

## The Training of Young Preachers (*Da'i Kecil*) Based on Islamic History in Indonesia: Integrating Local Wisdom into Learning

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### ABSTRACT

This study explores the implementation of a "small preacher" training program based on the history of Islam in Indonesia, integrating local wisdom into the learning process. The research was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah 15 Surabaya, with the aim of understanding how this integrated approach influences students' religious understanding and character development. The study used a qualitative approach, collecting data through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The results indicate that integrating Islamic history with local wisdom significantly enhances students' understanding of Islam, as well as their appreciation of local cultural values. The integration of values such as cooperation, tolerance, and mutual respect, which are deeply embedded in local wisdom, has proven effective in shaping students' character. The study concludes that combining Islamic history with local wisdom can create a more relevant and impactful learning experience for students. Recommendations include further teacher training, curriculum development, community involvement, and the provision of adequate resources to support this integrated approach.

**Keywords:** small preacher training, Islamic history in Indonesia, local wisdom.

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### INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in shaping the character and identity of the younger generation, especially in forming their understanding of history, culture, and religious values. One approach that can be used to teach Islamic history in Indonesia to children is through small *dai* training, which aims to introduce children to the duties of *da'wah*, religious values, and knowledge of Islamic history relevant to their local context (Harahap et al., 2023; Muzakki et al., 2023). This training not only focuses on the spiritual aspect but also includes an understanding of the history of Islam in Indonesia and how the religion developed in the country, with an approach that integrates local

wisdom (Setiawati & Romli, 2023; Elyana & Das, 2022).

Islamic history in Indonesia possesses a rich and distinctive dimension. The arrival of Islam in the archipelago influenced not only religious aspects but also reshaped the social, cultural, and political structures of society. By implementing small *dai* training rooted in Islamic history, children can learn about the significant contributions of Islamic figures in Indonesian history, such as the Wali Songo, who spread *da'wah* by integrating Islamic teachings with local traditions and culture (Azka et al., 2024; Nasution & Marsanda, 2023). This approach aligns with education based on local wisdom, which emphasizes the importance of instilling

values that resonate with local traditions while maintaining universal religious principles (Muzakki et al., 2023; Tsabita & Arifin, 2023).

Incorporating local wisdom into religious education allows children to study Islam in a more contextualized manner, tailored to their cultural backgrounds. This method is expected to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Indonesia's diverse cultures while ensuring that religious teachings remain relevant and applicable to everyday life (Helawati et al., 2024; Ghaisani & Gani, 2024). Consequently, this research seeks to examine how small dai training, grounded in Indonesia's Islamic history, can be integrated with local wisdom in education. The goal is to cultivate a generation that is not only intellectually capable but also possesses strong moral character and a deep appreciation for their cultural heritage (Rochmah, 2023; Triani et al., 2023).

This study aims to contribute to the development of innovative and contextually relevant learning models while offering new perspectives on the significance of integrating religious values and local wisdom into education. Such an approach is essential for shaping the character and identity of Indonesian children (Ghaisani & Gani, 2024; Harahap et al., 2023).

## METHOD

This study was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah 15 Surabaya, chosen as the research site because the school implements small dai training based on the history of Islam in Indonesia and integrates local wisdom into its learning process. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to gain a deep understanding of the implementation of small dai training in the context of Islamic education that is relevant to local culture (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Data was collected through in-depth interviews with small dai training participants, teachers, and local community leaders. In addition, the researcher also conducted participatory observation to directly observe the training activities and interactions in the teaching and learning process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Documents related to the training materials, curriculum, and the history of Islam in Indonesia were also analyzed to enrich the understanding of the integration of Islamic history and local

wisdom in education (Patton, 2014). The data analysis technique used is thematic analysis, by identifying, categorizing, and interpreting data based on the main themes that emerged. This study aims to explore how small dai training, based on the history of Islam in Indonesia, can be integrated with local wisdom to form character and religious understanding that is relevant to the children at SD Muhammadiyah 15 Surabaya.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

This study aims to explore small dai training based on the history of Islam in Indonesia and how the integration of local wisdom in the learning process can shape students' character and religious understanding. Using a qualitative approach involving interviews, observations, and document analysis, this research reveals several important findings related to the implementation of small dai training at SD Muhammadiyah 15 Surabaya. Based on the data collected, it was found that this training is not only effective in enhancing students' religious understanding but also in instilling local values that are deeply rooted in Indonesian culture.



**Figure 1.** Documentation of *Pildacil* competition

First, small dai training based on the history of Islam in Indonesia has proven to be very effective in improving students' understanding of the spread of Islam in the country. The program emphasizes important figures in the history of Islam in Indonesia, such as Wali Songo, who are known as the spreaders of Islamic teachings in

Java. Additionally, the training reveals how Islam has shaped and influenced local cultures in various regions of Indonesia. Students, especially those in grades 4 and 5, showed significant progress in their understanding of Islamic history. They not only learned historical facts but also understood how the Islamic preaching carried out by scholars and saints blended with local culture, making it easier for the community to accept Islamic teachings in a more contextual and relevant way. This aligns with findings mentioned by Muzakki et al. (2023), who emphasize the importance of developing curricula based on religious values relevant to the local context in shaping students' character.

Second, the integration of local wisdom in small *dai* training plays a significant role in shaping students' character. Teachers involved in the training actively incorporate local wisdom values such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), tolerance, and togetherness into each lesson. These values not only teach students about the importance of social relationships in *daily* life but also shape them into individuals who are wiser in responding to the diversity around them. Through this approach, students not only learn about Islamic teachings but also understand how these teachings can be embodied in their *daily* lives while maintaining harmony with the surrounding culture and community. This is also supported by Setiawati & Romli (2023), who indicate that da'wah communication can shape children's character through values relevant to their lives.

