

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DA'WAH: THE RELEVANCE OF ART AS A MEDIUM OF RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION IN PAGUTAN KARANG GENTENG

Ahmad Samsudin & Suprpto

UIN Mataram, Indonesia

190602024.mhs@uinmataram.ac.id; suprpto@uinmataram.ac.id

Abstract

This study is motivated by the limited research on how diverse artistic expressions collectively function as media of religious transformation, despite their significant impact on contemporary cultural *da'wah* practices in local Muslim communities. It aims to explore how cultural art forms are utilized in *da'wah*, analyze their relevance and effectiveness in shaping religious transformation, and identify the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing art-based *da'wah* in Pagutan Karang Genteng. A qualitative intrinsic case-study design was employed, involving 18 purposively selected participants representing religious leaders, local artists, community figures, and audience members. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation of artistic-religious events, and document analysis, and were examined using reflexive thematic analysis. The findings reveal that diverse artistic expressions—vocal, performative, and visual—are deeply embedded in community religious life and serve as effective tools for transmitting Islamic teachings. Art-based *da'wah* is actively practiced and integrated into religious gatherings, youth activities, and communal events, fostering emotional engagement, increasing public participation, and contributing to observable improvements in religious attitudes and behavior. Supporting factors include strong collaboration among religious leaders and artists, cultural continuity, and youth involvement, whereas inhibiting factors involve limited resources, inconsistent institutional support, and generational differences in artistic preferences. The study concludes that art plays a key role in contemporary *da'wah* by enhancing religious engagement and aligning Islamic teachings with local culture, thereby providing guidance for educators, institutions, and policymakers in integrating arts into community programs, while also

highlighting the need for future research employing longitudinal and multi-site designs to further understand art-driven religious transformation.

Keywords: Cultural Arts; *Da'wah*; Religious Transformation; Community Engagement; Artistic Expression

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between religion and artistic expression has become an increasingly significant topic in contemporary global discourse. Recent international studies highlight that the interaction between religion and visual art has expanded rapidly in the digital era, where visual media now function not only as historical artefacts but also as channels of modern religious communication that shape how religious values are visualized, interpreted, and disseminated across digital platforms (Zhang & Qian, 2024). Research on visual practices and visual-social platforms further demonstrates that contemporary visual aesthetics—ranging from images and videos to performative content—serve as emerging modes of *da'wah*, with influencers and online communities using visual language to frame new religious norms and convey Islamic messages to urban and youth audiences (Baulch & Pramiyanti, 2018).

Complementing this, global Islamic art scholarship asserts that the development of modern Islamic art is inseparable from the socio-cultural contexts that shape it, where artistic works—including visual motifs and performative forms—serve as mediums through which religious values are communicated in culturally adaptive ways (Bloom & Blair, 2019). Gruber (2019) adds that visual representation within Islamic culture has a powerful capacity to shape religious understanding through symbols, narratives, and aesthetic expressions that forge spiritual and emotional engagement with Islamic values.

National studies similarly indicate the increasing importance of culturally grounded *da'wah*. Ariani et al., (2025) note that *da'wah* aligned with local cultural values tends to be more readily accepted because it transforms religious communication from a didactic model into a dialogical one, especially in communities where values such as *ba'iman*, *ba'adab*, and *ba'budaya* function as mediators between Islamic teachings and everyday cultural practices. Empirical evidence from rural settings further reveals that vocal arts such as Qur'anic recitation and *syair* performance strengthen religious awareness and enhance community engagement with Islamic teachings (Rojanah & Fatikhun, 2023).

Traditional music forms also demonstrate similar potential; instruments like *genjring* have historically served as accessible mediums for Islamic communication due to their rootedness in local tradition (Wibowo, 2016). In the digital sphere, El-Nawawy and Khamis (2020) emphasize that contemporary religious expression increasingly relies on cultural narrative and visual symbolism to foster more inclusive religious discourse and reduce polarization. Other studies affirm that artistic expression—whether through music, performance, or visual design—holds strong potential as a communicative medium in da’wah due to its aesthetic appeal and adaptability to diverse audiences (Yusuf, 2018). Evidence from specific artistic forms, such as hadrah, shows that traditional Islamic musical practices strengthen religious identity and function as communicative tools within mosque communities (Fitriani & Sulistyani, 2022). Mandaville (2020) further argues that religious identity in contemporary Muslim societies is shaped not only by doctrine but also by recurring cultural practices—including local art and ritual—which transform how communities understand and enact Islam in plural social environments.

Research on artistic media in religious education also demonstrates the pedagogical impact of artistic da’wah. Short religious films have been shown to effectively convey Islamic values to young audiences (Andani et al., 2022), while cultural dynamics have long been recognized as key determinants of effective religious communication (Scharbrodt et al., 2018). Nusantara arts such as *wayang kulit*, *tembang*, and *syair* historically served as peaceful vehicles for Islamic transmission, illustrating the enduring relationship between art and da’wah (Wahdani, 2025).

In multicultural contexts, cultural da’wah plays a strategic role by integrating religious messages with local aesthetic and social structures (Abbas, 2021). Artistic approaches embedded in local social spaces not only express creativity but also facilitate deep internalization of religious values within communal life (Safei, 2021). Youth engagement in artistic-religious activities—including sholawat, Qur’anic learning, speech training, and hadrah—has been shown to shape moral character, spiritual awareness, and behavioral change (Rohman, 2023). Furthermore, community empowerment initiatives demonstrate that art-based da’wah increases social participation and strengthens communal religious involvement (Syafi, 2022).

Research on cultural da’wah in Indonesia confirms that Islamic propagation has long interacted with local cultural practices, with art serving as a central medium for

introducing Islam in contextual and peaceful ways (Djaya, 2022). Recent examples include *Kubro Siswo*, a traditional art that integrates Islamic education with local culture, effectively transmitting values of *aqidah*, ethics, and social harmony (Miftachurrozaq et al., 2023).

Despite the breadth of existing literature, prior research reveals certain limitations. Studies on Javanese *jathilan* (Salsabiila & Algifahmy, 2024), calligraphy in pesantren (Madina, 2024), tambourine-based Islamic education (Isa, 2023), and digitalized religious music in Pekalongan (Perdana, 2024) have significantly advanced understanding of art-based da'wah. Likewise, research on the decline of *mamaca* traditions highlights the challenges faced by oral arts as da'wah media in modern contexts (Sholihin, 2025). However, these studies have not sufficiently explored how diverse art forms function collectively as media of religious transformation within a unified community context. More specifically, little attention has been given to how multiple artistic expressions—vocal arts, performance arts, and visual arts—interact in a single locality to shape religious identity, communal behavior, and cultural-religious continuity. This gap becomes particularly relevant in communities such as Pagutan Karang Genteng, where artistic practices are deeply embedded in religious and social life.

Building on these gaps, the present study introduces a novel contribution by integrating conceptual perspectives from Cultural Da'wah Theory (Aziz, 2016; Sutanto, 2020), Social Aesthetics and Art-as-Transformation Theory (Dewey, 2005; Becker, 2017), Religious Communication Theory (Rakhmat, 2018), and Religious Transformation Theory (Berger, 2011; Woodward, 2018). This theoretical foundation positions art not merely as cultural expression but as an affective and communicative system capable of shaping spiritual experience and transforming religious behavior.

Initial field observations in Pagutan Karang Genteng support this theoretical orientation, revealing that artistic Islamic expressions—such as hadrah, qasidah, syair recitation, religious theatre, and calligraphic decoration—play a central role in local da'wah practices. Artistic activities are seamlessly integrated into weekly religious gatherings, youth training, communal festivals, and public spaces, creating a dynamic environment where moral dialogue, collective reflection, and spiritual engagement naturally unfold. (Observation, November 15, 2025).

In light of this background, the present study aims to investigate the contemporary practice of cultural da'wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng through the lens of artistic

expression. Specifically, this research seeks to (1) examine how cultural art forms are practiced and utilized as part of contemporary da'wah, (2) analyze the relevance and effectiveness of art as a medium of religious transformation, and (3) know what supporting and inhibiting factors influence the use of art as a medium for religious transformation within the context of cultural da'wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng?

