

## Integrating Islamic Values into the Culture of the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School

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**Keywords:** Culture, Integration, Islamic Values.

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**Abstract:** This research focuses on the origins of the culture that developed at the Sunan Drajat Islamic boarding school, the process of integrating Islamic values into the culture, and the benefits of integrating Islamic values into the lives of the students and the surrounding community. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical. The results show that the *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* culture emerged from KH. Abdul Ghofur's idea to continue Sunan Drajat *dakwah* through the medium of gamelan GASPI emerged from the harsh social conditions of the community, and Singo Mengkok barongsai emerged to fill the void during the series of grand haul events. The process of integrating Islamic values was carried out through several strategies. *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* through lyrics and musical compositions, GASPI through movements and routine worship activities, and barongsai through the instilling of moderate Islamic values and tolerance. This integration provides significant benefits in the form of increased religious awareness, strengthening of faith, sharia, and morals, as well as fostering cooperation and responsibility among students and the community.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini berfokus pada asal usul budaya yang berkembang di Pondok Pesantren Sunan Drajat, proses pengintegrasian nilai-nilai Islam ke dalam budaya, manfaat pengintegrasian nilai-nilai Islam bagi kehidupan para santri dan masyarakat sekitar. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa budaya karawitan Joyo Samudro muncul dari gagasan KH. Abdul Ghofur untuk melanjutkan dakwah Sunan Drajat melalui media gamelan. GASPI muncul dari kondisi sosial masyarakat yang terkenal keras. Barongsai Singo Mengkok muncul untuk mengisi kekosongan selama rangkaian acara haul akbar. Proses pengintegrasian nilai-nilai Islam dilakukan melalui beberapa strategi. Karawitan Joyo Samudro melalui lirik dan komposisi musik, GASPI melalui gerakan dan kegiatan ibadah rutin, dan barongsai melalui penanaman nilai-nilai Islam moderat dan toleransi. Integrasi ini memberikan manfaat yang signifikan berupa peningkatan kesadaran beragama, penguatan iman, syariat, dan akhlak, serta pembinaan kerja sama dan tanggung jawab antar siswa dan masyarakat.



## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is famous for its religious and cultural diversity. The religions recognized in Indonesia are Islam, Christianity, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. With a multicultural society, the integration of Islamic values into local culture is an important issue in Islamic education and socio-religious studies (Mukhlisin, 2020). When Islam arrived, the archipelago already had a diversity of cultures, so Islam gave the community freedom to practice their culture and then internalize Islamic values to strengthen the faith of the people and strengthen the existing culture in a society that coexisted with religious teachings, requiring a non-confrontational, but dialogical and contextual approach to *dakwah* and education (Nurdin, 2016).

In such situations, Islamic preaching is not enough to be done individually, but requires a forum that is able to instill religious values in a focused and sustainable manner. A dialogical and contextual approach requires institutions that understand Islamic teachings as well as the social and cultural conditions of society. Therefore, Islamic educational institutions serve as an important means in the process of internalizing Islamic values, so that religious teachings are not only understood theoretically, but also practiced in daily life without causing conflict with local culture.

In this context, Islamic boarding schools, as Islamic educational institutions that have long existed in Indonesia for 500 years, have a strategic role in bridging Islamic teachings with the cultural traditions of the community (Sadono, 2023). Islamic boarding schools not only function as centers for the transmission of Islamic knowledge, but also as social spaces where the processes of acculturation and cultural integration take place continuously, so that Islam can be understood and practiced in a peaceful, tolerant, and down-to-earth manner.

Some studies show that local culture can serve as an effective medium for the internalization of Islamic educational values. Research (Wardani, 2019) proves that *karawitan* art can be a means of instilling the values of faith, worship, and morals through indirect approaches such as habituation, exemplary behavior, and historical and philosophical understanding of traditional arts. These findings confirm that cultural arts are not merely aesthetic expressions, but also a medium for teaching values and shaping the religious character of students. However, this research is still limited to the context of formal schools and only examines one form of culture, so it does not yet describe the integration of Islamic values in a more complex and communal Islamic educational environment, such as an Islamic boarding school.

Another relevant study was conducted by (Muslimin dkk., 2023), which examined the internalization of Islamic educational values in the Pagar Nusa pencak silat organization. This study found that the values of *i'tiqādiyyah*, *khuluqīyyah*, and *'amaliyyah* were internalized through pencak silat training activities combined with religious practices such as congregational prayers, recitation of the Qur'an, *istighotsah*, and respect for teachers. This study confirms that pencak silat not only serves as a means of physical training but also as a vehicle for Islamic character building. However, the study focuses more on socio-religious organizations. It does not specifically place Islamic

boarding schools as spaces for the integration of Islamic culture and values that are systemic and institutional in nature.

