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Religious Values and Local Wisdom in Rural Sanitation: A Model for Sustainable Development in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the recontextualisation of religious values in the development of community-based sanitation systems in rural areas, integrating local wisdom as a key component. Using a qualitative methodology with an in-depth case study approach, the research focusses on the interaction between religious values and local wisdom to develop sanitation practices and outcomes. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving religious leaders, traditional leaders, and community members. Findings showed that religious values, when aligned with local customs and values, significantly improved community shaping and engagement in sanitation initiatives. Synergies between religious teachings and traditional practices, such as gotong royong, were shown to encourage sustainable behaviour change. This research highlights the importance of integrating spiritual, social and cultural dimensions in promoting rural sanitation development, emphasising its potential as a replicable model for community-based sanitation programmes in similar rural contexts. This research contributes to the discourse of sustainable sanitation development by offering practical insights in the application of faith-based and culturally-rooted approaches, providing a blueprint for policy makers and development practitioners in their efforts to promote sustainable sanitation systems.

Keywords: Local wisdom, religious values, sanitation, sustainable development

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INTRODUCTION

Sanitation and environmental health, especially in rural and remote areas, is still a crucial issue in many countries (Bazaanah & Mothapo, 2023; Charles, 2016; Lourenço & Nunes, 2020; Moreira & Dias, 2020). Although various programmes have been implemented to improve sanitation, many communities still face challenges in terms of access to adequate sanitation facilities. In Indonesia, sanitation and environmental health, especially in rural and remote areas, remains a crucial issue (Ainy et al., 2021; Daniel et al., 2021; Haryanto, 2020; Haryanto & Sutomo, 2012; Komarulzaman et al., 2017).

Although various programmes have been implemented to improve sanitation, the reality is that many communities still face challenges in terms of access to adequate sanitation facilities. This problem is often caused not only by a lack of infrastructure, but also by a lack of understanding and awareness of the importance of sanitation (Ramos da Silva et al., 2010; Sriram & Maheswari, 2013). In this context, the reactualisation of religious values becomes very relevant as an approach that can integrate religious values and local wisdom in community sanitation development efforts (Mcleod & Palmer, 2015).

Reactualisation of religious values is a concept that prioritises the role of religion in shaping people's behavior and mindset regarding environmental issues (Affandi et al., 2022). This is reinforced by the study of (Gifford & Nilsson, 2014) which states that social factors influence pro-environmental behaviour. Da'wah is not only seen as a means to spread religious teachings, but also as a medium to invite people to actively participate in protecting and preserving their environment. Through this approach, religious values are expected to motivate people to improve the quality of sanitation, which in turn contributes to improving their health and well-being.

The term religious values in this study refers to a form of religious communication that contextually integrates spiritual and ethical teachings with ecological awareness. Taking from the Islamic tradition, da'wah is not just preaching, but a broader mission, namely Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar, including environmental damage. Nasr (1968), in The Encounter of Man and Nature, states that the ecological crisis stems from a deeper spiritual crisis - human alienation from nature and the sacred. In this sense, religious values is an attempt to restore the spiritual connection between humans and their environment by fostering ecological virtues rooted in religious teachings. This approach positions environmental stewardship not as a secular obligation, but as a sacred mandate aligned with the Islamic principle of humans as caliphs on earth.

The concept of religious values in this research is also based on the Islamic ecological worldview developed through fiqh al-bī'ah, which views environmental maintenance as a religious obligation. Studies of the interpretation of Qur'anic verses by scholars in Lombok (Acim & Suharti, 2023) show that environmental damage is seen as a consequence of human

disobedience, while environmental balance is considered a divine blessing. In this context, da'wah is not only limited to the dissemination of doctrine, but also includes moral transformation, including ecological ethics. Ali Yafie, a pioneer of environmental Fiqh in Indonesia, also emphasises that preserving the environment is part of Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar. Religious values is therefore a form of religious engagement that integrates spiritual awareness with sustainable action, making it particularly relevant for addressing sanitation issues in culturally rooted communities.