METHODS

Type of research

This study is qualitative in nature, using a case-study orientation to explore how cultural art functions as a medium of contemporary da'wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng. The qualitative case-study posture enables an in-depth, contextualized understanding of meanings, practices, and local perceptions rather than numeric generalization. (Moleong, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Research design

A single-case, intrinsic case study design was applied to examine Pagutan Karang Genteng as a bounded social and cultural system where art-based da'wah is practiced. The design combines descriptive fieldwork, document review, participant observation of art events (e.g., hadrah, qasidah, theatrical performances), and semi-structured interviews to trace practices, perceived relevance, and enabling/inhibiting factors (2018; Yin, 2018). This study was conducted in Pagutan Village, Mataram District, Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. The fieldwork took place from October to December 2025.

Participants & sampling technique

A purposeful (purposive) sampling strategy was used to select 18 key informants representing the stakeholder groups directly or indirectly involved in art-based da'wah:

- a. Religious leaders and cultural da'wah figures (3–4 persons: local ustaz, majelis taklim facilitators, da'wah practitioners using art).
- b. Local cultural artists/practitioners (3–5 persons: hadrah/qasidah performers, theatre/music groups).
- c. Community / adat leaders (2–3 persons: neighborhood heads, elders).

d. Community recipients/audience (4–6 persons: youth, women’s majelis members, regular audience).

The purposive approach seeks information-rich cases that illuminate the phenomena under study; interviewees were selected for their direct experience and knowledge about art practices and da’wah in the local setting. (Sugiyono, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Instruments & data collection procedures

Data were collected using multiple complementary instruments to ensure triangulation:

- a. Semi-structured interviews with each informant group (approx. 45–90 minutes each) guided by an interview protocol aligned with the three research questions.
- b. Participant observation at art and da’wah events (field notes, audio recordings, and contextual photography where permitted).
- c. Document analysis of local flyers, program notes, social-media posts, and recordings related to Pagutan art events.
- d. Focus group (optional) with youth/audience to probe group perceptions of effectiveness and change in religious behavior.

Instruments were piloted with two informants outside the primary case to verify clarity and cultural appropriateness; interview guides were adapted based on pilot feedback. Ethical procedures included informed consent, anonymity/pseudonyms for participants, and local gatekeeper approval. (Flick, 2018; Braun & Clarke (2021).

Data analysis

All interviews were audio-recorded (with consent), transcribed verbatim, and checked against field notes. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis in an iterative, reflexive process to identify patterns relevant to the research questions: coding (open → axial → selective), development of themes, and cross-case comparisons across respondent groups. Triangulation (interviews, observation, documents) was used to validate emergent themes and to identify supporting and inhibiting factors for art-based religious transformation. NVivo / manual coding (depending on researcher resources) was used to manage data and support transparency of analytic steps. Trustworthiness was addressed via member-checking, audit trail, and thick description. (Moleong, 2018; Braun & Clarke, 2021).

RESULTS

1. Forms of Cultural Da'wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng

a. Patterns of Da'wah Integrated With Local Traditions

1) Integration of Religious Values Into Socio-Cultural Life

Findings indicate that cultural da'wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng is deeply embedded in everyday socio-cultural practices. Religious messages are not delivered as isolated doctrinal instructions but are woven into communal artistic traditions such as hadrah, qasidah, rebana ensembles, and Islamic-themed traditional dances. Religious leaders and cultural practitioners consistently position art as a natural conduit through which Islamic teachings become socially meaningful. One religious figure emphasized that integrating Islamic teachings into artistic traditions allows “moral values, love for the Prophet, and noble character to be delivered more gracefully through artistic expression” (P01, male, 52, Religious Leader, Pagutan, personal communication, October 4, 2025).

For youth participants, embedding religious content within artistic formats makes Islamic teachings relatable and emotionally engaging. A hadrah artist explained that “people feel the message in their hearts, because art touches emotions, not just intellect” (P03, male, 23, Hadrah Artist, Pagutan, personal communication, October 12, 2025). Observations during a hadrah rehearsal further confirmed this dynamic, where rhythmic chanting of salawat was accompanied by collective reflection and spontaneous expressions of devotion (Observation, October 10, 2025).

Document reviews of event pamphlets and community announcements also revealed that religious values are intentionally aligned with cultural identity, reinforcing the idea that Islamic teachings harmoniously intertwine with local heritage (Document review, October 6, 2025). Overall, the findings show that integration occurs organically through shared cultural forms, providing a stable foundation for transmitting Islamic ethics across generations.

2) Utilization of Local Traditions as Entry Points for Da'wah

Local traditions serve as strategic entry points for contemporary da'wah, enabling religious messages to be communicated through familiar cultural frameworks. Traditional dance, qasidah performances, and theatrical Islamic

storytelling function as accessible mediums for community engagement in religious learning. A cultural preacher described this strategy as “using tradition as a bridge that connects people’s heritage with Islamic teachings, so religion does not feel foreign to younger generations” (P02, male, 48, Cultural Preacher, Pagutan, personal communication, October 14, 2025).

Traditional music—especially hadrah and qasidah—has become a prominent mode of engagement. According to a community elder, these art forms are “inherited across generations and resonate with local sensibilities,” making them highly effective platforms for embedding Islamic values (P06, male, 48, Community Elder, Pagutan, personal communication, October 20, 2025). This blending of religion and tradition strengthens the cultural legitimacy of da’wah and promotes acceptance across demographic groups.

Field observations of a community theatrical performance showed that narratives of prophetic stories were presented using local expressions and dialect, resulting in strong audience attention and emotional resonance (Observation, November 2, 2025). These findings illustrate that artistic traditions function not only as cultural heritage but as meaningful entry points that simplify complex religious concepts for everyday understanding.

3) Involvement of Religious and Community Leaders in Strengthening Islamic Traditions

Religious leaders, cultural practitioners, and community elders play central roles in facilitating, legitimizing, and sustaining cultural da’wah. Their involvement ensures that artistic expressions remain aligned with Islamic principles while preserving social cohesion. As one cultural artist explained, collaboration with religious scholars is essential to guarantee the accuracy of religious messages: “We always consult with ustadz about lyric content to ensure it stays within Islamic guidelines” (P03, male, 23, Hadrah Artist, Pagutan, personal communication, October 12, 2025).

Community leaders contribute by providing organizational support, mobilizing youth participation, and maintaining continuity of cultural traditions. According to a village elder, “tradition and religion strengthen each other here; that is why the community receives art-based da’wah so openly” (P07, male, 65, Cultural

Elder, Pagutan, personal communication, October 18, 2025). This synergy between religious authority and cultural custodians fosters a harmonious environment that affirms both Islamic and local cultural identities.

Document reviews of community event schedules and meeting notes show that leaders consistently endorse and participate in cultural-religious programs, demonstrating institutional support for the integration of art and da’wah (Document review, November 4, 2025). Their role is therefore not only symbolic but structurally influential in sustaining a model of da’wah rooted in local wisdom.

Table 1. Implementation of Art in Cultural Da'wah
Practices in Pagutan Karang Genteng

Component	Description
Forms of Art Used	Islamic vocal arts (syair, zikir), religious drama/theatre, visual arts, and Islamic decorative arts.
Implementation Process	Integrating artistic forms into da'wah activities through performances, teaching, community engagement, and cultural events.
Community Engagement	Encouraging active participation through interactive performances, workshops, and collaborative cultural activities.
Da'wah Outcomes	Strengthening community understanding of Islamic values, increasing participation, and preserving local Islamic cultural traditions.