In the context of integrating Islamic values and local culture into a broader social sphere (Saimima, 2023) research, published in the journal *Pendidikan Perdamaian* (Peace Education): Integration of Islamic Values and Local Culture in Building Harmony in Maluku shows that traditions such as *Pela*, *Gandong*, *Iluwe*, *Masohi*, and *Sasi* on Saparua Island contain values of mutual assistance, brotherhood, and cooperation that are in line with the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. This local wisdom has proven to be effective as a medium for building solidarity and social peace. This finding confirms that local culture can be a strategic instrument in maintaining social harmony based on Islamic values.

Furthermore, cultural integration and religious values are also evident (Ansari, 2018) research through the journal *Cultural Accommodation as a Model for the Acceptance of Barongsai Art*. This research explains that the development of *Barongsai* and *Liong* in Surakarta became a model of inclusive integration between Chinese and Javanese cultures after the New Order. Through the process of cultural accommodation, dialogue and adaptation took place without eliminating the original identity, so that *Barongsai* art functioned not only as a ritual, but also as a medium for cross-ethnic and religious social integration.

This study was further reinforced (Khusniyyah, 2023) research entitled *The History and Function of Barongsai Singo Drojat at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School*, which shows that *Barongsai Singo Drojat* at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School was established as a medium for preaching and practicing the teachings of *hablun minannas*. This research confirms that *barongsai* is not only a means of preserving Chinese culture, but also a medium for teaching Islamic values, entertainment, and a means of strengthening cross-ethnic cooperation in the context of Islamic boarding schools.

Based on a review of previous studies, it can be concluded that studies on the integration of Islamic educational values through culture tend to be partial, either because they only examine one form of culture or because they are conducted outside the context of Islamic boarding schools. In fact, Islamic boarding schools have epistemological and cultural characteristics that enable the integration of Islamic values with various cultural expressions simultaneously and continuously. In addition, there has not been much research that examines the origins of culture, the process of integrating Islamic values, and its holistic benefits for *santri* and the surrounding community within a single, comprehensive framework.

Therefore, this study offers a new contribution by examining the integration of Islamic educational values in cultural practices developed at the Sunan Drajat Islamic boarding school, placing the boarding school as a dynamic social space, not merely an institution for the transmission of Islamic knowledge. Unlike previous studies, which generally only examined one form of culture in a limited context, this study focuses on the *pesantren* environment as a systemic and communal space of integration. Specifically, this study aims to analyze the origins of the culture that has developed in the *pesantren*,

explain the process of integrating Islamic educational values into these cultural practices, and examine the benefits of this integration for the character building of santri and the harmonization of social life in the pesantren environment and the surrounding community.

## **METHOD**

This study uses qualitative research with a descriptive analytical approach. Qualitative research methods are research procedures that produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior (I Wayan Suwendra, 2018). This study is qualitative in nature because its main focus is to comprehensively and contextually understand religious and cultural phenomena, particularly how Islamic values are integrated into the culture of daily life at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School. Descriptive research is research that aims to provide an overview, explanation, and validation of the phenomenon being studied. Qualitative research is used to explore the meanings, perceptions, and views of students, teachers, the community, and cultural administrators. The descriptive analytical approach in this study serves to describe in detail the phenomena that occur, as well as their benefits to the lives of students and the surrounding community.

Data sources are anything that can provide information about data (Saputra, 2023). Data sources are divided into two types, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources are data sources obtained directly from the main source or object that is the focus of the research (first-hand) (Haryono, 2023). In this study, the primary research data consists of teachers, students, cultural administrators, and the surrounding community at the Sunan Drajat Islamic boarding school. Furthermore, secondary data sources are supporting data other than primary data, which are used as supporting material in the research discussion (Sulung & Muspawi, 2024). In this study, literature, articles, journals, and online sources related to the topic of integrating Islamic values into culture were used as secondary data sources.

The location of this research was at the Sunan Drajat Paciran Lamongan Islamic Boarding School for a period of 3 months, from December to February. Data collection techniques included interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were semi-structured and used snowball sampling techniques. A semi-structured interview is a type of in-depth interview that aims to explore issues more deeply and openly (Andina, 2019). Interviews were conducted with administrators of pencak silat, karawitan, and barongsai, students, the surrounding community, and teachers at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School. The observation used passive participatory observation, where the researcher did not participate in the observed activities but only acted as an observer (Andina, 2019). This observation was used to observe the cultural activities of karawitan, barongsai, and pencak silat. Documentation was used to explore data on teaching materials etc.

The analysis technique used Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's data analysis model, namely, first, data collection, in which the researcher explored in general to obtain more data on the cultures of lion dance, pencak silat, and karawitan, so that more and varied

data could be obtained. In this study, observations were conducted at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School to observe various cultural activities. Interviews were conducted in person and via mobile media with several parties who participated in various cultural activities and communities. Second, data condensation refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming data. Because the data found in the field was quite extensive, this study focused on integration, Islamic cultural values, and the benefits of integration. Third, data display refers to the presentation of data in the form of a brief description of the integration of Islamic values into the culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School. Fourth, conclusion drawing refers to concluding the data that has been explained, from the data obtained from the research (Aldino dkk., 2020).

