



Transformation of Local Wisdom in the Practice of Islamic Da'wah: A Socio-Cultural Analysis in South Sulawesi

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Abstract. This study analyzes the evolution of indigenous knowledge within the context of Islamic da'wah in South Sulawesi, focusing on social and cultural dimensions. This research is predicated on the premise that Islamic da'wah in South Sulawesi evolves within a social framework influenced by persistent local cultural values and traditions. In this context, local wisdom serves as both a cultural identity and a strategic vehicle for disseminating Islamic doctrines. This research seeks to examine the transformation of local wisdom within Islamic da'wah methods and to discern its social and cultural ramifications. The study utilized a qualitative methodology using a descriptive-analytical framework. Data were gathered by library research, observation, and comprehensive interviews with religious leaders, traditional leaders, and community people engaged in culturally oriented da'wah activities. The results indicate that the evolution of local wisdom transpires through the adaptation, accommodation, and reinterpretation of indigenous cultural values within the context of Islamic teachings. This method makes da'wah more acceptable to society, enhances social integration, protects local cultural identity, and encourages a moderate, inclusive, and contextual type of religiosity.

Keywords: Cultural; Islamic Da'wah; Local Wisdom; Practic; Social; Transformation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Da'wah in Islam constitutes a fundamental endeavor aimed at disseminating Islamic teachings and guiding individuals toward a life aligned with Islamic principles. However, da'wah does not occur within a cultural vacuum. Rather, it continuously interacts with the social realities, value systems, traditions, and cultural institutions of the society in which it operates. Consequently, the effectiveness of da'wah is determined not only by the substance of the message but also by the preacher's capacity to understand and engage with the socio-cultural context of the community (Hendra et al., 2023; Riandi & Rusdiyah, 2025).

In this regard, local wisdom emerges as a crucial element in the practice of Islamic da'wah, particularly in culturally rich regions such as South Sulawesi. The region is widely recognized for its enduring cultural heritage, which continues to be preserved and transmitted across generations. Core cultural values such as siri', pacce, sipakatau, sipakalebbi, and sipakainge function not merely as social norms but also as moral frameworks that regulate interpersonal and communal relationships. These values contribute to social cohesion, reinforce collective identity, and sustain social order within the community (Ardiyansyah et al., 2025; Purnamasari, 2024).

Historically, the encounter between Islam and local culture in South Sulawesi has generated a dynamic and adaptive pattern of interaction. Islamic teachings have not always supplanted local traditions; instead, they have often undergone processes of negotiation,

accommodation, and reinterpretation in relation to pre-existing cultural elements. This interaction reflects a broader pattern observed in the spread of Islam in Indonesia, where cultural adaptation has played a significant role in facilitating societal acceptance of da'wah (Mahfudh & Susetiyo, 2025; Purwoyuliyanto & Mujahid, 2025).

The development of Islamic da'wah in South Sulawesi reveals a dualistic tendency. On the one hand, there exists a normative-textual approach that emphasizes the purification of Islamic teachings by eliminating cultural elements perceived as incompatible with Islamic law. On the other hand, a cultural approach to da'wah seeks to utilize local traditions as a medium for conveying Islamic messages. This latter approach demonstrates that da'wah can become more persuasive, inclusive, and contextually relevant when it incorporates deeply rooted cultural values (Nuryani et al., 2019; Puspitasari, 2023).

Within this framework, the transformation of local wisdom becomes a significant subject of inquiry. This transformation not only reflects changes in the form and function of cultural practices within da'wah activities but also illustrates the reciprocal relationship between religion and culture in shaping patterns of religiosity in society. Local wisdom is not static; it evolves in response to shifting social conditions, religious interpretations, and external influences.

The urgency of examining this transformation is further amplified by contemporary social developments, including modernization, globalization, and the digitalization of da'wah media. These processes have altered the ways in which religious messages are produced, disseminated, and received. Additionally, the rise of more formalistic and puritanical religious trends has, in some cases, marginalized local traditions or compelled them to undergo reinterpretation in order to remain relevant (Soraya, 2025; Wahyudi, 2023; Yuwono et al., 2025).

This study is academically significant as it positions da'wah not merely as a theological activity but also as a socio-cultural practice embedded within broader processes of social transformation. From this perspective, da'wah is understood as a dynamic process involving the transmission of values that continuously interact with cultural identity, social structures, and changing societal contexts (Sanjani et al., 2023; Waheeda et al., 2025).

Accordingly, this research seeks to address the following questions: (1) how does the transformation of local wisdom manifest in the practice of Islamic da'wah in South Sulawesi; (2) how do local cultural values and Islamic teachings interact during the da'wah process; and (3) what are the socio-cultural implications of this transformation for community life? These questions are essential for understanding local wisdom not merely as a passive cultural

backdrop but as an active and dynamic force shaping the structure and substance of Islamic da'wah.