The table 1 summarizes how various art forms—such as vocal Islamic arts, religious drama, and visual expressions—are incorporated into cultural da'wah activities in Pagutan Karang Genteng. Through performances, teaching, and community involvement, these artistic approaches enhance public engagement, deepen the understanding of Islamic teachings, and help sustain local cultural traditions within an Islamic framework.

b. Practices of Cultural Da’wah Through Social and Religious Activities

1) Community-Based Religious Gatherings

Community-based gatherings such as pengajian, salawat assemblies, and youth religious circles serve as primary platforms for cultural da’wah. These events integrate artistic performances—hadrah, qasidah, and religious poetry recitation—into structured learning sessions. A young community leader noted that “youth are

more engaged when religious study is combined with creative expression” (P09, male, 25, Youth Leader, Pagutan, personal communication, October 28, 2025).

Field observations during a weekly pengajian documented strong attendance and active participation, especially during artistic segments that preceded and followed the religious lecture (Observation, November 6, 2025). These practices demonstrate that the incorporation of art strengthens emotional connection, increases participation, and supports the continuity of religious learning.

2) Cultural Rituals Enriched With Moral and Religious Messages

Traditional rituals—especially those performed during life-cycle events and Islamic commemorations—are infused with moral teachings and devotional expressions. A female performer described how traditional dance routines are modified to reflect Islamic etiquette and values: “Movements are made modest and meaningful, so the performance becomes part of da’wah rather than mere entertainment” (P04, female, 19, Traditional Dancer, Pagutan, personal communication, October 22, 2025).

During an observed welcoming ceremony, performers incorporated salawat and short moral messages between segments, illustrating how cultural rituals are intentionally shaped to reinforce religious meaning (Observation, November 10, 2025). These practices reveal a form of da’wah that prioritizes cultural resonance and community acceptance.

3) Islamic Festivities With Local Cultural Expressions

Islamic holy days—such as Maulid, Isra’ Mi’raj, and the Islamic New Year—are major venues for cultural da’wah. Artistic expressions are central to these celebrations, transforming formal religious observances into vibrant cultural-religious festivals. A community member stated: “I seldom miss Maulid because the artistic performances make the event lively and spiritually uplifting” (P14, female, 41, Community Member, Pagutan, personal communication, November 12, 2025).

Document reviews of Maulid event schedules show dedicated segments for hadrah, qasidah, theatrical storytelling, and youth performances (Document review, November 1, 2025). These celebrations are widely attended and highly anticipated, reinforcing collective identity through shared artistic-religious expression.

Table 2. Practices of Cultural Da’wah Through Social and Religious Activities in Pagutan Karang Genteng

Practice Area	Description
Community-Based Religious Gatherings	Religious study sessions (pengajian), salawat assemblies, and youth circles integrating hadrah, qasidah, and poetic recitations to enhance engagement and participation.
Cultural Rituals with Religious Messages	Traditional rituals infused with Islamic values through modified dance movements, salawat, and moral reminders, transforming cultural activities into meaningful da’wah expressions.
Islamic Festivities with Local Cultural Expressions	Major Islamic celebrations (Maulid, Isra’ Mi’raj, Islamic New Year) enriched with hadrah, qasidah, theatre, and youth performances, fostering spiritual enthusiasm and collective identity.

This table 2 outlines how cultural da’wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng is practiced through various social and religious activities. Community gatherings incorporate artistic performances to increase participation and emotional engagement. Cultural rituals are adapted to reflect Islamic values, ensuring that traditional practices remain spiritually meaningful. Major Islamic festivities become vibrant cultural-religious events that strengthen communal identity and reinforce shared Islamic values through creative artistic expression.

c. Models and Strategies of Da’wah Based on Local Wisdom

1) Persuasive Approaches Based on Kinship Values

Da’wah strategies in Pagutan Karang Genteng emphasize familial ties, interpersonal warmth, and community cohesion. Artistic performance becomes a gentle and non-confrontational way of inviting people to understand and practice Islamic teachings. A senior community member noted that “art softens the message; people feel approached as family rather than instructed rigidly” (P08, male, 64, Community Elder, Pagutan, personal communication, October 30, 2025). This persuasive model contrasts sharply with doctrinal preaching styles, prioritizing emotional resonance, mutual respect, and collective belonging.

2) Participatory Da’wah Through Community Collectives

Da’wah is also practiced through participatory structures in which communities co-create performances, events, and learning environments. Artistic groups—hadrah teams, qasidah ensembles, youth theatre collectives—serve as

collaborative spaces where religious teachings are internalized through shared activity. A youth leader emphasized that “being involved in creative production makes us feel responsible for the message of the performance” (P10, male, 45, Youth Leader, Pagutan, personal communication, November 8, 2025).

Observations of group rehearsals revealed high levels of cooperation, peer learning, and collective decision-making about the religious themes embedded in artistic work (Observation, November 15, 2025). Such participatory engagement fosters religious transformation through active involvement rather than passive listening.

3) Delivery of Da’wah Through Accessible Local Language

Another key strategy is the use of local dialect and culturally familiar expressions during performances. Messages delivered in the vernacular improve comprehension, relevance, and emotional impact. One performer explained that “using local language makes the message feel closer and more sincere to the audience” (P11, male, 29, Artist, Pagutan, personal communication, November 10, 2025).

Document reviews of lyric sheets and performance scripts indicate that artists frequently blend Arabic devotional phrases with Sasak or regional Indonesian expressions, creating a culturally hybrid form of da’wah that is welcoming and easily understood (Document review, November 14, 2025).

**Table 3. Models and Strategies of Da’wah Based on Local
Wisdom in Pagutan Karang Genteng**

Model / Strategy		Description
Persuasive Approaches Based on Kinship Values		Da’wah delivered through familial warmth, emotional closeness, and artistic expression, making teachings gentle, non-confrontational, and socially harmonious.
Participatory Through Community Collectives	Da’wah Community	Community involvement in hadrah, qasidah, and theatre groups, where members co-create performances and internalize Islamic values through active collaboration.
Use of Accessible Local Language	Local	Delivery of messages using local dialect mixed with Arabic phrases, enhancing cultural relevance, comprehension, and emotional resonance.

This table 3 presents locally grounded da'wah strategies practiced in Pagutan Karang Genteng. Persuasive approaches emphasize kinship and emotional warmth, making religious messages more acceptable and heartfelt. Participatory da'wah engages community members in artistic collectives, promoting deeper internalization of Islamic values through active creation. The use of local language ensures that da'wah remains relatable, culturally rooted, and easily understood, reinforcing its impact across generations.

The following Figure 1 summarizes the key forms of cultural da'wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng, reflecting the findings discussed in the corresponding sub-section and illustrating how traditional arts engage the community and convey Islamic teachings



Figure 1: Forms of Cultural Da'wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng

The flowchart shows how Islamic teachings and local traditions merge through three implementation models to create an effective art-based da'wah system. Traditional

arts, community activities, and local wisdom strategies work together to enhance religious engagement while preserving cultural heritage.

2. The Relevance of Art as a Medium of Religious Transformation

a. The Function of Art in the Process of Religious Education

1) Art as an Aesthetic Medium for Delivering Da'wah Messages

Findings demonstrate that art functions as a powerful aesthetic medium that enhances the delivery of da'wah messages in Pagutan Karang Genteng. Unlike conventional didactic preaching, which relies heavily on verbal persuasion, artistic expressions such as hadrah, qasidah, Islamic theatre, and devotional poetry communicate religious teachings through layered aesthetic experiences. A local religious artist explained that “art makes the message beautiful; people listen because they enjoy the performance, but at the same time they absorb the teachings” (P12, male, 33, Qasidah Performer, Pagutan, personal communication, November 16, 2025).

Observational data from hadrah events showed that the rhythmic interplay of percussion, melodic chanting of salawat, and stylized collective movement created an emotionally immersive atmosphere that heightened attentiveness to religious content (Observation, November 18, 2025). These aesthetic features make art a highly effective medium for attracting listeners and embedding key Islamic principles in a way that is emotionally impactful and culturally resonant.

Document analysis of performance scripts further revealed deliberate integration of Qur'anic messages, prophetic ethics, and moral advice into aesthetically structured artistic formats (Document review, November 11, 2025). This suggests that the aesthetic dimension of art does not merely accompany da'wah but actively enhances its communicative power.