The validity of the data used in this study is triangulation technique, which combines interviews, observation, and documentation (Sugiyono, 2021). For example, data is obtained through interviews with cultural administrators about the integration of Islamic values into culture, then verified with data from observations during the cultural learning process, and then reinforced with documents such as cultural teaching materials.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

#### **The Origins of Culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School**

The *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School began with an initiative by nine students in 2013. Their goal was to realize KH. Abdul Ghofur's desire to preserve the karawitan culture as a medium for preaching, as was the tradition of Sunan Drajat through the Singo Mengkok gamelan. In the early stages, this activity was carried out with simple equipment and self-financing, as well as learning gradually by seeking karawitan teachers in the Modo area, Lamongan. In 2014, the karawitan activity received full support from the boarding school's caretaker in the form of a gamelan set. The year 2015 was a turning point when this karawitan was officially named "*Joyo Samudro*" and performed for the first time at the inauguration ceremony of *Mbah Mayang Madu's* tomb. Since 2017, *Joyo Samudro* has grown rapidly and performed in various regions. In 2019, it was even featured on a television program themed around tetembangan. Observational data show that the sustainability of this culture is supported by a consistent system of training and regeneration of *santri*.

The *GASPI (Gabungan Silat Pemuda Islam) pencak silat* culture has an earlier historical background and is closely related to the social conditions of the coastal community of Lamongan in the 1970s. GASPI was founded by KH. Abdul Ghofur in 1972 and was officially recognized by the government in 1977 as a response to the rampant violence, gambling, and prostitution in the region. In the early days, pencak silat was used as a medium of *dakwah* (proselytizing) to attract the interest of people who were still considered *abangan* (non-practicing Muslims) so that they would be drawn to Islamic teachings. Pencak silat training was accompanied by the requirement to perform religious duties, particularly prayer and recitation, so that pencak silat served as a means of religious guidance. Since 2012, GASPI has experienced significant development by

participating in various inter-regional competitions and achieving success, as well as evolving into a structured organization with a management system and ongoing training programs.

Meanwhile, the *Singo Drojat* lion dance culture began to develop in the Islamic boarding school environment in 2011. This culture originated from Mr. Fattah's initiative in response to the absence of lion dance performances at the grand haul of Sunan Drajat, so he formed an independent lion dance group involving students. In the early stages, this group was called Abahir Dragon and Lion Dance and was active in the Abu Hurairoh Dormitory. When it first appeared, lion dance received negative responses because it was considered incompatible with Islamic culture. However, after gaining support from KH. Abdul Ghofur and providing an understanding that lion dance was studied as a cultural expression, not a religious practice, this culture began to be accepted and facilitated by Islamic boarding schools. In 2016, the group's name was changed to *Singo Drojat* as a symbol of the pesantren's strength and identity. Since 2022, *Singo Drojat* has grown rapidly and performed at various national and international events. Observations show that Singo Drojat's lion dance serves as a symbol of religious moderation and the pesantren's openness to cultural diversity.

## **Integration of Islamic Values into Culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School**

### **Integration of Islamic Values into *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* Culture**

*Joyo Samudro Karawitan* culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School has been strongly integrated with Islamic values, both in terms of content, practice, and ethics. The integration of Islamic values is carried out through the packaging of song lyrics that are rich in religious messages and the instilling of manners in music. The songs performed contain invitations to pray on time, read the Qur'an, Hadith, *ijma'*, and *qiyas*, as well as character building in accordance with the stages of human development. Macapat songs such as Sinom, Kinanthi, Asmarandana, and Dhandhanggula are interpreted as a medium for moral and spiritual education that is relevant to Islamic teachings.

In addition to the lyrics, Islamic values are also integrated through the symbolism of the gamelan structure. The slendro scale is interpreted as representing the oneness of Allah, the relationship between humans and God, the pillars of Islam, and the pillars of faith. In contrast, the additional scales are understood as symbols of *tawakal* (trust in God) and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood). Karawitan practices in Islamic boarding schools strictly avoid elements that contradict Sharia law, such as the use of incense or mystical rituals. They are replaced with recitations of prayers before performances. As performers of karawitan, santri are trained in discipline, modesty in dress, and moral responsibility, so that *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* functions as a medium of cultural *dakwah* that is gentle, educational, and still Islamic in nature.

### **Integration of Islamic Values into the Culture of *GASPI Pencak Silat***

*GASPI (Gabungan Silat Pemuda Islam) pencak silat* integrates Islamic values comprehensively into its movements, training rituals, and member development system. *GASPI pencak silat* movements are characterized by Islamic symbols, such as moves named after Allah, Muhammad, Asmaul Husna, and *Laa ilaha illallah*. Each move is not only interpreted as a self-defense technique, but also as a form of remembrance and strengthening of faith.

