

## Islamic Boarding School Education: Patterns of Da'i Santri Character Building in Digital Era

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### ABSTRACT

*The integration of digital technology in Islamic educational institutions is increasingly essential in equipping students to address contemporary challenges. This study examines Pondok Pesantren Darullughah Wadda'wah (Dalwa), which effectively utilizes digital platforms such as Dalwa TV to enhance education and training of da'i among its 7,450 students among 4 universities. Established in 1981, the pesantren merges traditional religious education by integrating innovative digital approaches to create a holistic learning environment. The method used in this research include interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that Dalwa integrates religious teachings with practical skills in communication and media production, enabling students to actively participate in digital dakwah. Furthermore, the pesantren incorporates syariah-based economic empowerment initiatives, offering students entrepreneurial experience. Despite challenges such as technological skill gaps, Dalwa addresses them through targeted training and infrastructure development. This study highlights the pesantren's ability to adapt with digital era, producing competent da'i capable of navigating the complexities of modern society. Dalwa's success exemplifies how Islamic institutions can innovate to remain relevant in a rapidly evolving technological landscape, providing a benchmark for other pesantren.*

**Keywords:** *Dakwah, Digital Education, Innovation Pesantren*

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### INTRODUCTION

Pesantren is an educational institution that has a central role in shaping the character and personality of students, especially in the religious field. One of the main goals of education in Islamic boarding schools is to produce a generation that is not only intelligent in religious science but also has noble morals and can apply their knowledge in society. Along with the times, especially in this digital era, pesantren face new challenges in delivering da'wah and education, as well as utilizing technology to enrich the teaching and learning process (Khamim, 2022).

The Darullughah Wadda'wah Islamic Boarding School (Dalwa), as one of the salaf Islamic boarding schools that has adapted to the digital era, shows significant innovations in facing the changing times. Dalwa Islamic Boarding School not only focuses on teaching religious science in nature, but also provides opportunities for its students to develop knowledge and other skills through higher education programs. Students at Dalwa Islamic Boarding School can access formal education and earn a bachelor's degree, which allows them to become dai with more complete academic qualifications. Study programs offered such as Islamic Education Management (MPI), Islamic Religious Education (PAI), Islamic Family Law (HKI), Islamic Communication and Broadcasting (KPI), and many others, the opportunities for students to develop their competencies even wider, both in the field of religion and in the socio-economic field (Aisyah & Rofiah, 2022).

In addition, the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School also seeks to face the challenges of the digital era by developing its own broadcasting media, such as Dalwa TV, which is as a means to convey da'wah more widely and effectively. This pesantren also provides advanced facilities, including digital-based learning spaces with the latest technology such as touch screens to support a more interactive and modern teaching and learning process. New buildings with complete facilities, such as Mabna Abuuya Hasan which has 11 floors, show the seriousness of this pesantren in preparing students to become competent dai in a world that is increasingly influenced by digital technology.

This research is highly crucial to explore how the Dalwa Islamic boarding school shapes the character of da'i santri in the digital era, by examining the educational patterns applied and the innovations presented by this Islamic boarding school. This is relevant considering the challenges of the growing world of da'wah, where digital technology is a potential tool to expand the reach of da'wah and educate the public more efficiently. This research will provide an in-depth understanding of the role of pesantren in producing da'i who not only have deep religious knowledge, but are also able to utilize technology in their da'wah.

There are significant differences between this study and earlier research that tended to concentrate more on the analysis of conventional Islamic boarding schools and religious instruction strategies rather than the use of technology into the educational process. Few studies have looked at how pesantren, particularly Dalwa Islamic Boarding School, use digital innovations in printing da'i who are not only religious but also tech-savvy. Several earlier studies have looked at how well pesantren shapes students' character using a traditional approach. In addition, there have not been many studies that delve deeply discusses how higher education offered by Islamic boarding schools, such as MPI study programs, KPI, and others, can contribute to enriching the quality of a da'i in the digital era. This research will fill this gap by comprehensively focusing on how Dalwa Islamic

boarding schools combine traditional religious education and modern education, as well as utilizing technology to support da'wah in the digital era.