2) Art as a Means of Softening the Internalization of Moral Values

Artistic expression serves as a gentle and persuasive mechanism for the internalization of moral and ethical values. Rather than confronting audiences with rigid moral directives, art conveys Islamic virtues—humility, compassion, gratitude, modesty—through symbolic representation, emotional nuance, and narrative

metaphor. A cultural educator emphasized that “people accept moral lessons more easily when expressed through art because it does not feel like an order; it feels like a reminder through beauty” (P05, female, 44, Cultural Educator, Pagutan, personal communication, October 27, 2025).

During one observed qasidah rehearsal, performers repeatedly discussed the moral meaning behind certain lyrics—encouraging kindness, patience, and love for the Prophet—highlighting how artistic practice itself becomes a process of ethical reflection (Observation, November 5, 2025). This shows that art not only conveys moral values to audiences but also nurtures internal moral formation among performers.

Participants also reported that artistic da’wah softens interpersonal relations, making religious advice easier to receive and apply in daily life. A youth participant remarked that “advice from art stays longer in the heart because it enters softly” (P15, male, 21, Youth Participant, Pagutan, personal communication, November 20, 2025). Such findings affirm that art facilitates moral transformation through subtle emotional engagement rather than direct confrontation.

3) Art as a Tool for Strengthening Youth Engagement With Islamic Teachings

Art plays a central role in sustaining the interest and participation of young people in religious activities. In Pagutan Karang Genteng, youth are drawn to artistic expressions that blend religious meaning with creativity, rhythm, and social interaction. A youth leader emphasized: “If we only have lectures, many young people do not come. But if we combine them with art, the space becomes alive, and youth feel excited to join” (P09, male, 25, Youth Leader, Pagutan, personal communication, October 28, 2025).

Observations at youth-led rehearsals show that artistic groups—such as hadrah teams and theatre collectives—function as spaces where young participants build religious identity while developing artistic skills and social bonds (Observation, November 22, 2025). These groups provide a sense of belonging, creative purpose, and spiritual connection, making Islamic teachings more relevant to contemporary youth experiences.

Document review of youth event programs confirms that artistic segments consistently occupy central roles in shaping the atmosphere of religious gatherings

targeted at younger audiences (Document review, November 19, 2025). Overall, art serves as a gateway through which youth gain consistent exposure to Islamic messages in enjoyable, meaningful, and culturally compatible ways.

Table 4. The Function of Art in the Process of Religious Education in Pagutan Karang Genteng

Function of Art	Description
Art as an Aesthetic Medium for Delivering Da’wah Messages	Artistic forms (hadrah, qasidah, theatre, devotional poetry) enhance da’wah delivery through beauty, emotional immersion, and culturally resonant performances that embed Qur’anic messages and prophetic ethics.
Art as a Soft Approach for Internalizing Moral Values	Art communicates Islamic virtues gently through symbolism, emotional nuance, and narrative expression, facilitating deeper ethical reflection for both performers and audiences.
Art as a Tool for Strengthening Youth Engagement	Artistic groups attract and sustain youth participation by blending religious teachings with creativity, rhythm, and social interaction, developing both religious identity and artistic skills.

This table 4 summarizes the functions of art in religious education within Pagutan Karang Genteng. Art enhances da’wah messages by presenting them aesthetically, making them more engaging and emotionally impactful. It also softens the internalization of moral values, allowing ethical lessons to be absorbed gently through beauty and symbolic expression. Finally, art significantly boosts youth engagement by providing creative, enjoyable, and socially interactive spaces where Islamic teachings become meaningful and relatable to younger generations.

b. The Role of Local Arts in Driving Religious Transformation

1) Art as an Inspiration for Changes in Religious Behavior

Participants widely acknowledged that local art forms inspire changes in religious attitudes and practices. Through repeated exposure to spiritually infused performances, audiences develop deeper emotional connections with religious values. A community member stated: “After watching the performances, I often think more about my daily behavior. It motivates me to improve and become more obedient to Islamic teachings” (P14, female, 41, Community Member, Pagutan, personal communication, November 12, 2025).

Observational data from community performances show that emotional peaks during salawat chanting, narrative storytelling, or symbolic artistic gestures often evoke tears, reflective silence, or spontaneous recitation of dhikr among the audience (Observation, November 25, 2025). These reactions suggest that art facilitates spiritual awakening and behavioral introspection.

Documentary evidence from program notes and social media reflections supports the claim that artistic da'wah encourages personal transformation, especially in relation to prayer discipline, moral conduct, and community involvement (Document review, November 23, 2025). Thus, local art serves as both an emotional stimulus and a moral compass for behavioral change.

2) Art as a Medium for Forming Islamic Character and Ethics

Local arts also play an important pedagogical role in character formation. Through artistic engagement, performers and audiences internalize values such as teamwork, modesty, discipline, and respect. A traditional arts instructor noted: "When youth practice hadrah, they learn discipline, respect the leader, and work together harmoniously. This is Islamic character in practice" (P13, male, 38, Arts Instructor, Pagutan, personal communication, November 14, 2025).

Observations during hadrah rehearsals confirmed this, showing how synchronized movement, adherence to rhythm, and group coordination instill discipline and mutual cooperation (Observation, November 21, 2025). These processes translate artistic performance into a lived experience of Islamic ethics.

Document review of training manuals and group guidelines further illustrates how artistic collectives intentionally frame their activities as character-building exercises grounded in Islamic principles (Document review, November 17, 2025). Through this integrated approach, local arts act not only as entertainment or cultural heritage but as systematic pathways for shaping religious character.

3) Art as a Connector Between Islamic Values and Local Culture

Local artistic traditions bridge Islamic teachings with the cultural identity of Pagutan Karang Genteng, enabling religious messages to be communicated in ways that closely align with community identity. A cultural leader stated that "art connects Islam with our culture; it shows that being religious does not mean abandoning our

heritage” (P07, male, 65, Cultural Elder, Pagutan, personal communication, October 18, 2025).

Field observations of artistic events showed how performers blended Islamic themes with local aesthetics—such as Sasak language, traditional melodies, clothing styles, and symbolic gestures—to create culturally meaningful religious expressions (Observation, November 24, 2025). This synthesis reinforces both Islamic and local cultural values simultaneously.

Document review of performance scripts and cultural event archives revealed that many artistic pieces were intentionally designed to harmonize religious teachings with local identity markers (Document review, November 20, 2025). This reinforces the role of art as a “cultural bridge” that promotes religious transformation without cultural alienation.

Table 5. The Role of Local Arts in Driving Religious Transformation in Pagutan Karang Genteng

Role of Local Arts	Description
Art as an Inspiration for Changes in Religious Behavior	Emotional engagement in artistic performances (salawat, storytelling, symbolic gestures) encourages introspection, strengthens obedience to Islamic practices, and motivates behavioral transformation.
Art as a Medium for Forming Islamic Character and Ethics	Participation in artistic groups (hadrah, qasidah) develops discipline, teamwork, respect, and modesty, allowing performers to practice Islamic ethics through collective artistic activity.
Art as a Connector Between Islamic Values and Local Culture	Local arts integrate Islamic messages with cultural identity through language, melodies, attire, and symbolism, making religious teachings culturally resonant and widely accepted.

This table 5 outlines how local artistic traditions in Pagutan Karang Genteng contribute to religious transformation. Art inspires behavioral change by creating emotional and spiritual impact during performances. It also strengthens Islamic character by cultivating discipline, cooperation, and ethical conduct through group artistic activities. Furthermore, art acts as a cultural bridge, harmonizing Islamic values with local heritage so that religious teachings feel familiar, meaningful, and culturally rooted for the community.

c. Art as a Medium for Social Interaction and the Strengthening of Religious Identity

1) Artistic Performances as Spaces for Community Religious Dialogue

Artistic performances often function as communal spaces where implicit and explicit religious dialogue occurs. They bring community members together, fostering discussion about moral messages, religious meanings, and cultural expressions. A local hadrah organizer observed that “after performances, people usually discuss the meaning of the lyrics, the moral lessons, and how they relate to our daily life” (P02, male, 48, Cultural Preacher, Pagutan, personal communication, October 14, 2025).