The integration of Islamic values in *GASPI* is also reflected in the spiritual activities that accompany training, such as *wirid*, congregational prayers, *istighasah*, night prayers, and studies of the books of *tauhid*, *fiqh*, and *akhlak*. The training principles that emphasize hard work, breath control accompanied by *zikr*, and inner focus are interpreted as an effort to balance physical and spiritual strength. Sharia and moral values are internalized concretely through level advancement tests, which not only test physical abilities but also memorization of the Qur'an, prayers, and worship practices. Thus, *GASPI pencak silat* is positioned as a means of character building for *santri*, emphasizing that true strength comes from faith and submission to Allah SWT.

### **Integration of Islamic Values into the Culture of *Singo Drojat Lion Dance***

The *Singo Drojat* lion dance culture is a form of cultural *dakwah* innovation that integrates Islamic values into cross-ethnic cultures. The lion dance, which is synonymous with Chinese tradition, is packaged within a moderate Islamic framework that emphasizes the values of tolerance, morality, and togetherness. Practices that are not in line with Islamic teachings, such as worship rituals using incense, are replaced with Islamic prayers before practice and performances.

The integration of Islamic values in *Singo Drojat* lion dance focuses more on the aspect of morals. Students are trained to apply the attitudes of humility, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and mutual respect for religious and cultural differences. Interaction with lion dance groups from non-Muslim backgrounds is used as a means of learning *hablun minannas* values, without sacrificing the principles of faith. *Barongsai* activities also instill concern for environmental cleanliness as part of faith and discipline in performing worship, such as stopping activities when it is time for prayer. Thus, *Singo Drojat barongsai* serves as a medium for character education that reinforces the message of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*.

### **The Benefits of Integrating Islamic Values into the Culture of the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School in the Lives of Students and the Surrounding Community. The Benefits of Integrating Islamic Values into the Culture of Karawitan Joyo Samudro**

The integration of Islamic values into the Joyo Samudro gamelan culture provides significant benefits for the character building of *santri* and their social relationships with the surrounding community. For *santri*, karawitan activities shape attitudes of politeness, flexibility, discipline, and responsibility through learning gamelan techniques, macapat songs, and understanding philosophical values based on Islamic teachings. Faith and

moral values are strengthened through Islamic messages in songs that encourage the application of *hablun minallah and hablun minannas* in daily life.

For the surrounding community, Joyo Samudro's karawitan serves as a subtle and inclusive medium for cultural *dakwah*. The Islamic-themed songs encourage increased religious awareness, such as praying on time and reading the Qur'an. This integration strengthens the synergy between the pesantren and the community and creates a more religious, harmonious, and moral social environment.

### **Benefits of Integrating Islamic Values into GASPI Pencak Silat Culture**

The integration of Islamic values into GASPI pencak silat culture has a strong positive impact on the lives of students and the community. For santri, every training session accompanied by dzikir, wirid, congregational prayers, and book studies strengthens their tauhid and builds spiritual discipline. The non-coercive nature of the training process allows santri, including those from less religious families, to gradually become accustomed to practicing their faith and loving Islamic teachings.

In terms of character, GASPI shapes students to be humble, respectful of teachers and parents, and highly socially conscious. For the community, the existence of GASPI creates a sense of security and harmony because there are no conflicts between members. In addition, social activities such as mass traditional medicine treatments demonstrate GASPI's social concern and strengthen positive relationships between Islamic boarding schools and the surrounding community.

### **Benefits of Integrating Islamic Values into the *Singo Drojat* Lion Dance Culture**

The integration of Islamic values into the *Singo Drojat* lion dance culture provides benefits in shaping moderate, tolerant, and disciplined attitudes among students. Through lion dance training and performances, students are accustomed to being responsible, working together, and respecting differences in beliefs without neglecting the principles of Islamic faith. Discipline in terms of time and worship is maintained even though students are involved in cultural activities.

For the surrounding community, *Singo Drojat* lion dance plays a role in building an understanding of moderate Islam and eliminating negative stigmas against non-Muslim cultures. Lion dance performances serve as a means of entertainment as well as a medium for social learning that fosters openness, inclusiveness, and harmony. Thus, the integration of Islamic values in lion dance contributes to the creation of a peaceful and mutually respectful social life.

## **Discussion**

### **The Origins of Culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School**

The origins of the *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* culture show that the boarding school consciously revived Sunan Drajat's cultural *dakwah* through gamelan as a medium for Islamic education and preaching. This finding reinforces the view that traditional Javanese art has a strong pedagogical and spiritual function, as explained in a study of Singo Mengkok gamelan, which is a legacy of Sunan Drajat as a medium for Islamic

preaching in the 15th century and is one of the important symbols of the fusion of culture and religion in the history of the spread of Islam in Java (Sulistiyani & Sunarmi, 2023).