The religious values reactualisation approach in local wisdom-based community sanitation development is an effort that not only focusses on technical aspects, but also on social, cultural and spiritual aspects. Da'wah in this context functions as a spiritual-ecological engagement that combines the delivery of religious messages with efforts to cultivate environmental awareness, responsibility, and behavioural transformation rooted in faith and local wisdom and promote healthy and sustainable sanitation practices (Abdullah & Keshminder, 2020; Ahmad & Harrison, 2007; Mohidem & Hashim, 2023). Furthermore, Hidayat (2019) suggests that local wisdom-based sanitation development can be more easily accepted by communities because they feel that their local wisdom is valued and used as a basis for decision-making.

This is particularly important in the context of sanitation development, where there is often a gap between policies made by government or non-government organisations and the real conditions on the ground (Maryati & Martina Azizah, 2022). A local wisdom-based approach also allows for a more open dialogue between communities and those involved in sanitation development. This dialogue allows for an exchange of ideas and experiences that can ultimately lead to more innovative solutions that meet the needs of the local community. Ultimately, by bridging spiritual values with local wisdom, religious values offer a culturally resonant and morally grounded model for sustainable sanitation development.

The study (Arsal et al., 2023; Moeis et al., 2022; Tohari, 2025) emphasizes that dialogue based on mutual respect and understanding of shared local values can strengthen social bonds within communities, which ultimately contributes to the sustainability of programmes, including community sanitation. Thus, the reactualisation of religious values in the context of local wisdom-based community sanitation development is a holistic and sustainable approach. This approach does not only focus on the end result of improving sanitation facilities, but also on the process of community empowerment through increasing environmental establishment, strengthening local wisdom values, and creating strong social cohesion. Therefore, this new paradigm is expected to be an effective model in efforts to improve the quality of community sanitation in various regions in Indonesia.

Lack of access to proper sanitation facilities is often exacerbated by a lack of understanding and awareness of the importance of sanitation. (Mariwah et al.,

2017; Montgomery, Elimelech, 2007). This leads to various diseases that have a direct impact on people's quality of life and health. Studies by (Jati et al., 2023; Prihanto et al., 2021) show that interventions based on religion and culture are more effective in influencing people's behaviour related to sanitation. Therefore, an approach that integrates religious values and local wisdom is academically and practically important to create sustainable solutions to address current sanitation issues, especially in rural communities.

Previous research has extensively discussed the relationship between religion and pro-environmental behaviour, as stated by (Greeley, 1993; Kanagy & Nelsen, 1995; Zemo & Nigus, 2021) However, most of these studies tend to focus on normative perspectives without delving deeper into the potential integration of local wisdom in the sanitation context. Studies (Kula, 2001; Preston & Baimel, 2021) also underline the importance of a religious value-based approach, but do not highlight how these values can be actualised in specific social contexts. These weaknesses indicate the need for more comprehensive research in combining religious values with local wisdom as a strategy for community sanitation empowerment.

This research aims to fill a gap in the literature by exploring the reactualisation of religious values as a strategy in local wisdom-based sanitation development. This research specifically examines how religious values and local cultural practices can be integrated to increase community awareness and participation in sanitation programmes. With a holistic approach involving spiritual, social, and cultural aspects, this research is expected to develop a new paradigm that is more relevant and effective in addressing sanitation challenges in Indonesia.

The argument of this research is that the integration of religious values with local wisdom will increase the effectiveness of sanitation programmes in the community. In this context, religious values that touches on spiritual aspects and local culture can encourage active community participation in maintaining environmental cleanliness. This is based on the premise that religious values associated with local wisdom will be more easily accepted and implemented, thus creating sustainable behaviour change in maintaining sanitation and environmental health.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on the relationship between religious values, local wisdom, and sanitation development has shown several trends. First, early research highlighted the importance of religion in shaping people's environmental behaviour. Studies by (Arbuckle & Konisky, 2015; Greeley, 1993; Jia et al., 2017; Krettenauer, 2017; Tsai & Tan, 2022) found that religious values can influence pro-environmental attitudes. Secondly, local wisdom is recognised as an important aspect of environmental management, demonstrating how local cultural practices can support environmental sustainability (Kula, 2001; Negi, 2005; Sumarmi et al., 2024)

Thirdly, community participation-based sanitation approaches have been discussed in the context of sustainable development (Lüthi & Kraemer, 2012) However, this study focuses on urban sanitation, while this study focuses on rural sanitation. In addition, this study focuses more on the integration of *dakwwah*, religion and local wisdom, so this literature discusses the relationship between these variables. Comprehensively, this study integrates the three elements of environmental da'wah, local wisdom, and sanitation in a complementary framework.