Observations of post-performance interactions showed informal group discussions where community members exchanged reflections on religious content, personal experiences, and interpretations of messages embedded in the art (Observation, November 28, 2025). These discussions enhance collective understanding and support community-wide religious growth.

Document analysis of community event reports confirms that organizers intentionally design artistic activities to encourage dialogue and reflection as part of the da’wah process (Document review, November 26, 2025).

2) Art as a Platform for Uniting Diverse Social Groups

Art serves as a unifying force across diverse social groups in Pagutan Karang Genteng—bridging age differences, social backgrounds, and gender roles. Artistic events draw participation from youth, elders, women’s groups, religious leaders, and local artists. One community representative remarked: “Art gathers everyone together. When the performances start, all differences disappear; we become one community” (P06, male, 48, Community Elder, Pagutan, personal communication, October 20, 2025).

Observations during Maulid celebrations showed mixed groups participating collaboratively in artistic performances, reflecting collective identity and shared religious purpose (Observation, November 30, 2025). These activities strengthen social bonds and reinforce community cohesion.

Document review of event registrations and performance rosters revealed inclusive participation across demographic groups, demonstrating art’s role in fostering unity (Document review, November 29, 2025).

3) Art as a Symbol of Muslim Identity in Pagutan Karang Genteng

Artistic practices have become symbolic markers of Muslim identity within the community. Traditional Islamic performances—hadrah, qasidah, theatrical narratives—represent not only cultural heritage but public expressions of religious belonging. A young performer expressed: “When we perform hadrah, we feel proud because it shows our identity as Muslims of Pagutan” (P11, male, 29, Artist, Pagutan, personal communication, November 10, 2025).

Observations during major religious festivals showed that artistic expressions are used deliberately to showcase Islamic devotion and local pride, functioning as public affirmations of religious identity (Observation, December 1, 2025). These artistic symbols shape how the community perceives itself and how it is recognized externally.

Document review of festival programs and local archives supports the centrality of artistic expression in representing the collective Muslim identity of Pagutan Karang Genteng (Document review, November 30, 2025). Through this symbolic function, art strengthens the community’s sense of unity and shared religious purpose.

**Table 6. Art as a Medium for Social Interaction
and Strengthening Religious Identity**

Role of Art		Description
Artistic Performances as Spaces for Community Religious Dialogue	as	Performances provide communal spaces for discussing lyrics, moral messages, and religious meanings, fostering shared reflection and collective spiritual growth.
Art as a Platform for Uniting Diverse Social Groups		Artistic events bring together people of different ages, genders, and social backgrounds, strengthening cohesion and creating a sense of collective religious identity.
Art as a Symbol of Muslim Identity in Pagutan Karang Genteng		Traditional Islamic performances (hadrah, qasidah, theatrical narratives) function as public expressions of Muslim identity, reinforcing pride and communal belonging.

Table 6 highlights how art strengthens social interaction and religious identity in Pagutan Karang Genteng. Artistic performances create spaces for informal religious dialogue, helping community members reflect on moral messages together. Art also unites diverse social groups, fostering cohesion across ages and backgrounds. Additionally, local artistic expressions—such as hadrah and qasidah—serve as visible symbols of Muslim identity, reinforcing shared belonging and communal pride.

The following Figure 2 summarizes the relevance of art as a medium for religious transformation, highlighting how artistic expressions facilitate emotional engagement, moral internalization, and community participation in Islamic teachings.

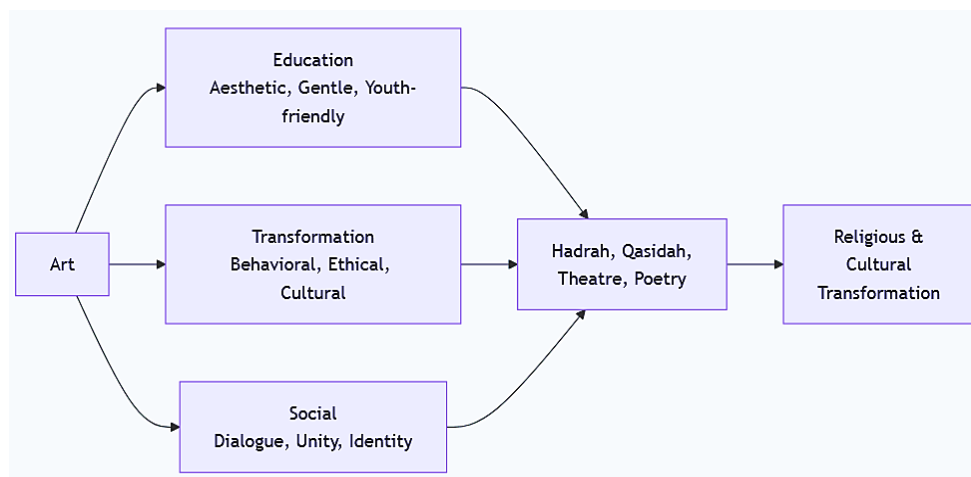


Figure 2: The Relevance of Art as a Medium of Religious Transformation

Figure 2 illustrates how Art serves three simultaneous functions in religious transformation: education (making messages beautiful and accessible), personal transformation (changing behavior and character), and social bonding (creating dialogue and unity). Traditional art forms like hadrah and qasidah bring these functions together, resulting in both religious and cultural transformation.

3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Use of Art as a Medium for Religious Transformation in Cultural Da’wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng

The use of art as a medium for religious transformation in Pagutan Karang Genteng is influenced by both supporting and inhibiting factors that affect its effectiveness in community-based da’wah.

a. Supporting Factors

1) Cultural Alignment and Community Engagement

Embedding Islamic teachings into local artistic traditions—such as hadrah, qasidah, traditional dance, and theatre—facilitates emotional resonance and social acceptance of religious messages. Community members actively participate in artistic performances and youth collectives, strengthening both individual spiritual reflection and collective piety. A hadrah artist noted that “people feel the message in their hearts, because art touches emotions, not just intellect” (P03, male, 23, Hadrah Artist, Pagutan, personal communication, October 12, 2025).

A cultural elder emphasized that “tradition and religion strengthen each other here; that is why the community receives art-based da’wah so openly” (P07, male, 65, Cultural Elder, Pagutan, personal communication, October 18, 2025). Observations of performances and rehearsals demonstrated high levels of participation and emotional engagement during artistic da’wah events (Observation, November 28, 2025).

2) Strategic Role of Religious and Community Leaders

Religious leaders and cultural practitioners adapt Islamic teachings into accessible artistic formats, collaborate with local artists, and introduce innovative approaches to engage youth. One religious leader stated, “Integrating teachings into artistic forms makes messages more approachable, especially for younger generations” (P01, male, 52, Religious Leader, Pagutan, personal communication, October 4, 2025).

A youth leader added, “If we only have lectures, many young people do not come. But if we combine them with art, the space becomes alive, and youth feel excited to join” (P09, male, 25, Youth Leader, Pagutan, personal communication, October 28, 2025). Document reviews confirmed that leaders consistently support and legitimize these artistic activities (Document review, November 4, 2025).

3) Educational and Emotional Effectiveness of Art

Artistic expressions function as aesthetic and participatory learning media that facilitate the internalization of moral values. A qasidah performer explained, “Art makes the message beautiful; people listen because they enjoy the performance,

but at the same time they absorb the teachings” (P12, male, 33, Qasidah Performer, Pagutan, personal communication, November 16, 2025).

A youth participant added, “Advice from art stays longer in the heart because it enters softly” (P15, male, 21, Youth Participant, Pagutan, personal communication, November 20, 2025). Observations highlighted that artistic segments create immersive experiences, enhancing attentiveness and collective reflection on Islamic ethics (Observation, November 25, 2025).