## **METHOD**

This study applies a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to deeply understand the process of forming da'i character in the Darullughah Wadda'wah (Dalwa) Islamic Boarding School. This approach is considered relevant because it allows exploration of complex social and cultural phenomena, as well as exploring the meanings behind educational actions and practices applied in Islamic boarding schools. The application of this approach is in line with the principle that qualitative research is used to explore social experiences, views, and practices rooted in specific contexts.

This study uses a case study method that focuses on the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School as data. Case studies allow researchers to conduct in-depth investigations into applied educational patterns, programs, and technological innovations. The location of this pesantren was chosen because of its relevance and uniqueness in integrating digital technology with religious education, which is an important aspect in this research.

The research subjects involved students, caregivers, teachers, alumni, and technology managers. The participating students consist of those who participate in formal education programs as well as those involved in digital broadcasting activities such as Dalwa TV. Caregivers and teachers act as data sources to understand learning philosophies and patterns. Alumni and technology managers were also included to gain perspectives on digital da'wah practices and technical aspects of technology integration.

Data collection was carried out through various methods: in-depth interviews to explore the experiences and views of research subjects, participatory observation to understand direct practices in the pesantren environment, and analysis of official documents that included recordings of digital da'wah activities and learning materials. In addition, a literature study was used to compare the results of this study with relevant references from previous studies (Waliam, 2019).

The collected data was analyzed using a reduction technique consisting of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction is done by simplifying inbuilding to highlight key patterns. Data presentation is carried out in the form of narratives or visualizations such as tables and diagrams to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions are drawn by analyzing the findings thoroughly to answer the research question.

The validity and reliability of the data are maintained through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checks. Triangulation is carried out by comparing data from various collection methods, while member

checks are used to confirm the results of the analysis to the research subjects to ensure data accuracy. This approach ensures that the results of the research are not only valid, but can also be applied to the development of technology-based education in the pesantren environment (Laila & Shari, 2016).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Institution of Darullughah Wadda'wah Islamic Boarding School

By making use of its current resources, Dalwa Islamic Boarding School has effectively incorporated digital technology into its students' education, promoting more contemporary teaching and learning methods. The usage of broadcasting media, like Dalwa TV, which serves as a learning environment for students to comprehend the media landscape and obtain real-world experience through the creation of da'wah content, is one of the major ways that the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School is implementing digitalization. Students get knowledge of communication and da'wah theories through Dalwa TV, but they also get hands-on experience in delivering religious teachings to the public (Mutmainah, 2023).

Dalwa Islamic Boarding School, which was founded by Al Habib Hasan Baharun in 1981, has now grown rapidly with a total of 7,450 students and four campuses. Along with these developments, Dalwa Islamic Boarding School continues to innovate in the building of da'i character through a well-rounded education, which includes strong religious education as well as practical skills needed in the modern world. The educational programs offered by this pesantren consist of various levels, ranging from I'dadiyah (preparation) to Madrasah Aliyah (advanced), as well as special takhassus programs that focus on specific fields, all of which lead to the achievement of the goal of producing a generation of da'i who are competent and ready to face the challenges of the times (Malik, 2018).

Below is a table that can support the results of your research, with relevant inbuilding about aspects of education, technology, and economic empowerment in Dalwa Islamic Boarding School:

**Table 1.** Aspects of Education, Technology, and Economic Empowerment

Aspects	Description	Relevance
<b>Religious Education</b>	The curriculum is based on early science, such as tafsir, hadith, and fiqh. Traditional methods: sorogan, bandongan.	Forming a deep understanding of religion and a character based on noble morals according to the values of the pesantren.
<b>Formal Education</b>	Study programs: from Mts to Higher Education (S1 - S3) various Study Programs.	Preparing students with formal academic competencies to support more professional da'wah in the modern era.
<b>Utilization of Technology</b>	Dalwa TV as a medium for learning and da'wah,	Supporting an educational process that is adaptive to technological

Aspects	Description	Relevance
	digital classrooms (touch screens).	developments and equipping students with digital skills.
<b>Digital Da'wah Innovation</b>	The production of interactive da'wah content by students through Dalwa TV and social media.	Providing direct experience in conveying religious messages to the community effectively in the digital era.
<b>Economic Empowerment</b>	Sharia businesses: hotels, mini markets, bread, printing, Hajj and Umrah travel.	Building the economic independence of students and creating a sharia-based empowerment model that is relevant to the needs of the community.
<b>Technology Training</b>	Intensive training on the use of technology for new students and cooperation with external institutions.	Close the technology skills gap among new students and ensure the continuity of digital Innovation in Islamic boarding schools.
<b>Challenge</b>	Technology skills gap, infrastructure updates.	Encourage Pesantren to continue to improve the quality and sustainability of educational technology facilities.
<b>Positive Impact</b>	Alumni have mastery of religious knowledge, communication skills, confidence, and creativity.	Proving the effectiveness of the innovative approach of Pesantren in producing da'i that is competent and relevant to the challenges of modern da'wah.