The first trend in the literature is a normative approach that focuses on religious values in promoting pro-environmental behaviour. Previous research discussing the relationship between religion and pro-environmental behaviour, as stated by (Greeley, 1993; Hunter & Toney, 2005; Kanagy & Nelsen, 1995; Zemo & Nigus, 2021) highlight how religious teachings can be used as a basis for raising environmental awareness. These studies tend to use quantitative methods to analyse the relationship between religious commitment and pro-environmental behaviour. While this approach successfully demonstrates a positive correlation between religion and the environment, its limitation lies in the lack of exploration of how these values can be applied in specific social contexts, such as local wisdom and sanitation practices. This tendency generally ignores cultural dimensions that may reinforce or hinder the implementation of religious values in daily sanitation-related behaviours.

The second trend emphasises the importance of local wisdom in environmental and sanitation management. Research by Negi (2005) and Clarke (1990) shows that traditional practices often have sustainability values that can be integrated into modern environmental programmes. These approaches are typically qualitative and descriptive, focusing on exploring locally relevant practices, such as traditional irrigation systems or environmentally friendly waste disposal methods. However, these studies tend to focus on one dimension, namely local wisdom, without regard to potential collaboration with religious values or proselytisation strategies. As a result, while this approach is contextual, its effectiveness in promoting sustainable behaviour change is limited if not supported by a more systematic religious approach.

A third trend in the literature is the participatory approach to community-based sanitation development. This research generally uses a case study methodology to evaluate sanitation programmes that involve active community participation (Abalo et al., 2017; Lüthi et al., 2009; Roma & Jeffrey, 2010). This approach often emphasises the importance of community involvement in the planning and implementation of sanitation programmes to ensure sustainability. These studies show positive results in improving sanitation quality, but tend to ignore the spiritual and cultural dimensions that can strengthen community participation. Thus, while these participatory approaches emphasise the importance of sustainability, the absence

of integration between environmental proselytisation and local wisdom makes these approaches less comprehensive and less effective in certain social contexts.

Although the three trends in previous research have significantly contributed to addressing sanitation issues, there are some shortcomings that need to be noted. Firstly, approaches that focus on religious values tend to lack contextualisation in their application. Secondly, studies that highlight local wisdom are often fragmented and not integrated with religious approaches that could strengthen environmental preaching messages. Thirdly, community participation-based research usually ignores spiritual and cultural aspects that can be key in motivating behaviour change. These weaknesses point to the need for a model that combines religious values, local wisdom and sanitation strategies in a holistic and contextualised framework.

This research formulates a new direction by integrating religious values approaches, local wisdom, and sanitation development strategies within a holistic framework. The main focus is how these three elements can complement each other in creating sustainable social change related to sanitation. By combining spiritual, cultural, and participatory approaches, this research is expected to provide practical and theoretical contributions in the development of a relevant and contextualised community sanitation empowerment model. This approach also opens up space to explore how synergies between religious values and cultural practices can improve the effectiveness of sanitation programmes in various regions in Indonesia.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the integration of environmental *dakwah* and local wisdom in rural sanitation programmes. The qualitative approach was chosen because it can explore social phenomena in depth in a specific context, especially those involving key factors such as religious leaders, traditional leaders, and local communities. The case study design allows for a more detailed analysis of the experiences, views and practices that develop in the community regarding the application of local wisdom in sanitation programmes.

This research was conducted in two regions in South Sulawesi, Indonesia: Pinrang and Parepare. These two locations were purposively selected to represent different socio-cultural environments, yet share common values rooted in Islam and local wisdom. Pinrang, a rural area, reflects a society where traditional knowledge and social norms still shape daily practices, including environmental management. However, many villages in this area still face limitations in access to proper sanitation facilities and consistent hygiene practices. Prepare, in contrast, is a coastal urban area with more advanced sanitation infrastructure, but still faces challenges related to population density and behavioral aspects of environmental hygiene. The city also serves as a center for Islamic education and cultural interaction. In Parepare,

religious initiatives such as Friday sermons and recitations have incorporated elements of social responsibility, thus creating a strategic space to integrate religious values with sustainable sanitation messages.