Table 6. Supporting Factors of Art-Based Da’wah in Pagutan

Role of Art	Description
Cultural Alignment & Community Engagement	Integrating Islamic teachings into local arts (hadrah, qasidah, traditional dance, theatre) fosters emotional connection and encourages active community and youth participation.
Role of Religious & Community Leaders	Leaders adapt teachings into artistic formats and collaborate with artists to engage youth effectively in religious activities.
Educational & Emotional Effectiveness	Art serves as participatory learning media, enhancing moral internalization, attentiveness, and collective reflection on Islamic ethics.

The table 6 highlights Art-based da’wah in Pagutan is supported by cultural alignment, strategic leadership, and the educational and emotional effectiveness of art. Local traditions and performances engage the community, leaders facilitate youth participation, and artistic expressions help internalize moral values while creating immersive, reflective experiences for participants.

b. Inhibiting Factors

1) Resource and Infrastructure Constraints

Limitations in funding, venues, artistic materials, and professional guidance restrict the frequency, scale, and quality of art-based da’wah activities. A community elder stated, “We sometimes struggle to organize performances due to lack of proper space and materials” (P06, male, 48, Community Elder, Pagutan, personal communication, October 20, 2025).

2) Generational and Technological Differences

Differences in preferences between younger and older audiences pose challenges. Observations showed that while youth engage with innovative and digital

art formats, older members favor traditional expressions (Observation, November 22, 2025).

3) Cultural and Religious Skepticism

Some community members perceive creative innovations as potentially diluting religious orthodoxy. An artist explained, “Art and religion must walk together so that the message remains beautiful and correct” (P11, male, 29, Artist, Pagutan, personal communication, November 10, 2025). Document reviews also noted that some community feedback questioned whether new formats maintain traditional religious integrity (Document review, November 30, 2025).

Overall, the findings indicate that the transformative potential of art in Pagutan Karang Genteng relies on the alignment of cultural relevance, leadership strategies, and active community participation. While strong cultural embedding and leadership support enhance religious engagement, practical limitations and social perceptions present challenges that require ongoing management and adaptation to sustain meaningful art-based da’wah

Table 7. Inhibiting Factors of Art-Based Da’wah in Pagutan

Inhibiting Factor	Description
Resource & Infrastructure Constraints	Limited funding, venues, artistic materials, and professional guidance reduce the frequency, scale, and quality of art-based da’wah activities.
Generational & Technological Differences	Diverging preferences between younger and older audiences challenge engagement; youth prefer innovative or digital formats, while elders favor traditional expressions.
Cultural & Religious Skepticism	Some community members question whether creative innovations preserve religious orthodoxy, potentially limiting acceptance of new artistic formats.

The table 6 shows that art-based da’wah in Pagutan faces challenges from limited resources, generational and technological gaps, and concerns over maintaining religious orthodoxy. While cultural embedding and leadership support foster engagement, these inhibiting factors require careful management and adaptation to sustain effective art-driven religious activities.

The following Figure 3 presents the supporting and inhibiting factors in the use of art as a medium for religious transformation within cultural da’wah in Pagutan Karang

Genteng, highlighting elements that enhance engagement as well as challenges that may limit its effectiveness.

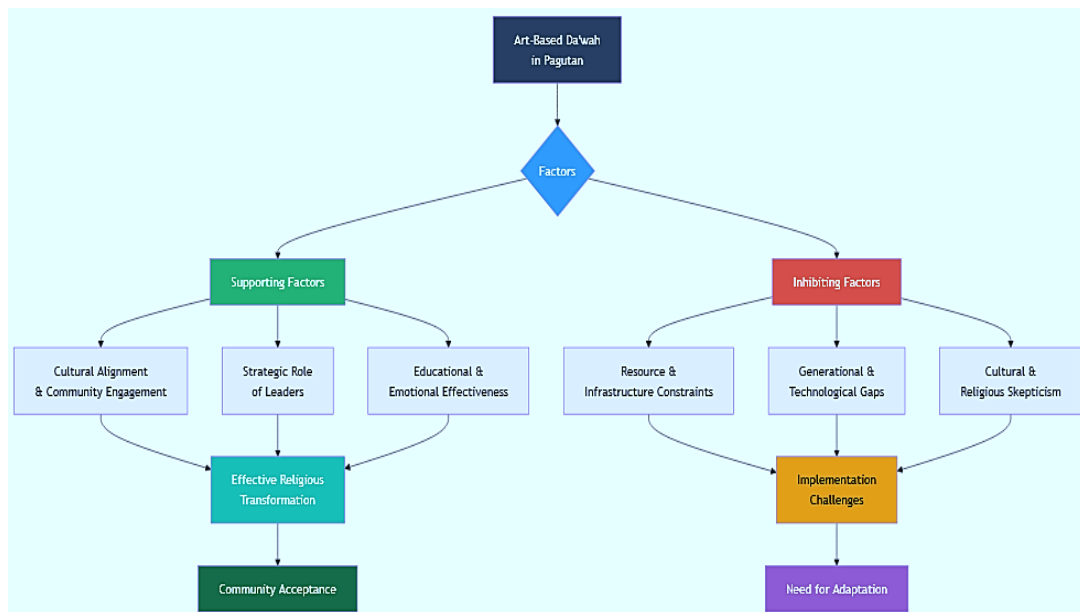


Figure 3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Use of Art as a Medium for Religious Transformation in Cultural Da’wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng

The figure 3 shows that the success of art-based da'wah in Pagutan is shaped by balancing supporting factors (cultural alignment, strong leadership, educational effectiveness) against inhibiting factors (resource constraints, generational gaps, religious skepticism). When supporting factors dominate, art becomes an effective medium for religious transformation and community acceptance. However, the inhibiting factors create implementation challenges that require continuous adaptation and resource management to sustain meaningful da'wah through artistic expression.

DISCUSSION

1. Analysis of Findings

a. Forms of Cultural Art Practiced in Contemporary Da’wah

The findings demonstrate that cultural da’wah in Pagutan Karang Genteng is expressed through a highly integrated constellation of artistic forms—vocal arts (syair, qasidah, dhikr), performance arts (religious theatre and short dramas), and visual arts

(calligraphy and decorative motifs). Each artistic form operates as a symbolic and communicative medium that supports the transmission of Islamic teachings through aesthetic experience. In line with Dewey's Art-as-Experience theory (2005), artistic engagement in Pagutan is not isolated from daily life but embedded in routine religious gatherings, communal celebrations, and youth activities. This embeddedness transforms art into a lived religious practice that reinforces spiritual consciousness and ritual continuity. The multimodal nature of these arts also aligns with contemporary visual-aesthetic studies, which argue that religious meaning is increasingly constructed through multiple sensory channels rather than through text alone. Thus, the first research objective is fulfilled by revealing that Pagutan represents a dynamic ecosystem where diverse artistic expressions collectively function as culturally grounded da'wah mechanisms.

b. Relevance and Effectiveness of Art as a Medium of Religious Transformation

The study highlights that art-based da'wah in Pagutan promotes religious transformation through three principal mechanisms: affective persuasion, participatory embodiment, and cultural-linguistic adaptation. First, the emotional resonance of poetic recitation, melodic qasidah, and rhythmic dhikr amplifies the spiritual impact of da'wah by eliciting affective responses that predispose individuals toward moral self-reflection. This finding supports Gruber's (2019) argument that artistic representation strengthens religious internalization by stimulating emotional-spiritual engagement. Second, participatory artistic structures such as hadrah ensembles and youth theatre groups embody Becker's (2017) Art Worlds theory, where collaborative artistic production fosters shared responsibility, social cohesion, and experiential learning.