In practice, karawitan training not only develops musical skills, but also shapes the character of students through time discipline, consistency in practice, and the ability to listen and harmonize with the rhythm of the group. Each player is required not to stand out excessively, so that the values of patience, precision, and ego control grow naturally. The harmony between instruments teaches that beauty comes from cooperation, not individual domination. The internality of the religious lyrics in the songs played also strengthens religious understanding emotionally and aesthetically, so that the moral message is more memorable than verbal lectures alone. Socially, involvement in karawitan contributes to a reduction in aggressive behavior, an increase in self-confidence, and the growth of pride in a culturally friendly Islamic identity.

However, in the context of Islamic thought, the presence of music still draws pros and cons. Some scholars view music as part of art that can strengthen spirituality as long as it does not contain elements of immorality and does not neglect religious obligations. This view is seen, for example, in the thoughts of Al-Ghazali, who allows music as long as it brings spiritual benefits. Conversely, figures such as Ibn Taymiyyah and some contemporary Salafi scholars tend to absolutely prohibit music because it is considered to have the potential to corrupt morals and faith (Satra dkk., 2025). These differing views have influenced the attitudes of some Javanese Muslims who are prejudiced against local culture, considering it synonymous with mysticism, spiritualism, or *bid'ah* (innovation) and even *kufur* (disbelief) (Widiantoro, 2019).

However, from an integrative perspective between religion and culture, the two should not be viewed as dichotomous opposites. Religion provides a normative framework for assessing the substance and purpose of a cultural practice, while culture becomes a medium for expressing religious values in a concrete social context. As long as karawitan art is directed towards educational, missionary, and moral guidance purposes and does not contain elements that contradict the principles of sharia, it can be positioned as a medium in Islamic education. Thus, religion and culture can coexist and reinforce each other, where culture becomes a means of contextualizing Islamic teachings, while religion provides the spirit and value orientation for cultural practices in the pesantren environment.

In the contemporary context, *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* does not stop at preserving cultural artifacts, but is transformed into a living educational practice, involving santri as active subjects. *Joyo Samudro* means *Joyo Jayaneng Santri Sunan Drajat*. This process affirms the theory of cultural *dakwah*, which states that Islamic values can be effectively transmitted through local cultural mediums that are familiar to the community. This is in line with research showing that karawitan has a dual function, namely to spread Islam and cultural activities. In addition, Islamic boarding schools act as agents of cultural transformation, not merely guardians of tradition (Muizzuddin & dkk., 2023).

In the GASPI pencak silat culture, research shows that its origins are closely related to contextual *dakwah* strategies for social problems, such as violence, gambling, and low awareness of worship. These findings are in line with the theory of pencak silat

as a cultural product that serves to maintain the balance of individuals and society, as explained in the literature on pencak silat as a system of physical, mental, and social education (Muhtar, 2020). However, in social reality, martial arts practices do not always run ideally as per their normative concepts. In several contexts, pencak silat has undergone a shift in meaning from a means of moral and spiritual development to a symbol of group superiority, an arena for displaying strength, and even a trigger for intergroup fighting. Self-defense, which should train self-control and noble character, can instead be misused to build collective arrogance and social conflict (Pratiwi & Fauzi, 2023).

Philosophically speaking, pencak silat originated in Indonesia as a martial art that emphasizes self-defense, protection of others, and the development of a humble and responsible knightly character. Martial arts are essentially important for protecting oneself from threats, training discipline, strengthening the mind, and fostering social solidarity, not for attacking or demeaning others (Pratama & Trilaksana, 2018).

In this context, the uniqueness of GASPI lies in its non-sectarian approach and emphasis on Islamic values as a shared identity, which differs from the egocentric tendencies of some martial arts schools. Thus, GASPI can be understood as a pencak silat education model that returns the orientation of self-defense to its original function: forming moral strength, strengthening ukhuwah (brotherhood), and becoming an instrument for the moral reconstruction of Islamic youth, rather than a means of social conflict.

Meanwhile, the origins of the *Singo Drojat* lion dance culture show a more complex dynamic of cultural acculturation. Barongsai is historically closely associated with Chinese traditions and Confucian rituals (Islam & Hidayat, 2022), but *Singo Drojat* underwent a process of reinterpretation in the pesantren environment, showing that pesantren do not reject outside cultures a priori, but rather select and transform values to align with the principles of moderate Islam. This process is in line with the theory of multiculturalism, which emphasizes the importance of cultural openness while maintaining identity (Munif, 2018).

In practice, the art of lion dance is used as a communicative and inclusive medium for cultural *dakwah*; through attractive and familiar performances in the midst of a diverse community, Islamic boarding schools convey the values of monotheism, discipline in worship, noble character, and tolerance in a persuasive manner without a confrontational approach. Thus, *dakwah* is not only interpreted as verbal lectures but also as cultural practices that integrate the values of faith, sharia, and morals in the public sphere. This strategy strengthens the image of Islam as a religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin that is adaptive to culture, while also demonstrating the ability of Islamic boarding schools to respond to pluralistic social realities wisely and constructively.