Unit of Analysis

The units of analysis in this study consisted of local communities who participated in sanitation initiatives rooted in local wisdom, as well as religious and customary leaders who actively contributed to the dissemination of environmental and moral messages. The research involved 7 key informants who were purposively selected based on their involvement and knowledge of local cultural values and religious practices.

The composition of the informants included four main categories. Firstly, traditional leaders (2 people) who are actively involved in preserving and practising local traditions related to environmental concerns and communal rituals. Second, religious leaders (2 people), including mosque administrators and ustadz, who regularly deliver religious teachings and sermons with moral guidance relevant to environmental responsibility. Third, the women's community (2 people) was selected because of their important role as cultural custodians in the family and neighbourhood, especially in maintaining household sanitation and transmitting traditional norms. Fourth, youth representatives (1 people) were engaged to assess the extent to which cultural and religious values related to sanitation are understood, lived and adapted by the younger generation.

Informants were selected to reflect intergenerational and social diversity, with particular attention to their social roles, position in the community, and active engagement in cultural and religious life. This composition allowed the study to capture a more comprehensive understanding of how environmental *dakwah* and local wisdom are perceived and practised across different segments of society, ultimately supporting the goal of sustainable community-based sanitation development.

Data Source

The data collection techniques used include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Semi-structured interviews were used to explore informants' perspectives and experiences related to environmental *dakwah* and local wisdom. Participatory observation was conducted in the field to directly observe local wisdom-based sanitation practices and social interactions in the community. FGDs involved collective discussions to explore broader community views on the implementation and success of the sanitation programme. The use of these various methods ensured a deep and thorough understanding of the issues researched.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted in stages using thematic analysis techniques. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and FGDs were transcribed, organised, and analysed based on themes relevant to the research

objectives. A coding process was conducted to identify main themes, subthemes, and relationships between variables. Descriptive analysis was used to understand the social and cultural dynamics that influence the implementation of sanitation programmes. Data triangulation was conducted by comparing data from different sources and data collection methods to increase the validity and reliability of the findings. With this holistic approach, this research was able to provide in-depth insights into how environmental *dakwah* and local wisdom play a role in supporting sustainable sanitation programmes.

RESULT

Implementation of Religious Values in Shaping Sanitation Awareness

The findings of this study indicate that religious values plays a meaningful role in shaping community understanding and attitudes toward sanitation. Interviews with religious and community leaders revealed that religious messages linking cleanliness to spiritual values such as "cleanliness is part of faith" became the main motivation for communities to implement good sanitation practices. Table 1 shows the interview results with the coding that has been arranged:

For example, in an interview, a religious figure stated, "People are more receptive to calls to maintain cleanliness if it is linked to the teachings of the religion they believe in" (Informant 1, 2023). Based on field observations, it appears that regular lectures on the importance of environmental hygiene and health from a religious perspective have increased the number of households using healthy latrines. This shows the pattern that the religious approach is more effective in changing people's behaviour than the technical approach alone. Overall, the

Table 1
Interviews with key informants

Informant	Statements	Coding
Informant 1	People are more receptive to calls to maintain cleanliness if it is linked to the teachings of the religion they believe in.	Faith-based messaging as behavioural reinforcement
Informant 2	We are used to practising environmentally friendly waste management the way our ancestors taught us.	Local wisdom in waste management
Informant 3	When we were involved from the beginning, we felt we had a responsibility to maintain and care for this facility.	Community participation in sanitation programmes
Informant 4	It's hard to change old habits because they've become part of our culture, even though we know they're not good.	Cultural resistance to change
Informant 5	Messages about the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness are more quickly received if delivered through social media that is often accessed by the public.	The role of digital media in the spread of da'wah

Source: Tabulation of interviews by researchers (2023)

integration of *dakwah* and environmental awareness resulted in a positive response in the context of community sanitation.