These participatory dynamics enable community members—especially youth—to embody religious values through collective practice rather than passive reception. Third, the strategic use of local language, idioms, and cultural symbols enhances message accessibility and relevance, confirming earlier Indonesian studies on culturally adaptive da'wah. These mechanisms collectively indicate that artistic da'wah facilitates not only the transmission but also the transformation of religious behavior, surpassing traditional didactic preaching by activating emotional, social, and cultural dimensions of learning.

c. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Art-Based Religious Transformation

Multiple enabling conditions contribute to the success of artistic da'wah in Pagutan. Collaboration between religious leaders and cultural practitioners ensures doctrinal integrity while preserving aesthetic authenticity, reflecting theoretical claims that religious communication is most effective when mediated through culturally meaningful channels (Rakhmat, 2018). The resonance of local art forms with community identity echoes long-standing observations that Islam historically spreads through localized cultural expressions such as syair, tembang, and wayang (Wahdani, 2025; Djaya, 2022). Youth participation—visible in hadrah ensembles, Qur'anic performance arts, and religious theatre—aligns with findings that artistic-religious activities enhance spiritual enthusiasm and positive behavioral change (Rohman, 2023). These supporting factors position Pagutan as a living example of cultural da'wah in a contemporary setting, consistent with Mandaville's (2020) argument that modern Muslim identity is increasingly shaped by recurring cultural-ritual practices.

However, several inhibiting factors also emerged. The availability of resources remains uneven, limiting the continuity of training and artistic development. The tension between traditional forms and the appeal of digital or commercial entertainment mirrors concerns raised by scholarship on the decline of oral traditions such as mamaca in an era dominated by textual and digital paradigms (Sholihin, 2025). Additionally, not all community members share the same enthusiasm for artistic approaches, and generational differences occasionally create friction regarding which forms of art are considered religiously appropriate. These challenges highlight structural vulnerabilities that may hinder long-term sustainability and call for strategic community-based interventions. Thus, the third research objective is addressed by identifying conditions that both support and constrain art-driven religious transformation.

2. Comparison with Previous Literature

The findings of this study demonstrate strong alignment with global scholarship on the intersection between religion and art, particularly regarding the increasing relevance of artistic media as channels of contemporary Islamic communication. As highlighted in the introduction, international studies argue that “visual media now function not only as historical artefacts but also as channels of modern religious communication” (Zhang & Qian, 2024). The present study confirms this trend at the local level: artistic expressions in

Pagutan Karang Genteng—such as syair, vocal Islamic arts, and religious theatre—serve as affective mediums through which Islamic teachings are simplified, emotionally contextualized, and socially disseminated. This parallels findings by Baulch & Pramiyanti, (2018), who note that visual-aesthetic forms help shape new modes of da’wah for youth audiences.

The results also resonate with Islamic art scholarship stating that cultural context plays a decisive role in shaping the communicative function of art. Bloom and Blair (2019) argue that artistic forms adapt religious values to local sensibilities, while Gruber (2019) emphasizes the “powerful capacity” of visual representation to evoke spiritual and emotional engagement. This aligns with local observations in Pagutan, where adapted artistic performances bridge doctrinal teachings with local cultural identity and enhance community participation.

Consistent with national research, the findings demonstrate that culturally grounded da’wah fosters acceptance and internalization of Islamic values. Ariani et al., (2025) argue that da’wah rooted in local culture shifts religious communication from a didactic to a dialogical model—mirrored in this study’s finding that community enthusiasm increases when religious messages are expressed through familiar artistic formats. Similarly, studies on Qur’anic recitation, syair, and traditional music (Rojanah & Fatikhun, 2023; Wibowo, 2016) affirm the role of vocal and musical arts in strengthening religious awareness. The observed impact of hadrah, calligraphy, and youth artistic activities in Pagutan parallels findings by Fitriani & Sulistyani, (2022) and Rohman, (2023), who demonstrate that artistic-religious engagement shapes moral discipline and spiritual identity.

At the theoretical level, this study’s results reinforce perspectives from Cultural Da’wah Theory and Social Aesthetics, which conceptualize art as a communicative and transformative system (Aziz, 2016; Dewey, 2005). As the introduction notes, religious identity is shaped “not only by doctrine but also by recurring cultural practices” (Mandaville, 2020), a pattern clearly observable in Pagutan’s integration of art into daily religious life. Additionally, the transformative effect of artistic da’wah found in this study strengthens the claims of Religious Transformation Theory (Berger, 2011), which posits that religious behavior evolves through sustained cultural exposure.

Where the present study departs from previous literature is in its holistic examination of multiple artistic forms operating simultaneously within a single community

context. Earlier research has often focused on specific media—such as jathilan (Salsabiila & Algifahmy, 2024), calligraphy (Madina, 2024), tambourine music (Isa, 2023), or digital religious music (Perdana, 2024). However, these works rarely address how diverse artistic expressions collectively shape a community's religious transformation. By examining vocal arts, performance arts, and visual arts together, this study addresses the gap identified in the introduction: the insufficient exploration of how “multiple artistic expressions... interact in a single locality to shape religious identity, communal behavior, and cultural-religious continuity.”

The study not only confirms patterns established in previous literature but also extends the scholarly conversation by demonstrating the synergistic influence of integrated artistic practices on religious transformation in a contemporary Indonesian Muslim community.

3. Implications

The findings of this study contribute important advancements to the scholarly understanding of cultural da'wah and the transformative role of art in contemporary Muslim communities. Theoretically, the results directly reinforce the conceptual framework outlined in the introduction, which draws from Cultural Da'wah Theory (Aziz, 2016; Sutanto, 2020), Social Aesthetics and Art-as-Transformation Theory (Dewey, 2005; Becker, 2017), Religious Communication Theory (Rakhmat, 2018), and Religious Transformation Theory (Berger, 2011; Woodward, 2018). Consistent with these perspectives, the study demonstrates that artistic expression in Pagutan Karang Genteng functions not merely as cultural ornamentation but as an affective and communicative system capable of shaping spiritual experience and influencing religious behavior. The synergy among vocal, performative, and visual arts observed in the field strongly supports theoretical claims that religious identity emerges through recurring cultural practices rather than doctrinal transmission alone.

Practically, the findings illuminate the strategic value of integrating artistic expression into community-based religious programs. Increased participation, deeper emotional engagement, and observable behavioral improvements indicate that art-based da'wah can serve as a flexible and culturally resonant tool for religious educators, community leaders, and youth organizations. The collaborative model between religious figures and local artists, the adaptation of theological messages into artistic formats, and the development of youth-centered creative initiatives provide actionable frameworks for other

communities seeking to revitalize religious engagement. Moreover, the study suggests broader implications for policymakers and cultural institutions, particularly the potential of art-driven religious programs to strengthen social cohesion, preserve cultural heritage, and sustain intergenerational transmission of Islamic values.

4. Limitations

Despite its contributions, this study acknowledges several methodological limitations. First, the research is limited to a single community—Pagutan Karang Genteng—meaning that the findings may not be fully generalizable to other socio-cultural contexts with different artistic traditions or religious dynamics. Future studies may benefit from comparative analyses across multiple regions. Second, the sample size, although sufficient for qualitative depth, remains relatively small, which may restrict the diversity of perspectives captured, particularly from marginalized or less active community members.

Third, the reliance on interviews and observations may involve subjective biases, including selective memory, social desirability in responses, and the researcher's interpretive influence. While triangulation was applied, some aspects of artistic impact—such as long-term behavioral change—could not be measured quantitatively. Fourth, several external variables, such as digital media consumption, individual family background, or broader socio-political influences, were not fully controlled yet may significantly shape religious transformation.

Recognizing these limitations allows future research to refine methodological approaches, integrate mixed-method designs, and explore the dynamics of art-based da'wah across diverse settings to deepen the theoretical and practical understanding of religion-art interaction.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relevance of art as a medium of religious transformation within the contemporary practice of cultural *da'wah* in Pagutan Karang Genteng. The findings confirm that diverse artistic expressions—vocal, performative, and visual—serve as effective communicative tools that reinforce Islamic teachings and strengthen community religious life. In line with the research objectives, three principal results were identified: (1) cultural art forms are actively practised and integrated into religious

gatherings, youth activities, and communal events; (2) art-based *da'wah* fosters emotional engagement, enhances public participation, and contributes to observable improvements in religious attitudes and behaviour; and (3) key supporting factors include strong collaboration among religious leaders and artists, community cultural continuity, and youth involvement, whereas inhibiting factors encompass limited resources, inconsistent institutional support, and generational differences in artistic preferences. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that art occupies a transformative role in local *da'wah* practices by creating a spiritually engaging and culturally resonant environment.