In addition, this Islamic boarding school also develops sharia economic empowerment through various businesses that are carried out, such as bread making, mini markets, hotels, printing houses, to Hajj and Umrah travel. This not only strengthens the aspect of religious education, but also provides students with experience in managing businesses, which is important to form a da'i that has economic independence (Mukri, 2016). With these various fields of business, the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School is an inspiring example for other Islamic boarding schools in utilizing sharia technology and economics as part of efforts to form da'i that are relevant to the needs of modern society.

Overall, Dalwa Islamic Boarding School has succeeded in combining strong religious education with adaptability to technology, which has resulted in students who not only have in-depth religious knowledge but also skills in digital media-based da'wah and entrepreneurship (Almira et al., 2021). This approach shows that pesantren can transform into an institution that not only focuses on traditional religious education but also innovates to produce da'i that are ready to compete in the digital era.

This research reveals how the Darullughah Wadda'wah Islamic Boarding School (Dalwa) has succeeded in integrating traditional religious education with digital technology in shaping the character of da'i santri in the digital era (Muchasan et al., 2024). Based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation analysis, it was found that the Dalwa Islamic boarding school

developed a holistic and innovative educational pattern to produce da'i who are not only competent in religious science but also able to utilize technology in da'wah.



**Figure 1.** One of the learning innovations at the Dalwa Hotel

The Dalwa Islamic Boarding School applies an educational approach that combines the teaching of religious science with the cultivation of noble moral values. The pesantren curriculum is designed to strengthen the mastery of diniyah, such as tafsir, hadith, and fiqh, through traditional methods such as sorogan and bandongan (Syafe'i, 2017). Furthermore, dormitory system encourages the development of character through routine practices like halaqah, congregational prayers, and the instillation of Islamic values. Through study programs like Islamic Education Management (MPI) and Islamic Communication and Broadcasting (KPI), students can also receive formal education at the university level. Students' abilities are enhanced by this combination, equipping them to handle the demands of da'wah in the contemporary world.

The use of digital technology by Dalwa Islamic boarding schools to enhance the teaching and da'wah process is one of the primary advances identified in this study. One specific illustration of how technology might be used as a da'wah medium is the establishment of Dalwa TV. Dalwa TV offers interactive educational programs that actively engage pupils in addition to religious lectures. Furthermore, touch-screen classrooms and other technology-based learning spaces facilitate a more contemporary and efficient learning environment (Abidin, 2020). The use of this technology not only improves learning efficiency but also equips students with relevant digital skills to preach on social media.

The skills gap among new students and the requirement to constantly update the IT infrastructure are two issues that this study also highlights as obstacles to the use of digital technologies. In order to get around this, Dalwa Islamic boarding school works with other organizations to secure financing and technical assistance while also giving pupils rigorous instruction on how to use technology. This action

demonstrates Pesantren's dedication to successfully fusing traditional and modern education (Supandi et al., 2024).

The results of the study also show the positive impact of this innovation on the building of the character of the students. Alumni of the Islamic boarding school stated that education in Dalwa not only provides in-depth mastery of religious knowledge but also practical skills that support da'wah in digital media. Students who are active in Dalwa TV, for example, have experienced an increase in confidence, communication skills, and creativity in conveying religious messages.

Overall, the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School has succeeded in answering the challenges of the digital era through an adaptive and innovative educational approach. This pesantren not only maintains traditional values but also utilizes technology to print da'i that is relevant to the needs of modern society. This educational model can be a reference for other Islamic boarding schools in facing the dynamics of changing times (Al Idrus, 2016).

### **Dalwa Islamic Boarding School Education in Shaping the Character of Students to Become Da'i**

The Dalwa Islamic Boarding School has a very important role in shaping the character and quality of the students, especially in the midst of the challenges of the increasingly rapid digital era. As mentioned in the research background, the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School not only teaches religious knowledge that is diniyyah but also integrates technology to enrich the educational and learning process of students. This approach is very relevant to the needs of the times, where digital technology has become an integral part of daily life and greatly affects the way da'wah is delivered.