Local Wisdom Values as a Key Pillar in Sustainable Sanitation Development

The study also found that the local wisdom values of Bugis culture, such as Sipakatau, Sipakainge' and Siri, play an important role in the success of sanitation programmes in rural communities. During the FGDs, one of the traditional leaders explained that people in the village have always been taught to Sipakatau or humanise and remind each other. 'In this village, people have always been taught to Sipakatau, to remind and humanize each other. This means that if we litter or pollute the water, it is the same as disrespecting others. Because other people also need a clean environment. If we have a sense of Sipakatau, we will be ashamed if we disturb others' (Informant 6, 2023).

In an FGD, one participant mentioned, "We are used to practising environmentally friendly waste management the way our ancestors taught us" (Informant 2, 2023). Observation data also showed that communities were more likely to follow sanitation practices that were in line with their customs, such as gotong royong in cleaning the neighborhood. These results indicate a pattern of linkages between the success of sanitation programmes and respect for local values. Local wisdom has been shown to provide a strong social foundation, so that sanitation programmes supported by adat are more accepted and sustainably implemented by the community.

The data shows that the synergy between environmental propaganda and local wisdom is a key factor in improving the success of sanitation programmes. The integration of these two elements has created a holistic and sustainable approach. For example, in one village, a sanitation programme that combined religious teachings with local traditions, such as 'Sibali Parri' (the spirit of gotong royong), successfully stimulated the community's enthusiasm in actively participating in a sustainable sanitation programme. The programme also strengthened social cohesion within the community. In conclusion, this synergistic pattern shows that the success of sanitation programmes depends not only on technical aspects, but also on the harmonisation of mutually reinforcing local religious and cultural values. Sanitation approaches that ignore local wisdom tend to be less effective because they do not consider the cultural and social context of the local community. In contrast, sanitation programmes based on local wisdom tend to be more easily accepted and adopted by communities because they are considered more relevant and in accordance with their values.

Sanitation approaches that ignore local wisdom tend to be less effective because they do not consider the cultural and social context of local communities. In contrast, sanitation programmes that are based on local wisdom are more likely to be accepted and adopted by the community as they find them more relevant and in line with their values.

Based on the *Key Performance Indicator* (KPI) in the technical manual (Ministry of

Public Works and Housing, 2020), all stages have been carried out well. The quantity and quality of 50 units of SANIMAS SPALD-S buildings have been completed and have been utilized by community members to date. The picture above obtained from *Focus Group Discussion (FGD)* activities by beneficiaries shows that stakeholders interact together and cooperate by integrating and practicing the local wisdom value of "sibali perri". All institutions intersect with each other and are not outside the circle, meaning that the interaction relationship is strong and positive.

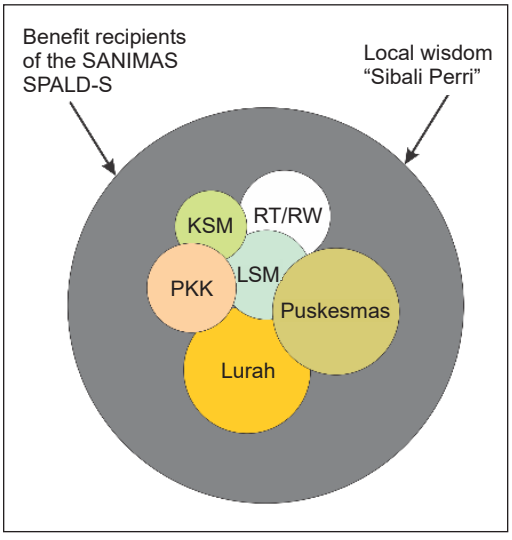

Figure 1. Venn Digram of Bittoeng Village Communinity

Meaningful Contribution of Community Participation in Sanitation Programme Implementation

The results of the study show that active community participation is key to the success of environmental *dakwah* and local wisdom-based sanitation programmes. Based on interviews and observations, it was found that communities who were directly involved in the planning and implementation of the programme had a higher level of ownership of the sanitation facilities built. One informant stated, "When we are involved from the beginning, we feel we have a responsibility to maintain and care for these facilities" (Informant 3, 2023). This suggests that community participation is not only instrumental but also constitutes a relational and moral process, where shared responsibility becomes a medium for internalising environmental values within collective identity.