Previous studies have explored the relationship between Islam and local culture in the context of da'wah, religious traditions, and identity formation. Many findings indicate that the spread of Islam in Indonesia has largely been facilitated through cultural adaptation, enabling da'wah to be more readily accepted by local communities (Al Jauhariyah et al., 2025; Mustofa et al., 2024). Other studies highlight the role of local wisdom as a bridge connecting universal Islamic values with local social realities (Baharun et al., 2023; Zargar, 2026).

However, existing research often treats local wisdom as a complementary variable rather than as a central analytical focus. Moreover, limited attention has been given to examining the processes of transformation, adaptation, and reinterpretation of local wisdom within the specific socio-cultural context of South Sulawesi. Therefore, this study offers a distinct contribution by emphasizing local wisdom as a dynamic and integral component of da'wah practice.

Methodologically, this research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design. Data are collected through library research, observation of socio-religious practices, and in-depth interviews with religious leaders, traditional figures, and community members involved in culturally based da'wah activities. The data analysis process includes data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and conclusion drawing, aimed at generating a comprehensive understanding of the transformation of local wisdom and its socio-cultural implications.

Ultimately, this study argues that Islamic da'wah in South Sulawesi cannot be adequately understood solely through a normative-theological lens. Instead, it must be examined within its socio-cultural context, where local wisdom functions as a dynamic and evolving element. The interaction between Islam and local culture demonstrates that da'wah can be more effective when it engages constructively with local traditions without compromising core Islamic values. This reciprocal relationship contributes to the formation of a model of da'wah that is inclusive, moderate, and relevant to the contemporary realities of society.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a descriptive-analytical design to explore the transformation of local wisdom in the practice of Islamic da'wah in South Sulawesi. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate as this research seeks to understand social

phenomena, cultural meanings, and the dynamic interaction between religion and local traditions from the perspectives of the actors involved.

Research Design

The research is designed to capture the socio-cultural processes underlying the interaction between Islamic teachings and local wisdom. It focuses on how cultural values are adapted, negotiated, and reinterpreted within da'wah practices. The descriptive-analytical method enables the researcher to systematically describe empirical findings while interpreting their broader social and cultural significance.

Data Sources

The data used in this study consist of both primary and secondary sources:

a. Primary Data

Primary data are obtained through: a) In-depth interviews with religious leaders (*da'i*), traditional leaders, and community members who actively participate in culturally based da'wah activities. b) Participant observation of socio-religious practices, including religious gatherings, cultural rituals, and da'wah events that incorporate local wisdom.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data are collected through library research, including books, journal articles, and previous studies related to Islamic da'wah, local wisdom, and socio-cultural transformation.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is conducted using several techniques: a) Observation, to examine real-life practices of da'wah and the integration of local cultural values. b) Interviews, to obtain in-depth insights into participants' perspectives regarding the role and transformation of local wisdom in da'wah. c) Documentation, to gather written sources, archival materials, and relevant literature that support the analysis.

Data Analysis

The data are analyzed using an interactive model consisting of the following stages:

- a) Data Reduction – selecting, simplifying, and organizing raw data relevant to the research focus.
- b) Data Categorization – grouping data into themes such as forms of local wisdom, patterns of da'wah, and modes of cultural interaction.
- c) Data Interpretation – interpreting the meaning of the data by connecting empirical findings with theoretical perspectives on da'wah and culture.

- d) **Conclusion Drawing** – formulating conclusions regarding the transformation of local wisdom and its socio-cultural implications.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the credibility of the findings, this study applies data triangulation, combining multiple data sources and collection methods (interviews, observations, and documentation). In addition, source triangulation is used by comparing perspectives from different informants to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

Research Scope

This research is limited to the socio-cultural context of South Sulawesi, focusing on communities where local wisdom remains actively integrated into Islamic da'wah practices. The study emphasizes the processes of adaptation, negotiation, and reinterpretation of cultural values rather than measuring quantitative outcomes.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Transformation of Local Wisdom Values in Islamic Da'wah

The change in local wisdom values in Islamic da'wah in South Sulawesi shows how religious teachings and the culture of the local community interact with each other. Islamic da'wah does not arise in a vacuum; it engages with pre-existing value systems deeply rooted in society. In South Sulawesi, native values such *siri'*, *pacce*, *sipakatau*, *sipakalebbi*, and *sipakainge* are very important as moral guides for how people live together. Islam did not instantly get rid of these ideals. Instead, it encouraged reform, adaptation, and new interpretations so that they still fit with the teachings of Islam.

