enhances mutual understanding and reduces social tension (Johannessen & Skeie, 2019; Cooling, 2020). Unlike rigid doctrinal methods, the dialogical approach allows individuals to interpret values within their own socio-cultural context. This study confirms that communication strategies grounded in cultural familiarity significantly increase audience receptivity. It also provides empirical evidence that persuasive communication is more effective than coercive methods in promoting religious moderation. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on educational transformation in plural societies.

The internalization of moderation values through narrative structures demonstrates the importance of symbolic learning processes. The findings support the theoretical framework of character education, which emphasizes the integration of cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions (Harrison et al., 2020; Peterson, 2020). By presenting moral dilemmas and consequences through storytelling, wayang dakwah encourages reflective thinking and ethical reasoning. This approach differs from conventional methods that rely on direct instruction. It also aligns with previous studies indicating that value internalization is more effective when learners actively engage with meaningful experiences (Musyahid, 2023). The study extends this perspective by showing that cultural narratives can serve as powerful tools for ethical development. It highlights the potential of integrating traditional media into modern educational practices.

The findings related to tolerance and nonviolence reinforce existing research on the role of education in preventing extremism. The portrayal of moral oppositions within narratives provides a framework for evaluating ethical behavior. This aligns with studies on radicalization that emphasize the importance of counter-narratives in reducing extremist tendencies (Conway, 2021; Ohls et al., 2024). By presenting nonviolence as a moral ideal, wayang dakwah contributes to the development of peaceful social attitudes. Compared to formal interventions, this approach offers a more subtle and culturally embedded strategy for addressing extremism. It also highlights the role of cultural media in shaping public discourse. This finding suggests that prevention strategies should incorporate cultural elements to enhance effectiveness.

The role of the dalang as a central figure in value transmission supports the concept of social learning, where individuals learn through observation and interaction. The dalang's authority is not derived solely from knowledge but also from cultural legitimacy and social trust. This finding aligns with previous studies emphasizing the importance of role models in character formation (Sakti et al., 2024). The study extends this perspective by demonstrating that cultural figures can function as educators in non-formal contexts. It also highlights the need to recognize diverse educational actors beyond institutional settings. This contributes to the ongoing discussion on expanding the scope of

educational ecosystems. The findings suggest that collaboration between formal and informal educators can enhance learning outcomes.

The hybrid nature of wayang dakwah, combining traditional and digital elements, reflects broader trends in contemporary education. The adaptation of cultural practices to digital platforms demonstrates the flexibility and resilience of traditional media. This aligns with research on digital religion, which highlights the transformation of religious practices in online environments (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020). The study shows that cultural media can remain relevant by adapting to technological changes without losing their core values. This finding extends existing literature by providing empirical evidence of such adaptation in the context of Islamic education. It also underscores the importance of integrating technology into cultural education strategies. This has significant implications for future research and practice.

Finally, the reconstruction of integrative Islamic education through wayang dakwah offers a new conceptual framework that bridges religion, culture, and social practice. This study contributes to the theoretical development of Islamic education by emphasizing the importance of contextual and experiential learning. It addresses the gap in previous research that has largely focused on institutional approaches. By positioning cultural media as central to education, the study provides a novel perspective on curriculum development and pedagogical design. This contribution is particularly relevant in addressing contemporary challenges such as social fragmentation and cultural disconnection. Overall, the findings demonstrate that integrative approaches are essential for developing inclusive and sustainable educational systems.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that wayang dakwah in Boyolali Regency functions not merely as a traditional performance, but as an effective medium of cultural da'wah that contributes significantly to strengthening religious moderation. The findings demonstrate that religious values such as tolerance, nonviolence, justice, deliberation, respect for local tradition, and non-extreme religiosity are internalized through narrative, symbolic, and communicative processes embedded in wayang performances. These values are not transmitted in a rigid or doctrinal manner, but are experienced as part of lived cultural practices that engage cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions simultaneously. In this process, the dalang plays a central and strategic role, not only as a performer but also as a value educator, cultural mediator, and agent of moderation who bridges Islamic teachings with local cultural contexts. The presence of figures such as Ki Sri Setyo further illustrates how wayang dakwah can adapt to contemporary challenges while maintaining its cultural authenticity and social relevance.

Furthermore, the study highlights that wayang dakwah provides a strong foundation for reconstructing a paradigm of integrative Islamic education that is more contextual, dialogical, and culturally grounded. The findings indicate that effective religious education should not be limited to formal and textual approaches, but must also incorporate cultural media that are deeply embedded in the lived experiences of society. Through its ability to integrate religious, cultural, and social dimensions, wayang dakwah offers a transformative educational model that responds to contemporary challenges, including social fragmentation and the spread of extremism. Therefore, this study contributes both theoretically and practically by positioning cultural da'wah as a vital component in the development of inclusive and sustainable Islamic education. It affirms that strengthening religious moderation requires approaches that are not only normative but also experiential, participatory, and rooted in local wisdom.

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### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

AFW conceived the study, designed the research framework, conducted data collection and analysis, and prepared the initial draft of the manuscript. NA contributed to data interpretation, theoretical enrichment, language refinement, and critical revision of the manuscript. Both authors discussed the findings, approved the final version of the manuscript, and agreed to take full responsibility for the content of this article.

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