The cultural origins of the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School reflect a dynamic, contextual, and transformative model of culture-based Islamic education. Pesantren not only preserves culture, but also actively reconstructs cultural meanings as a means of *dakwah*, character education, and strengthening an inclusive Islamic-Javanese identity. The theoretical contribution of this research lies in strengthening the paradigm that

pesantren can be a space for dialogue between Islam and local and global cultures, while offering a model of cultural *dakwah* that is relevant to the development of Islamic education in a multicultural society.

### **Integration of Islamic Values into Culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School**

#### **Integration of Islamic Values into *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* Culture**

In *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* culture, the integration of Islamic values demonstrates a transformative model of cultural *dakwah*. The value of faith is internalized through the symbolism of slendro gamelan notation, which consists of beats 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6, which are interpreted as representations of the oneness of Allah (1), the Prophet Muhammad and His creations (2), Allah, the Prophet Muhammad and all creatures (3), the pillars of Islam {5}, and the pillars of faith (6). In contrast, Sharia values are instilled through song lyrics that explicitly remind listeners of the obligation to pray and the discipline of worship. Research by Vitrotun Hasanah, Abdul Majid, and Pradita Ayu Suwandari reinforces this finding by showing that the songs used in karawitan contain Islamic values, namely the song titled *pepiling*, which means being invited together to remind each other and perform worship when the time comes (Hasanah & Majid, 2025).

Table 1.  
Songs sung by Joyo Samudro

Song Title	The value contained
<i>Pepiling</i>	together, they are encouraged to remind each other and perform their religious duties when the time comes
<i>Wasiat Kanjeng Sunan Drajat Kinanthi</i>	assisting others in need Advice to speak kindly and refrain from using harsh words
<i>Dhandhinggula</i>	A stable, happy life, achieving one's goals
<i>Maskumambang</i>	The human phase is still in the womb.
<i>Sinom</i>	A period of hopeful growth

The slendro notation consists of 17 notes, which means that 17 rakaats must be performed. As research shows, gamelan slendro has notations of 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6, which add up to 17, representing the number of rakaats of prayer in a day, which is 17 rakaats. Then, 17 Ramadan is nuzulul Qur'an (Roziqin, 2020). Moral values are embodied through messages of social awareness, ethical music training, and songs, one of which is the song *wasiat kanjeng Sunan Drajat*, which conveys social awareness. The karawitan players are santri who have been trained in the values of politeness, discipline, and a strong understanding of religion. Some of them are even memorizers of the Qur'an and Alfiyah. This is in line with research stating that in karawitan culture, members are taught to be polite, disciplined, and responsible with the instruments used by each member (Pradita

Ayu Suwandari, 2019). This finding is in line with the theory of cultural *dakwah*, which states that art can be an effective medium for transmitting religious values persuasively and emotionally. The contribution of this research lies in emphasizing that the integration of Islamic values in karawitan is not merely about preserving tradition, but reforming cultural elements that are not in harmony with tauhid into Islamic spiritual practices.

### **Integration of Islamic Values into the Culture of GASPI Pencak Silat**

The integration of Islamic values into the culture of GASPI pencak silat can be understood through the concept of cultural integration or living Islam, which is an approach that views Islam not only as a set of normative doctrines but as values that are manifested in everyday social and cultural practices. Within this framework, religion and culture are not positioned dichotomously, but rather interact and transform each other. Pencak silat, as a product of local culture, becomes a medium for expressing Islamic teachings, while Islam provides a value orientation and normative framework for these cultural practices (Ilham dkk., 2023). Thus, cultural integration means the process of selecting, reinterpreting, and internalizing religious values into cultural activities, resulting in social practices that are both religious and contextual.

The integration of Islamic values into the GASPI pencak silat culture demonstrates a holistic and experience-based form of Islamic education. The values of faith are internalized through the symbolism of the moves and awareness of monotheism in every movement. GASPI teaches that true strength does not come from muscles, but from faith and submission to Allah SWT. The example set by the Prophet Muhammad and the existence of angels such as Jibril and Mikail strengthen their spirituality, in line with research that reveals that the salam movement in pencak silat has the meaning of faith and piety to Allah SWT, which is the main foundation of Islamic teachings (Jayanti & Sugiarto, 2023).

Sharia values are embodied through worship discipline, sunnah fasting, and religious evaluation in level advancement, which includes memorizing selected surahs and prayers, while moral values are instilled through teacher-student ethics, humility, and solidarity. These findings are in line with research that confirms that pesantren-based pencak silat functions as a vehicle for faith and moral education (Syafi'i, 2020). Theoretically, GASPI represents a modification of the concept of Islamic character education, in which martial arts are not only a means of physical training but also a space for the internalization of spiritual and social values, even for members who do not live in pesantren (Kinasih, 2023).

This pattern is in line with character education theory that emphasizes habituation, modeling, and community practice as effective means of moral formation (Ginjar dkk., 2026). Martial arts in this context become a pedagogical space that simultaneously integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions.