Barriers to the Implementation of Environmental Da'wah and Local Wisdom

Despite many successes, the study also found some significant barriers in the implementation of environmental *dakwah* and local wisdom in sanitation programmes. One of the main challenges is cultural

Table 2
Comparison of local wisdom-based sanitation programme vs conventional approach

Aspects	Local Wisdom	Conventional Approach
Planning	Participatory, involving the community	Top-down, often without community participation
Implementation	Using local methods and materials	Relying on imported technology
Sustainability	High, as it is in line with local culture	Low, often abandoned after the project ends

resistance to change. Some communities still hold on to traditions that do not support good sanitation practices, such as dumping waste in the river. In an interview, a community leader stated, "It is difficult to change old habits, even though we know it is not good, because it is part of our culture" (Informant 4, 2023). This illustrates that cultural resistance is less about opposition and more about deeply embedded social memory, which requires da'wah to function as a mediator of values rather than a vehicle of change imposed from outside.

Field observations also showed that these tradition-bound communities were less responsive to sanitation programmes despite being supported by religious leaders. This suggests that da'wah strategies and sanitation programmes need to be adapted with a more persuasive and inclusive approach to overcome these cultural barriers. The research also found that integrated environmental education and da'wah can effectively increase sanitation awareness. Faith-based education programmes conducted in schools and Quran recitals perceived role in instilling the importance of sanitation from an early age. One informant who is a school teacher stated, "The children here started to apply the habit of maintaining cleanliness after getting material about the importance of cleanliness in their religion" (Informant 5, 2023). These findings highlight the role of faith-based education as a form of eco-religious socialisation, in which environmental ethics are transferred across generations through moral narratives and daily religious practices.

The research also shows that the use of digital media in religious values has an important role in spreading sanitation messages. In the digital era, da'wah through social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp is an effective tool to reach a wider audience. Some religious and community leaders have utilised these platforms to spread messages about the importance of sanitation and environmental hygiene. One informant stated, "Messages about the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness are more quickly received if delivered through social media that are frequently accessed by the community" (Informant 6, 2023). In this context, digital media does not merely serve as a dissemination channel, but as a technological extension of religious space, reshaping the way da'wah is practiced and received in modern community life.

The Role of Religious Leaders in Motivating Behaviour Change

The role of religious leaders in motivating sanitation behaviour change is also very significant. Religious leaders who were actively involved in the sanitation programme succeeded in building community trust in the importance of behaviour change. Interviews with several religious leaders showed that the approach they used was not only based on religious teachings, but also with real examples in everyday life. One religious leader stated, "People will follow if they see direct examples from us, not just hear lectures" (Informant 7, 2023). This suggests that religious influence is most effective when it is embodied, where

authority stems from lived example rather than doctrinal speech, highlighting the performative dimension of da'wah.

The study also found that the sustainability of sanitation programmes can be maintained through integration with local wisdom. In some communities, customary values such as "sibali perri" have been the basis of various environmental hygiene initiatives. Observational data shows that sanitation initiatives based on local values are more easily accepted and adopted by the community compared to top-down approaches. One example found was the practice of gotong royong, which is routinely conducted to clean waterways and the village environment. This shows that sanitation programmes supported by local wisdom have longer durability and are more sustainable because they are based on values that have been rooted in people's lives. This demonstrates that local wisdom serves as a cultural infrastructure, enabling environmental messages to be perceived as familiar, legitimate, and sustainable in the long term. In conclusion, combining religious values and local wisdom proved to be an effective and sustainable approach in improving the quality of community sanitation. Table 3. shows how religious values influence sanitation practices in the community. This diagram emphasises the direct relationship between religious understanding, personal motivation, and good sanitation actions.

Taken together, these findings contribute to the development of a conceptual model of contextual religious values, in which religious values, cultural memory, and community engagement operate in synergy to shape sanitation awareness and behaviour within local ecosystems.