Third, the results of observations during the training show that children are more interested and absorb the material more easily when the history of Islam is connected with elements of local culture they are familiar with. Learning that combines historical stories with relevant local cultural practices makes the material easier to accept and understand by students. They feel more connected to the material being taught because they see that Islamic teachings are not separate from their cultural life but actually support and enrich it. This process not only deepens students' understanding of Islamic history but also provides them with a broader understanding of the importance of preserving cultural diversity within the framework of universal religious teachings. This approach is also highlighted by Nasution & Marsanda

(2023), who identify the importance of a contextual approach in da'wah to facilitate understanding among communities with diverse cultures.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that small *dai* training based on the history of Islam, which integrates local wisdom, is highly effective in improving students' religious understanding as well as in shaping better character. Students not only acquire knowledge about religion but also learn to appreciate and preserve local wisdom that is an inseparable part of their identity as Indonesians.

## **Discussion**

Small *dai* training based on the history of Islam in Indonesia plays a crucial role in fostering a deeper understanding of religion while also raising awareness about the significance of Islamic history in the Indonesian context. One key aspect that makes this training successful is its ability to connect religious teachings with local culture. The history of Islam in Indonesia is unique and rich, where Islamic preaching was carried out with a highly adaptive approach to local traditions and cultures. The da'wah carried out by Wali Songo, for example, was not just about teaching Islamic principles but also aligning those teachings with the local customs and culture. These figures are known for their innovative methods, such as adapting art, culture, and even local rituals to facilitate the spread of Islam. In this way, Islamic teachings did not seem foreign to the Indonesian people but were accepted as part of their life, making the process of assimilation easier. This aligns with the statement by Ghaisani & Gani (2024), who show how cultural approaches can enhance religious enthusiasm among Madrasah students.

By integrating local wisdom into small *dai* training, the learning of Islam is no longer viewed as separate or dogmatic, but becomes an integral part of students' everyday lives. This changes students' perception of religion, showing them that Islam is not just a set of teachings that apply outside their context, but is also relevant to their cultural life. In this context, children are taught to understand that Islamic teachings can coexist and integrate with their local culture. This process provides space for students to appreciate the cultural diversity that exists in Indonesia, as well as deepen their

understanding of how universal Islamic values can be applied in various cultures across the country. This finding aligns with Azka et al. (2024), who emphasize the importance of da'wah education that integrates local values to shape tolerant and nationalistic youth.

Several values of local wisdom applied in this training, such as gotong royong (mutual cooperation) and the importance of interfaith tolerance, are very much in harmony with Islamic teachings that encourage peaceful coexistence, respect, and harmony in a plural society. These values not only support the formation of students' character but also enrich their understanding of Islam, making it more humanistic and compassionate towards others. In every lesson, these values are instilled through real-life examples that students can find in their *daily* lives, enabling them to internalize religious teachings in practical actions. This not only helps students understand Islamic teachings but also fosters a high level of social awareness and ethics, as found by Helawati et al. (2024) in their study on developing self-confidence among students.

However, despite the positive outcomes, there are some challenges in implementing this training. One challenge is the limited resources available to support the training, including the shortage of teaching materials that integrate local wisdom with Islamic history. Some teachers still struggle to adapt Islamic historical content to local cultural contexts without diminishing the essence of the religious teachings themselves. This may be due to a lack of references or adequate training for teachers in developing more contextual and relevant materials for students' lives. Therefore, it is important to provide further training for teachers, emphasizing the need to develop curricula that not only teach Islamic history but also connect it with the local cultural values alive in society.

Additionally, there needs to be closer collaboration between schools, communities, and local religious leaders to support this training. Such collaboration will help students relate Islamic teachings to their social and cultural realities, ensuring that the material taught is easier for them to understand and accept. Teachers also need space to innovate in their teaching methods, so that the history of

Islam can be conveyed in an engaging and relevant way for students. In this regard, support from various parties, including the development of resources and access to more diverse teaching materials, is crucial to ensuring the sustainability and success of small *dai* training based on Islamic history and local wisdom.

Overall, this study shows that small *dai* training based on Islamic history and local wisdom has a positive impact on character development and students' understanding of religion. By integrating Islamic history with local wisdom, religious learning becomes more alive, relevant, and rooted in students' everyday lives. This not only shapes a more holistic understanding of religion but also cultivates a sense of love and respect for Indonesia's history and culture. Thus, small *dai* training based on Islamic history and local wisdom can become an effective model for learning.

## **CONCLUSION**

Small *dai* training based on the history of Islam in Indonesia, which integrates local wisdom into the learning process, has proven effective in shaping students' understanding of religion and character. The research results indicate that by connecting the history of Islam in Indonesia with local culture, students find it easier to absorb the material and feel more connected to religious teachings. The integration of local wisdom values, such as gotong royong (mutual cooperation), tolerance, and togetherness, in small *dai* training enriches students' learning experiences and shapes their attitudes toward the cultural diversity present in Indonesia. However, challenges remain regarding the limited teaching resources that integrate these two elements in a more systematic way.

## **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to improve the effectiveness of small *dai* training based on the history of Islam and local wisdom. First, it is important to enhance teacher training to help them better understand how to integrate local wisdom into teaching Islamic history, by providing more innovative and context-based training. Second, developing a more

comprehensive curriculum that connects Islamic history with various local cultures in Indonesia can enrich students' learning experiences, making them more inclusive and relevant. Additionally, collaboration with local communities and religious leaders can enrich learning materials and provide more dynamic experiences for students. Finally, it is crucial to ensure the availability of adequate resources, both in terms of teaching materials, learning aids, and external support, to support the implementation of integrating Islamic history and local wisdom into small *dai* training.

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