This research fills an important empirical and theoretical gap in the scholarship on cultural *da'wah*. Theoretically, it expands the model of art-based religious communication by integrating Cultural *Da'wah* Theory, Social Aesthetics, Religious Communication Theory, and Religious Transformation Theory, demonstrating how artistic practices operate as affective systems that shape spiritual experience, consistent with Bloom and Blair (2019) and Gruber (2019). Empirically, it validates that multiple artistic forms can function collectively to influence religious identity and communal behaviour within a single locality—an aspect underexplored in prior studies that tend to focus on isolated art forms (e.g., *jathilan*, *hadrah*, calligraphy). In the context of Indonesian Islamic studies, the study documents how a contemporary Muslim community harmonises Islamic values with cultural heritage through synergistic artistic practices, offering a model for culturally grounded *da'wah* in plural social environments.

Based on the study's findings and limitations, several directions for future research are recommended. Longitudinal studies are needed to evaluate the long-term effects of art-based *da'wah* on behavioural transformation and religious identity. Broader multi-site research across different regions of Indonesia would enhance the generalisability of the model developed in this study and enable comparative analysis of local variations. In addition, experimental or intervention-based studies could test the effectiveness of specific artistic formats, such as digital visual art, youth theatre, or interactive vocal performance—in strengthening religious engagement among different demographic groups. Such work will help refine theoretical models and support the development of innovative, culturally responsive *da'wah* strategies.

REFERENCES

- Abbas, A. (2021). *Cultural Islam and contemporary Muslim societies*. Lexington Books.
- Andani, M., Ichsan, Y., Yulianti, S., & Fadhilah, V. (2022). Peran Seni Islam dalam Film Pendek Nussa “Belajar Jujur” sebagai Media Dakwah Pembinaan Akhlak. *BUSYRO: Journal of Broadcasting and Islamic Communication Studies*, 3(2), 76–81. <https://doi.org/10.55352/kpi.v3i2.234>
- Ariani, A., Fuadi, A., Idris, M., & Ariani, A. (2025). Integration of da’wah ethics and psychology in Banjar culture: A humanistic approach to religious communication. *Mubarrik: Jurnal Dakwah dan Sosial*, 8(2), 33–47. <https://doi.org/10.37680/muharrik.v8i2.7922>
- Aziz, A. (2016). *Ilmu Dakwah*. Kencana.
- Baulch, E., & Pramiyanti, A. (2018). Hijabers on Instagram: Using visual social media to construct the ideal Muslim woman. *Social Media + Society*, 4(4), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118800308>
- Becker, H. S. (2017). *Art worlds* (Updated and expanded ed.). University of California Press.
- Berger, P. L. (2011). *The sacred canopy: Elements of a sociological theory of religion*. Open Road Integrated Media.
- Bloom, J., & Blair, S. (2019). *Islamic art: Past, present, future*. Thames & Hudson.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Dewey, J. (2005). *Art as experience*. Penguin.
- Djaya, S. (2022). Relevansi Abadi Dakwah Kultural. *Dakwah: Jurnal Kajian Dakwah dan Kemasyarakatan*, 26(2), 221–231. <https://doi.org/10.15408/dakwah.v26i2.29326>
- El-Nawawy, M., & Khamis, S. (2020). *Digital world, religious communication, and media narratives*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fitriani, N. L., & Sulistyani, A. (2022). Seni Hadrah sebagai Media Dakwah dalam Membangun Syiar Islam di Masjid. *Ulumul Syar’i: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Hukum dan Syariah*, 11(2), 34–54. <https://doi.org/10.52051/ulumulsyari.v11i2.211>
- Flick, U. (Ed.). (2018). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data collection*. SAGE Publications.
- Gruber, C. (2019). *The praiseworthy one: The Prophet Muhammad in Islamic texts and images*. Indiana University Press.
- Isa, A. (2023). Tambourine art as a da’wah strategy in the actualization of Islamic values in Islamic religious education learning. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Indonesia (JPAAI)*, 4(4), 106–112. <https://doi.org/10.37251/jpaa.v4i4.951>
- Madina, A. (2024). Calligraphy art as a medium of da’wah in the development of Islam. *Eduslamic: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Keagamaan*, 2(1), 50–62. <https://doi.org/10.59548/jed.v2i1.261>
- Mandaville, P. (2020). *Islam and politics* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Miftachurrozaq, T., Mauli, B., Bustam, R., & Perawironegoro, D. (2023). Cultural da’wah: Analyzing Islamic education values in Kubro Siswo art Magelang. *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah*, 34(2), 129–145. <https://doi.org/10.24014/jdr.v34i2.25669>

- Perdana, F. (2024). Exploration of religious music art in Pekalongan: Transformation of tradition, digitalization, and role in contemporary preaching. *Peshum: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial dan Humaniora*, 4(1), 501–512. <https://ulilalbabinstitute.id/index.php/PESHUM/article/view/6478>
- Rakhmat, J. (2018). *Psikologi Komunikasi* (Edisi revisi). Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Rohman, N. (2023). Seni Hadroh sebagai Media Dakwah Remaja (Studi Aktivitas Keagamaan Irmas Desa Mantiasa Kecamatan Tebing Tinggi Barat). *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 1(2), 94–103. <https://jkm.my.id/index.php/komunikasi/article/view/12>
- Rojanah, & Fatikhun, M. (2023). Seni Baca Al-Qur'an sebagai Media Dakwah di Desa Karangjambu Kabupaten Purbalingga. *Jurnal Ilmiah Komunikasi dan Penyiaran Islam*, 7(1), 25–41.
- Safei, A. A. (2021). The transmission of Islamic messages in local social space through artistic approach the transmission of Islamic messages in the transmission of Islamic messages in *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10(1), 541–562.
- Salsabiila, A., & Algifahmy, A. F. (2024). Da'wah cultural in Yogyakarta: Transformation tradition art Jathilan in Java. *Islah: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin, Adab dan Dakwah*, 6(2), 353–368. <https://doi.org/10.32939/ishlah.v6i2.366>
- Scharbrodt, O., Woodward, M., Mandaville, P., & Amghar, S. (2018). *Islam and the liberal state: National identity and the future of Muslim communities*. I.B. Tauris.
- Sholihin, A. B. (2025). The degradation of the role of Mamaca art as a medium for proselytizing moderate Islam. *Journal of Islamic History*, 5(2), 112–136. <https://doi.org/10.53088/jih.v5i2.2194>
- Sutanto, A. (2020). *Dakwah Kultural di Era Modern: Pendekatan, Strategi, dan Praksis Sosial*. Prenadamedia Group.
- SyaFi, A. G. (2022). Seni sebagai Media Dakwah dalam Pemberdayaan Masyarakat. *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan*, 16(4), 1512–1520. <https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v16i4.1189>
- Wahdani, A. (2025). Metode Penyebaran Islam di Nusantara melalui Kesenian. *Fathir: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 2(3), 427–444. <https://doi.org/10.71153/fathir.v2i3.366>
- Wibowo, M., & S. (2016). Musik Genjring sebagai Sarana Dakwah Islamiah. *Dewa Ruci: Jurnal Pengkajian dan Penciptaan Seni*, 11(2), 60–69. <https://doi.org/10.33153/dewaruci.v11i2.2560>
- Woodward, M. (2018). *Islam in Java: Normative piety and mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta*. Arizona State University Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Yusuf, M. (2018). Seni sebagai Media Dakwah. *Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi*, 2(1), 225–238. https://doi.org/10.32332/ath_thariq.v2i1.1079
- Zhang, H., & Qian, C. Z. (2024). The interplay of religion and the visual arts: A bibliometric. *Religions*, 15(4), 481. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15040481>