DISCUSSION

This study explores the contributions and social meanings of religious values reactualisation integrated with local wisdom in community sanitation development programs. The main findings show that religious values delivered through religious teachings and local wisdom practices encouraged deeper community resonance with and engagement in sanitation-related awareness and participation. Emerging improvements in household sanitation practices, as observed in the field, indicates that the integration of spiritual values and cultural norms has shaped gradual, yet meaningful, behavioural adaptation among community members. Programmes

Table 3
Religious values that support sanitation practices

No.	Religious Value	Implications for Sanitation Practices
1	Cleanliness is part of the faith	Motivation to keep the environment clean
2	Not littering	Encourage good waste management behaviour
3	Keeping water clean	Water usage Clean in daily life

Source: Researcher's data, 2023

that combine religious values with local traditions, such as gotong royong, tend to be more socially embedded and culturally reinforced, as they are supported by deep-rooted values in community life. Barriers such as cultural resistance and limited resources remain, but were often navigated through inclusive, persuasive, and participatory approaches. These findings suggest that a culturally rooted sanitation model—grounded in religious values and local wisdom—offers a socially accepted and locally resonant pathway for promoting sustainable sanitation practices, especially in rural and remote communities.

The results of this study show that the relationship between religious values and local wisdom plays an important role in changing community behaviour related to sanitation. In theory, religious values puts forward religious values that emphasise the importance of cleanliness as part of faith (Nawawi, 1970; Nurhayati, 2019). When these values are integrated with local wisdom practices such as gotong royong and traditional irrigation systems, communities are more receptive to and implement changes in their sanitation behaviour. This explanation can be linked to the concept that contextualised and community-based approaches are more effective in addressing socio-cultural challenges than top-down approaches (Kula, 2001). This aligns with ongoing debates in the field of religion and ecology, where some scholars argue that religious environmentalism, when grounded in local traditions, offers an alternative to the mainstream environmentalism model, which is often shaped by affluent, white Western frameworks (Baugh, 2019). Others contend that religion's role in environmental action is more complex, with some religious communities incorporating eco-friendly practices while maintaining traditional beliefs that might not overtly advocate for sustainability (Witt, 2015). Thus, the integration of da'wah and local wisdom in sanitation programmes is successful because these approaches adapt to and resonate with the values held by local communities, creating a more holistic and culturally grounded framework for behavioural change.

This research study is in line with previous studies that show the important role of religion in pro-environmental behaviour (Abd Rahman et al., 2020; Arbuckle & Konisky, 2015; Greeley, 1993; Kar & Tripathy, 2022). However, in our study we went a step further by integrating local wisdom as a key component in the sanitation strategy, an approach that has not been widely discussed in previous literature. Studies by (Negi, 2005; Sartini et al., 2023) also emphasise the importance of local wisdom in environmental sustainability, but have not linked it directly to religious values. Therefore, this study presents novelty in combining two elements that are often separated in previous studies. In the context of sanitation, this research shows that the synergy between da'wah and local wisdom can create a more holistic and effective solution compared to a single approach that only focuses on one aspect.

The meaning of the results of this study is that sanitation programmes based

on the integration of religious values and local wisdom are able to provide more contextual and sustainable solutions. In the social context, the findings show that communities are more responsive to programmes that respect and strengthen the values they already believe in. Historically, local wisdom and religion have long been the main foundation in regulating social behaviour in rural communities. This integration provides strong social legitimacy and ensures that behaviour change in sanitation can be sustained in the long term. From an ideological perspective, this approach indicates that sanitation development should not always rely on modern technology alone, but can also be rooted in local traditions and beliefs that have proven effective.

This study contributes theoretically to the development of studies on the interaction between religious values, local wisdom, and social behaviour in the context of sustainable sanitation development. By integrating religious value-based concepts with local wisdom practices such as mutual assistance and traditional irrigation systems, this research expands our understanding of how contextual and community-based approaches can be more effective in promoting behavioural change than formal, top-down bureaucratic approaches. This highlights the relevance of new institutionalism theory (Hwang, 2023; Lecours, 2005; Wijaya, 2019), which emphasises how social norms and practices interact with institutional structures in creating social change.