From a sociolinguistic and cultural studies perspective, art can be understood as a symbolic system that shapes social meaning. Greeting movements, training procedures, hierarchical structures, and even the terms used in pencak silat function as a symbolic language that transmits the values of faith, piety, and discipline. Through repetition and

collective participation, these symbols shape the religious habitus of members, so that Islamic values are not only understood but also experienced and practiced. In this context, GASPI represents a living form of Islam, namely Islam that operates in the cultural sphere, shaping identity and character through martial arts, even for members who do not live in Islamic boarding schools. Art is no longer just a physical activity, but a medium for the construction of meaning and the formation of character.

### **Integration of Islamic Values into the *Singo Drojat* Lion Dance Culture**

Meanwhile, the integration of Islamic values into the *Singo Drojat* lion dance culture shows a moderate and reflective model of cultural acculturation. The findings of the study show that Islamic boarding schools make a clear distinction between cultural elements and non-Islamic religious rituals by replacing lion dance rituals with Islamic prayers. As explained in the study, barongsai has its own ritual of preparing offerings of oranges and apples in odd numbers as a symbol of prosperity. This ritual is intended to ensure that the performance runs smoothly. In addition, a ritual of prayer with the burning of incense for the ancestors is also performed (Sani, 2017).

However, when this art form was introduced to the Sunan Drajat Islamic boarding school, the school, as a beacon of religious knowledge, did not immediately adopt all elements of the ritual. Instead, a theological screening process was carried out, replacing the offerings and incense burning with Islamic prayers, thereby maintaining the purity of monotheism. This transformation also distinguishes it from the offerings commonly practiced in the religious traditions of the abangan community, which often combine local beliefs with symbols of offerings. Thus, the pesantren affirms its role as a center of religious education that is capable of dialoguing with culture without sacrificing the principles of Islamic faith.

Sharia values are manifested through adherence to prayer times and habitual worship, while moral values are predominantly evident through education on tolerance, cooperation, responsibility, and environmental awareness. These findings reinforce the theory of religious multiculturalism, which states that cultural openness can go hand in hand with the strengthening of religious identity, as also shown in the research by Ahmad Fasya and Ammarsan Fachory on barongsai as a medium of tolerance in Islamic boarding schools. A new contribution from this study is the affirmation that Islamic boarding schools are not only defensive against outside cultures, but are capable of being active actors in directing the process of cultural acculturation in an Islamic manner (Alfayyadl & Fachory, 2023).

From a broader educational theory perspective, this model is in line with holistic and contextual educational approaches, which emphasize that character building is more effective when values are practiced in real-life experiences, rather than just taught cognitively (Suwahyu, 2025). Barongsai becomes a pedagogical space where students directly experience Sharia discipline (obedience to prayer times, habitual prayer), while also building character through teamwork, interfaith tolerance, responsibility, and environmental awareness. This is in line with character education theory, which

emphasizes habituation, modeling, and community practice as the foundations of moral formation. In this case, performing arts are not neutral; they become a means of internalizing values through active participation, collective emotions, and symbolic experiences.

From a sociolinguistic and cultural studies perspective, art can be understood as a symbolic system that shapes social meaning and identity. Dance movements, costumes, stage design, and musical rhythms function as a symbolic language that communicates messages of courage, harmony, and solidarity (Woelandhary, t.t.). When these symbols are framed within Islamic values, a process of religious habitus formation occurs, namely, patterns of thought and behavior that gradually shape character. Thus, the findings of this study not only show moderate and reflective acculturation practices but also expand the paradigm of Islamic Education: Islamic boarding schools can become a space for creative dialogue between Islam and culture, where living Islam is present in artistic practices as a medium for the internalization of values that are contextual, inclusive, and transformative for a multicultural society.

Overall, this discussion shows that the integration of Islamic values into the culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School forms a contextual, inclusive, and transformative model of culture-based Islamic education. Culture is not positioned as a threat to Islamic teachings, but rather as a strategic medium for the internalization of the values of faith, sharia, and morals in a more lively and applicable manner. These findings contribute theoretically by expanding the paradigm of Islamic education, namely that Islamic boarding schools can become a space for creative dialogue between Islam and culture, while offering a model of *dakwah* and education that is relevant to multicultural societies in the modern era.

## **The Benefits of Integrating Islamic Values into Culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School**

### **The Benefits of Integrating Islamic Values into Karawitan Joyo Samudro Culture**

Empirically, findings were obtained through observation of boarding school cultural practices, santri involvement in arts and martial arts activities, and the response of the surrounding community. The process of internalizing Islamic values is not done verbally, but through habituation, exemplary behavior, and direct experience in cultural activities. This is in line with the theory of value internalization in Islamic education, which emphasizes the importance of practical experience and habituation as effective means of character building.

