



The Role of the Islamic Students Association in Disseminating Islamic Values and Developing Education

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Abstract

This study examines the role of the Islamic Student Association in disseminating Islamic values, promoting a deeper understanding of religion, and improving the quality of education for students and the wider community. The research employs a qualitative method with a case study approach and involves seven informants from the second and third levels of cadre training. The findings show that the Islamic Student Association plays an important role in Islamic outreach activities and educational development. The organization contributes to strengthening the understanding of Islamic teachings and fostering critical awareness of various emerging social, political, and religious issues. Its outreach activities include public lectures, sermons, seminars, and group discussions that function as platforms for promoting Islamic values. In the field of education, the Islamic Student Association contributes through leadership training, academic mentoring, student self-development, and efforts to support the provision of higher-quality education. The findings highlight several implications, including the strengthening of organizational roles in Islamic outreach, the development of concept-based religious education, student empowerment, and character formation. This study provides a clearer understanding of the potential of the Islamic Student Association in the areas of Islamic outreach and education, and it may serve as a basis for enhancing the organization's responsiveness to societal changes and community needs.

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INTRODUCTION

The Islamic Student Association was established during the period of the Indonesian Physical Revolution, two years after the Proclamation of Independence, on 5 February 1947 in Yogyakarta (Rachmanto et al., 2023; Wahid, 2018). The organization was initiated by Lafran Pane together with a number of students from the Islamic College of Yogyakarta, which is now known as the Islamic University of Indonesia. At that time, the political situation in Indonesia remained unstable due to the Dutch military aggression that sought to regain control over Indonesian territory (Scholtz, 2019). This situation encouraged various groups, including students, to take part in defending independence while strengthening social and religious life.

Since its establishment, the Islamic Student Association has carried values of struggle grounded in humanitarian responsibility, solidarity, and collective

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cooperation, as reflected in its Basic Values of Struggle (Jamilah, 2021; Khoirudin et al., 2020; Yabanci, 2021). These principles emphasize the importance of pursuing truth and justice through collective effort, perseverance, and mutual support. Such values have become the foundation for various organizational activities, both in the context of Islamic outreach and community service.

In the field of education, the Islamic Student Association seeks to encourage students to take an active role in the learning process and to increase their awareness of the importance of education for national development (Febriansyah et al., 2019; Husein et al., 2022). A range of activities such as seminars, workshops, training sessions, and academic mentoring are organized to support student capacity-building. In addition, the organization advocates for more equitable access to education by addressing issues related to educational facilities, learning policies, and assistance programs for students in need (Daulay & Azmi, 2022).

Previous studies indicate that the Islamic outreach movement within the Islamic Student Association is associated with increases in students' social awareness, the development of youth character, and the strengthening of educational quality (Ardiansyah, 2022; Ramdani et al., 2018). Several studies have shown that the organization's outreach activities not only involve conveying religious values but also include community empowerment through skills training, educational support, and participation in social activities. Other studies highlight the organization's role in promoting a moderate understanding of Islam and expanding the reach of Islamic outreach through religious studies and social media (Mutawali, 2023).

Although the role of the Islamic Student Association in outreach and education has been discussed in various studies, most of the existing research examines the organization from a broad and general perspective (Khan & Siddiqui, 2017; Risman & Asman, 2022). There is limited research that specifically explores how outreach and educational activities are implemented at the cadre level, particularly from the viewpoint of members who are directly involved in these processes. Therefore, a deeper understanding is needed regarding how these roles are practiced and how they are perceived by the cadres themselves.

While previous discussions have addressed the organization's history, outreach activities, and contributions to higher education, studies that specifically explore cadre experiences in carrying out outreach and educational activities through the training process remain limited. Most research addresses the movement in general, whereas questions related to cadre interpretations of outreach, educational strategies, and their relevance to contemporary social and technological challenges have not been examined in depth. This gap demonstrates the need for research that describes the experiences of cadres at specific training levels to understand how values, strategies, and outreach education practices are applied within the organization today (Feyyaz, 2016; Goodson, 2016).

Based on this need, the present study aims to examine the role of the Islamic Student Association in outreach and educational activities through an approach that focuses on cadre experiences and the concrete activities carried out by the organization. This study is expected to provide a more structured understanding of the organization's contributions to religious development, student growth, and community empowerment.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach, as described by Crowe et al (2016); Hyers (2018); Engkizar et al (2023), who emphasize