One of the main innovations carried out by the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School is the use of broadcasting media, especially Dalwa TV, as a means to develop communication skills and da'wah for students. With Dalwa TV, students not only learn theories about da'wah and Islamic communication but can also practice directly in producing da'wah content. They are taught how to use media platforms to convey religious messages that are relevant to the times, making them da'i who are not only fluent in religious language, but also proficient in communicating in the digital world. This shows that pesantren can transform into educational institutions that not only teach religious knowledge but also provide the skills needed to utilize technology in da'wah.

The variety of educational programs provided at Dalwa, such as study programs like Islamic Education Management (MPI), Islamic Religious Education (PAI), and Islamic Communication and Broadcasting (KPI), also significantly aids in the process of developing students' character. Dalwa Islamic Boarding School offers its students the chance to pursue formal education leading to a bachelor's degree through this higher education program. In addition to giving students the

chance to broaden their religious knowledge, this equips them with the extra abilities needed to meet the demands of da'wah in a society that is becoming more digital and interconnected by the day. With this integration between religious education and practical skills, Dalwa students are prepared to become da'i who not only have strong religious competence but also a deep understanding of social, economic, and technological dynamics.

On the other hand, the success of the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School in developing sharia economic empowerment also makes a great contribution to the process of forming the character of the students. By owning various businesses such as mini markets, hotels, and printing houses, students are not only taught religious knowledge but also skills in managing a business. This is important, considering that an effective da'i is not only needed to talk about religion but must also be able to be an agent of change in society, including in the economic field. By having entrepreneurial skills, Dalwa students are prepared to become leaders who not only talk about the goodness of religion but can also make a direct contribution to society through productive economic activities.

All of the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School's initiatives demonstrate that the Islamic boarding school can quickly adjust to changing circumstances without compromising the fundamentals of religious instruction. Dalwa Islamic Boarding School has been successful in producing da'i who are well-versed in religion and prepared to take on the challenges of da'wah in the digital age by using a comprehensive educational approach that incorporates a strong religious education, practical skills, and technological proficiency. This demonstrates that it is quite feasible to combine traditional religious instruction with contemporary technology, and that doing so can greatly enhance the development of da'i character and proficiency in the digital age. The approach applied by the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School is an inspiring example for other Islamic boarding schools to continue to innovate and keep up with the times without leaving religious values that are the main foundation in Islamic boarding school education (Wahidah & Fatikhun, 2022).

## CONCLUSION

By fusing religious education with technology, this study demonstrates how the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School contributes significantly to the development of students' character and proficiency in the digital age. Dalwa TV is one of the technological advancements that this pesantren uses as a learning environment and broadcasting medium. This innovation aligns with the issues of da'wah in the digital age by giving students a direct understanding of the media and communication world. This suggests that in order to effectively spread the word

of da'wah, a da'i needs to be proficient in both religious understanding and digital platform usage.

The Dalwa Islamic Boarding School has also succeeded in implementing formal education through higher study programs, such as Islamic Education Management, Islamic Communication and Broadcasting, and Islamic Religious Education. These programs open up opportunities for students to continue their education to the university level, which not only deepens religious knowledge but also enriches their skills in the social, economic, and communication fields. In the context of the theory of pesantren educational innovation, Dalwa shows the ability to adapt to the times, by providing relevant education for students to prepare them to face increasingly complex social and economic challenges. Through educational programs that integrate religious values and practical skills, this pesantren is able to produce da'i who are ready to play a role in modern society.

The Dalwa Islamic Boarding School also demonstrates its dedication to economic empowerment by operating a number of sharia-compliant businesses, including mini-markets, hotels, and bread manufacturing. Through this entrepreneurial program, students can get practical economic skills that they can apply to their post-graduation lives. This strategy is consistent with the philosophy of innovation in pesantren education, which emphasizes both religious instruction and the development of students with employable skills that can benefit society (Munir, 2020). Thus, the Dalwa Islamic Boarding School has succeeded in integrating religious education, technology, and economic empowerment to produce da'i who are not only capable in religious science, but also able to innovate and contribute to an increasingly advanced and digital-based society.

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