In the *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* culture, the integration of Islamic values has proven to strengthen the spiritual awareness and social character of santri. Values such as patience, cooperation, responsibility, and awareness of Allah's will are internalized through songs and gamelan philosophy. These findings reinforce the research of Melysya 'Idah Ayu Wardani and Ahmad Aly Syukron Aziz Al Mubarak, which states that karawitan functions as an effective medium for cultural *dakwah* and character education. The

benefits are not only felt by santri, but also by the community, because karawitan is a subtle means of *dakwah*, building religiosity without resistance, and strengthening the relationship between pesantren and their social environment ('Idah ayu Wardani, 2019).

### **The Benefits of Integrating Islamic Values into GASPI Pencak Silat Culture**

In GASPI pencak silat culture, the integration of Islamic values provides significant benefits in shaping character, religious discipline, and awareness of monotheism. Pencak silat is not merely physical training, but also a medium for tazkiyatun nafs (purification of the soul) through *dzikir* (remembrance of God), *wirid* (prayers), and the obligation to pray. These findings are in line with the research of Sekarningrum and Yanuartuti, as well as Aserun Nasiroh, which confirms that pencak silat can be a vehicle for moral and spiritual education. In the powerful movements of pencak silat, there is also a gentleness accompanied by the recitation of dzikir, remembering and mentioning the name of Allah *Azza wa Jalla* (Sekarningrum & Yanuartuti, 2021).

GASPI is a training space that is not coercive, but consistently shapes religious awareness in a natural way. In addition, the integration of Islamic values is also seen in the formation of noble character in students, such as respect for teachers, trainers, and peers, as well as the growth of an attitude of humility. This is in line with the results of Aserun Nasiroh Ponorogo's research, which found that pencak silat enables members to have good character, namely always praying together and shaking hands with others, especially those who are older (Nasiroh, 2021). Socially, GASPI also contributes to creating a safe environment, strengthening ukhuwah (brotherhood), and reducing conflict, as confirmed by Herman Syahrudin's research on the social *dakwah* function of pencak silat, which states that pencak silat has an impact on society through social service activities that help the community, such as natural disaster donations, compensation for orphans, blood donations, and helping fellow human beings (Herman Syahrudin, 2018).

### **The Benefits of Integrating Islamic Values into the Singo Drojat Lion Dance Culture**

The *Singo Drojat* lion dance culture demonstrates the benefits of integrating Islamic values in shaping moderate, tolerant, and inclusive attitudes. Students are not only trained in discipline and responsibility, but also accustomed to respecting cultural and religious differences. Lion dance serves as a medium for cultural *dakwah* that teaches Islamic values through social practices, rather than formal religious symbols. These findings reinforce the research of Madhan Anis and Yunita Sari that the existence of lion dance in Muslim communities makes the community more open and accepting of differences and tolerance, as seen in the indigenous Indonesian community who participate in and watch lion dance as a form of social interaction between the Chinese ethnic community and the indigenous population (Anis & Sari, 2018).

Theoretically, the findings of this study enrich the discourse on culture-based Islamic education by offering the perspective that the integration of Islamic values does not have to be exclusive or normative, but can be contextual, inclusive, and transformative. The integration of Islamic values into the culture at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School not only preserves tradition but also transforms it into an

instrument of character education, moderate *dakwah*, and strengthening of the Javanese-Islamic identity. Thus, this research offers a theoretical contribution in the form of a cultural Islamic education model that is able to harmoniously bridge religion, culture, and social reality, and is relevant for development in the context of multicultural Islamic education in Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION

The Joyo Samudro gamelan culture, GASPI pencak silat, and *Singo Drojat* lion dance at the Sunan Drajat Islamic Boarding School have strong origins in the boarding school's cultural *dakwah* strategy in responding to the social, historical, and cultural realities of society. *Joyo Samudro Karawitan* was born from efforts to revive Sunan Drajat's *dakwah* through gamelan art, GASPI pencak silat developed as a response to social problems by making self-defense a medium for religious guidance, while *Singo Drojat* lion dance emerged as a form of adaptation and acculturation of cross-ethnic cultures aimed at strengthening social harmony.

The integration of Islamic values into these three cultures takes place substantially through the internalization of the values of faith, sharia, and morals in cultural practices, habits, and the santri (Islamic boarding school student) education system. Culture is not positioned as an element that conflicts with Islamic teachings, but is reinterpreted and directed to become a medium of education and *dakwah* that is contextual, moderate, and inclusive.

The benefits of integrating Islamic values into Joyo Samudro karawitan, GASPI pencak silat, and *Singo Drojat* barongsai are evident in the formation of the religious character of santri, increased discipline in worship, strengthened social solidarity, and the growth of tolerance and openness to diversity. This integration also strengthens the relationship between pesantren and the community and affirms the role of pesantren as centers of Islamic education that are adaptive to cultural dynamics.

The findings of this study can be used as a reference for the development of a culture-based Islamic education model in Islamic boarding schools and other Islamic educational institutions, especially in the context of a multicultural society. Further research is recommended to examine the application of similar models in other Islamic boarding schools or to study the long-term impact of cultural integration on the formation of students' Islamic identity in a broader social space.

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