Changes in local values within da'wah practices can be apparent in the movement of cultural functions from being just social traditions to being means for delivering religious messages. For example, the virtue of *sipakatau*, which used to mean respecting other people in social situations, has grown in Islamic da'wah to mean respecting human dignity as a creature of God. Similarly, the virtue of *sipakalebbi*, which promotes mutual respect in local culture, has been included into the principles of da'wah, which are based on politeness, wisdom, and non-confrontational methods. So, Islamic da'wah doesn't break the cultural continuity of society; instead, it changes it within a religious framework.

The adaptation of local values transpires through a process of reconciliation between cultural aspects and Islamic teachings. In South Sulawesi, da'wah is generally done in a cultural way so that people can better understand Islamic messages. This method is used by taking into account the local people's language, symbols, customs, and social ties. In this context, the

significance of *siri'*, intrinsically linked to honor and dignity, is now comprehended not only within socio-cultural confines but also in accordance with Islamic principles on the preservation of dignity, morality, and personal accountability before God and society. This kind of adjustment makes da'wah more relevant to the community, because it uses a value system that the population already knows and respects to teach Islamic ideas.

Along with change and adaptation, transformation is also clear in how local values are reinterpreted. This new way of looking at things is vital since not all parts of local culture can be kept the same way they were before. Some traditions that used to have a lot of meaning are now reinterpreted so that they fit with the concepts of tauhid, morality, and Islamic law. People don't see local culture as a threat to religion in this process. Instead, they see it as a way to make Islamic ideals more relevant to daily life. For instance, the virtue of *pacce*, which is associated to solidarity, empathy, and humanity, takes on a new meaning when it is seen as a mirror of *ukhuwah*, helping each other, and caring for others in Islam. This way, local values become more religious without losing their social and cultural foundations.

In the end, this change shows that Islamic da'wah in South Sulawesi grows through a fruitful conversation between religion and culture. Changes, tweaks, and new interpretations of local values make da'wah easier for people to embrace because it doesn't seem strange to them. Instead, da'wah becomes an element of social life that honors local cultural uniqueness while steering it toward Islamic principles. The adaptation of local wisdom values in Islamic da'wah enhances its efficacy and fosters societal cohesion, cultural identity preservation, and the development of a moderate, inclusive, and contextual approach to religion in South Sulawesi.

The Interaction of Islamic Da'wah with Local Community Culture

The interplay between Islamic da'wah and the culture of the local community is a significant factor in the formation of a contextual pattern of da'wah. Da'wah is fundamentally focused not only on transmitting religious teachings in a normative context but also on comprehending the social and cultural realities of the targeted community. Islamic teachings evolved within the established cultural traditions of South Sulawesi civilization, which are strongly embedded in daily life. Consequently, the relationship between Islam and local culture should not be perceived as one of mutual negation, but rather as a dialogical process that facilitates reciprocal adaptation and reinforcement.

Islamic teachings, as a universal value system, encompass the ideas of tauhid, morality, justice, brotherhood, and public welfare, all designed to direct human existence. The people of South Sulawesi also have societal principles that influence their lives, such as *siri'*, *pacce*,

sipakatau, *sipakalebbi*, and *sipakainge*. These principles stress how important it is to have honor, be together, respect others, and be morally responsible in community life. In the practice of da'wah, the intersection of Islamic principles and local cultural norms produces a contextual approach to da'wah that is more readily embraced by society.

The connection between Islamic teachings and local culture is clear in the way da'wah is given through methods that take into account the local language, symbols, customs, and social systems. Da'wah is not always done through formal, one-way speeches. It can also be done through good behavior, social interactions, religious traditions, and cultural events that the community is already familiar with. In this context, local culture serves as a social conduit that integrates Islamic beliefs, rendering them familiar rather than alien. This approach demonstrates that effective da'wah is not alone that which is normatively correct, but also that which can articulate within the community's framework of thought and cultural experience.

When Islamic teachings are not forced on people, but are instead shared through local values that are very similar to those teachings, a contextual pattern of da'wah is created. For example, the Islamic principle of respecting others might be linked to the value of *sipakatau*, which stresses respect for other people. The concept of *pacce*, encompassing empathy and social solidarity, aligns with the Islamic ideals of *ukhuwah* and mutual help. In the same way, the value of *siri'*, which has to do with honor and dignity, can be combined with Islamic teachings on keeping your self-respect, morality, and sense of duty. In this way, da'wah is accepted not just as a religious message, but also as something that fits in with the community's ideals.

But the relationship between Islamic da'wah and local culture doesn't always go smoothly. In various instances, specific traditions are deemed need reinterpretation to conform to Islamic standards. At this juncture, the function of da'wah becomes essential, not in the outright rejection of culture, but in the processes of selection, filtering, and reinterpretation of the evolving cultural aspects. In this approach, Islamic teachings can still be the core ideals that guide societal transformation, while local culture can still be a sign of communal identity.