that case studies allow researchers to understand a phenomenon in depth within its real-life context. This approach was selected because the study focuses on the experiences and perspectives of members of the Islamic Student Association in carrying out outreach and educational activities. Data were obtained from a number of informants selected through purposive sampling. The informants were chosen based on several criteria: having adequate knowledge of outreach and educational activities within the organization, being actively involved in the Islamic Student Association, being willing to participate in interviews, and being able to provide information that reflects conditions in the field. Based on these criteria, the informants consisted of members of the Islamic Student Association at the third and second levels of cadre training in the Padang Branch.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews with all informants. After the interview process was completed, all data were transcribed to facilitate analysis (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016; Cahill et al., 2018; Engkizar et al., 2023). The transcripts were then reviewed systematically to identify themes relevant to the objectives of the study. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis based on the framework of Miles and Huberman, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, interview information was organized and simplified in accordance with the focus of the study (Febriansyah et al., 2019; Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Onwuegbuzie & Weinbaum, 2016). The data display stage involved arranging categories and thematic patterns to help the researcher observe relationships between themes more clearly. The final stage, conclusion drawing, was carried out gradually by examining the consistency between the data and the emerging findings throughout the analysis process. To support the validity of the data, this study employed source triangulation by comparing information obtained from different informants. This step was taken to ensure the coherence and reliability of the data, allowing the study's findings to be described more accurately.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study involved one informant from the third level of cadre training and six informants from the second level of cadre training. The data were obtained through in-depth interviews and analyzed using a thematic approach. Six main themes were identified: strategies for outreach and education, strengthening the quality of human resources, the integration of outreach activities with social and political engagement, the influence on educational and governmental policies, and the impact of the Islamic Student Association on Islamic development and national progress. An additional theme related to the organization's adaptation to social, cultural, and technological change also emerged from the data.

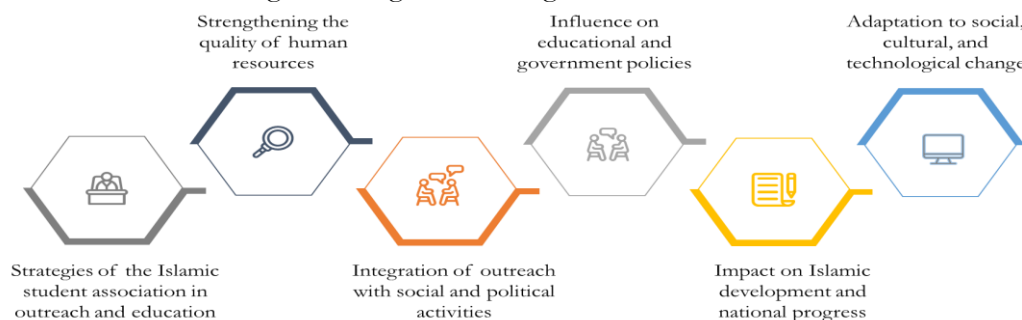


Fig 1. The Islamic student association in disseminating Islamic values

Strategies of the Islamic Student Association in Outreach and Education

The first theme relates to the organization's efforts to strengthen students' Islamic awareness through outreach and educational activities. The informants indicated that these strategies are rooted in the organization's goals and supported by the cadre training process.

One informant from the third level of cadre training stated that outreach activities originate from organizational principles based on the organization's foundational values. The informant explained:

"Whatever we do, whether in outreach or education, is always directed toward bringing benefit. Outreach does not have to take place on a pulpit; it can be carried out through personal behavior and professional roles. The essence of a cadre is to embody good example." (Informant 1)

Another informant emphasized the importance of increasing members' capacity through formal training:

"The first step is to improve members' skills through formal training and a systematic cadre development guide." (Informant 4)

Cadre training also serves as a space for building Islamic consciousness:

"In cadre forums, we are guided to develop an awareness of our roles and responsibilities as students who uphold Islamic values." (Informant 3)

The implementation of cadre training is accompanied by worship routines and Islamic learning activities:

"During cadre training, we carry out Quran recitation, short religious talks, study circles, and communal prayers, along with required materials such as organizational history and leadership." (Informant 5)

A personalized approach through mentoring, study circles, and seminars is also used:

"The organization uses personal approaches through mentoring, counseling, Quran recitation, and seminars to improve Islamic awareness." (Informant 6)

Overall, the strategies emphasize gradual cadre development, the internalization of Islamic values, and the use of activities relevant to student needs.

Strengthening the Quality of Human Resources

The second theme addresses how the organization maintains the quality of cadres produced through training and educational processes. This is carried out through a tiered training structure and post-training follow-up activities.

One informant explained:

"There are multiple levels of training, and members learn from each other through interactions, which helps them complement one another." (Informant 1)

Post-training follow-up is considered essential to deepen the learned material:

"After the first level of training, there is a follow-up program to review and deepen the material that was studied." (Informant 2)

Monitoring members after training is also part of quality enhancement:

"The department responsible for member development monitors changes that occur among members after training." (Informant 3)

Mentoring and assigning qualified instructors are also conducted to support competency development:

"The organization provides mentors and selects qualified instructors to strengthen members' competencies." (Informant 4)

These findings indicate that human resource development is carried out through structured training, systematic monitoring, and focused competency development.

Integration of Outreach with Social and Political Activities

The third theme shows that outreach within the organization is not limited to formal religious activities but is integrated with social and political engagement among students.

An informant explained:

“When members complete their involvement in the organization, they carry its values into their workplaces, reflecting both Islamic and national values.” (Informant 1)

Social issues often become subjects of discussion and advocacy:

“The organization conducts studies and critiques of social issues by utilizing technological developments.” (Informant 5)

Participation in campus political dynamics is viewed as leadership training:

“The organization involves its members in student political activities to train leadership skills.” (Informant 6)

Another informant noted that social activities are carried out in a structured manner:

“The organization actively participates in social activities such as community service and fundraising, and these are conducted professionally to maximize benefits.” (Informant 3)

This integration suggests that outreach is broadly understood as guiding, assisting, and contributing to society.

Influence on Educational and Government Policies

The next theme explains how the organization attempts to influence educational and governmental policies through studies, dialogues, and advocacy.

One informant stated:

“The organization is part of the middle class and often conducts studies that can serve as pressure through written work or dialogue sessions.” (Informant 1)

Some informants emphasized communication with government institutions:

“The organization can mediate with government authorities and convey community concerns.” (Informant 3)

A non-confrontational approach is preferred:

“The approach is not confrontational; the organization first analyzes the situation and its impacts before taking action.” (Informant 2)

Mobilization through advocacy and democratic participation is also carried out:

“The organization influences policy through advocacy, campaigns, and participation in democratic processes.” (Informant 7)

These findings indicate that the organization uses various channels to express public aspirations.

Impact on Islamic Development and National Progress

The fifth theme shows that informants perceive an impact of the organization's movement on students' Islamic development and on national progress.

One informant explained:

“All members discuss and review policies, which enables them to participate in matters of national concern.” (Informant 1)

Cadre training is viewed as influential in shaping critical thinking:

“After training, members tend to think more critically and become more concerned about society.” (Informant 2)

Another informant noted the organization's contribution to Islamic understanding and social involvement:

“The programs aim to improve Islamic understanding and develop members who contribute positively to national development.” (Informant 7)

Evaluation is carried out through reports, monitoring, and surveys:

“Through evaluation, the organization can identify which programs are effective and which need improvement.” (Informant 6)

Adaptation to Social, Cultural, and Technological Change

The final theme shows how the organization adjusts to changing social, cultural, and technological contexts.

One informant stated:

“The organization is dynamic and tends to adapt to ongoing developments and changes.” (Informant 2)

Technological adjustments are also made in educational programs:

“In the technological field, the organization updates its educational activities to align with current developments.” (Informant 2)

Social media is used to support outreach efforts:

“The organization uses social media to disseminate outreach messages and enhance the effectiveness of educational programs.” (Informant 4)

Overall, the findings show that the organization’s role in outreach and education is reflected through a structured cadre system, human resource development efforts, and the integration of Islamic values into social, political, and educational activities (Febriansyah et al., 2019; Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Méndez et al., 2021). Outreach is understood not only as delivering religious material but also as promoting values, engaging in social advocacy, and contributing to public life. The organization’s efforts to adjust to social and technological developments also enhance the effectiveness of its activities in contemporary contexts. These themes illustrate how members perceive outreach as a process of character formation and social engagement that aligns with current societal needs (Humala, 2015; Luján-álvarez et al., 2021; Sahli et al., 2023).

The findings are consistent with previous studies that highlight the organization’s role in developing Islamic awareness and leadership among students. Earlier research has noted similar patterns in outreach activities, character formation, and technological adaptation. This study contributes additional perspectives based on the experiences of members at the cadre training level.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the Islamic Student Association plays an important role in strengthening da'wah and education among students through its tiered cadre development process, the internalization of Islamic values, and the integration of organizational activities with social, political, and community issues. The findings also indicate that cadres understand da'wah not only as the dissemination of religious knowledge but also as a process of character building, leadership development, and social service that is relevant to the needs of society. However, several challenges remain, including limited institutional support from universities, varying public perceptions of Islamic student movements, and the need for more rapid adaptation to technological developments and social dynamics. Based on these findings, the Islamic Student Association is encouraged to strengthen the quality of its cadres, expand collaboration with various stakeholders, and develop more innovative and inclusive strategies for da'wah and education so that the organization can remain relevant amid ongoing changes. This study also provides opportunities for further research, particularly by involving a larger number of organizational branches, employing comparative approaches, or integrating quantitative analysis to provide a broader and more comprehensive picture of the contribution of Islamic student organizations to education, da'wah, and social development in Indonesia.

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Author Contribution

Islahuddin: Writing-Preparation of original manuscript, Visualization, **Muhammad Faiz** Conceptualization, Investigation, Data accuracy, **Sasmi Nelwati:** Methodology, Improve Content, Improve Language.

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The authors declare that this research was conducted without any conflict of interest in the research.

Ethical Clearance

The place or location studied has agreed to conduct research and is willing if the results of this study are published.

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