So, the way Islamic teachings and local cultural traditions in South Sulawesi society affect each other shows a pattern of interaction. Islamic da'wah achieves more acceptance when conveyed through a contextual cultural framework, while local culture receives affirmation of significance through its amalgamation with Islamic ideals. This kind of da'wah not only brings Islamic teachings closer to people, but it also helps people build a social life that is peaceful, religious, and based on culture. Consequently, the interplay between Islamic da'wah and local

culture must be recognized as a crucial basis for the evolution of da'wah that is inclusive, moderate, and aligned with societal requirements.

Socio Cultural Implications of Local Wisdom-Based Da'wah

Da'wah based on local wisdom has a big effect on the social, cultural, and religious life of society. This is because this type of da'wah not only focuses on the correct way to teach Islamic teachings, but it also takes into account cultural values that have been around for a long time and are deeply ingrained in the community. Utilizing local wisdom as a conduit for da'wah enables the presentation of Islamic teachings in a manner that is more relatable, grounded, and comprehensible for society. In this setting, da'wah is not seen as something strange or as a force that goes against tradition. Instead, it is seen as a way to guide people that fits in with the social and cultural identity of the local community.

In social life, da'wah that is founded on local knowledge helps bring people together and keep the peace. Islamic teachings on *ukhuwah*, mutual help, and justice can be combined with local values that stress respect, solidarity, togetherness, and social responsibility. This integration makes da'wah serve not only as a way to teach people about religion, but also as a way to improve social ties. People are more likely to listen to da'wah messages when they are taught through ideals that are already familiar to them in their daily lives. So, da'wah that is founded on local wisdom can bring Islamic teachings and social realities closer together while also making community life more peaceful. In the cultural realm, da'wah grounded in local wisdom also aids in the preservation of the community's unique identity.

This is significant as the forces of modernization and globalization frequently provoke apprehensions regarding the deterioration of local customs. In a da'wah approach that respects culture, local beliefs are not seen as barriers to Islamic teachings but as things that may be made to work with Islamic principles. Islamic teachings offer new meaning to traditions, symbols, language, and local norms that are still important. This way, local culture can still exist in society without losing its moral and spiritual direction. In this situation, da'wah serves as a way not just of providing religious guidance to society but also of preserving the continuation of cultural heritage that constitutes the community's collective identity.

In the realm of religious life, da'wah informed by local wisdom promotes the development of a more moderate, inclusive, and contextually relevant expression of Islamic religiosity. This method helps people see Islam as a religion that can talk to other cultures, instead of as a set of rules that are always strict and aggressive. People who get culturally based da'wah tend to have a more open-minded view of religion when it comes to social interactions, but they still follow the core principles of Islam. This is vital for developing a religious mindset

that is not immediately exclusive, does not soon reject tradition, and does not rapidly see local culture as something that goes against religion. In this approach, da'wah that is based on local knowledge might make a type of religious practice that is more peaceful, flexible, and in line with what society wants.

But the effect of da'wah based on local wisdom also means that you need to be careful while choosing and understanding cultural factors. Not all elements of culture can be embraced uncritically; so, reinterpretation is necessary to align with the tenets of tauhid, Islamic law, and morality. In this sense, religious and traditional authorities have a very significant role in making sure that religion and culture come together in a balanced way. If this process is done right, da'wah based on local expertise will not only make people more accepting of each other, but it will also find a balance between keeping cultural traditions alive and developing Islamic ideals.

So, it is clear that da'wah based on local wisdom has a big impact on how people live in society. In the social realm, it fortifies harmony and unity; in the cultural domain, it maintains the continuity of local identity; and in the theological context, it cultivates a moderate and contextual interpretation of Islam. So, da'wah based on local wisdom is not just a way to teach people about religion; it is also a way to change society and culture in a way that is relevant to the lives of people.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the evolution of local wisdom in the practice of Islamic da'wah in South Sulawesi is a dynamic process influenced by the interplay between Islamic teachings and local cultural traditions. Local wisdom is not only kept as cultural heritage but is also continually adapted, reinterpreted, and incorporated into da'wah activities in ways that remain pertinent to the community's social existence. Respect, solidarity, honor, and mutual care are fundamental cultural values that help people understand Islamic beliefs in a more relevant way. The results show that da'wah based on local wisdom is very helpful for keeping peace in society, preserving culture, and developing a moderate view of religion. Islamic da'wah is easier for people to accept and understand when it uses local cultural values as a strategic medium. This method also helps people get along better and keeps local identity strong even when socioeconomic conditions change. The study also shows that religion and culture don't always clash; they can also work together in a positive way. Consequently, the adaptation of indigenous wisdom in Islamic da'wah illustrates that culturally informed da'wah

serves as an effective, inclusive, and socially pertinent methodology for modern Muslim society in South Sulawesi.

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