These findings add to our understanding of how religious values and local traditions can be a powerful source of social legitimacy in promoting desired behavioural change. This complements the views of several previous studies that have identified religion and culture as important factors in pro-environmental behaviour, but rarely explicitly link them to sanitation development programmes. This finding suggests that sanitation development models rooted in religious values and local wisdom not only provide practical contributions but also reinforce the theory of the importance of approaches grounded in social and cultural contexts for the success of sustainable development programmes. Thus, this research reaffirms the importance of incorporating local and spiritual values into the formulation of policies and development programmes to make them more effective and sustainable.

The implications of this study suggest that the religious values and local wisdom approach can be an effective model for sanitation development in rural areas. In terms of function, this approach strengthens social cohesion and increases community participation in sanitation programmes. However, there is potential for dysfunction when cultural resistance is not managed properly, as in the case of communities that continue to maintain practices that are contrary to good sanitation. Nonetheless, these results also show that with a persuasive and inclusive approach, resistance can be overcome, and communities can be encouraged to actively participate. In the

long term, this model not only improves sanitation quality but also strengthens social values that support sustainability.

The results of this study can be used as a basis for formulating more effective policies in sanitation development at the local level. The government and religious institutions should consider adopting this model as part of the national sanitation strategy. The first step is to involve religious and traditional leaders in the planning and implementation of sanitation programmes, by providing the necessary training and resources. In addition, it is important to develop preaching materials that emphasise the link between hygiene, health and religious teachings. At the community level, community involvement in programme planning and monitoring should be strengthened through dialogue forums that respect local wisdom. Thus, this approach can become a sustainable model in addressing the sanitation problems that many communities in Indonesia still face.

CONCLUSION

This study addresses the key issue of how the integration of religious values and local wisdom can provide more relevant and sustainable solutions in sanitation programs in rural areas. This issue arises as existing sanitation programs only focus on technical approaches in environment communities with strong social, cultural, and spiritual values. Therefore, this research fills the gap with an approach that incorporates spiritual aspects, and local culture can help overcome these challenges. The results showed that the integration of religious values with local wisdom proved succeeded in shaping community awareness sanitation quality. Firstly, religious values that links cleanliness with religious teachings has succeeded in shaping community awareness, especially in terms of the importance of maintaining cleanliness as part of religious values. Second, local wisdom values such as gotong royong, sipakatau, sipakainge' and siri creates stronger community participation in sanitation programs, encouraging a sense of belonging and shared responsibility. Third, the synergy between these two elements strengthens the sustainability of the sanitation programs, which is evident in the improvement of proper sanitation facilities and changes in community behavior towards hygiene. Significantly, this research provides new insights into how community-based approaches that consider spiritual and socio-cultural aspects can provide more adaptive and sustainable solutions. This approach is able to overcome cultural resistance that is often an obstacle in conventional sanitation programs, as well as build stronger social cohesion through the involvement of religious, traditional, and community leaders. The results of this study can serve as a reference for the development of community-based sanitation models in other areas with similar social and cultural characteristics.

Implications of the Study

Significantly, this research provides new insights into how a community-based approach that considers spiritual and socio-cultural aspects can provide more adaptive and sustainable solutions. This approach is

able to overcome cultural resistance that is often an obstacle in conventional sanitation programmes, as well as build stronger social cohesion through the involvement of religious leaders, traditional leaders, and the community. The results of this research can serve as a reference for the development of rural community-based sanitation models in other areas with similar social and cultural characteristics.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

There are several limitations in this study. Firstly, this study was conducted in a particular rural area with specific socio-cultural characteristics, so the results may not be generalisable to other areas with different contexts. Secondly, the data collection was conducted over a limited period of time, so long-term behavioural changes cannot be thoroughly analysed. Thirdly, the dominant role of religious and traditional leaders in the programmes has the potential to bias community perceptions of the programme's success.

Based on these limitations, recommendations for future research include several things. Firstly, further research needs to be conducted in various regions with different socio-cultural characteristics to explore whether this model of integrating religious values and local wisdom can be widely applied. Secondly, longitudinal research should be conducted to evaluate the long-term impact of this approach on sanitation behaviour change. Third, more in-depth research on the role of other actors in the community, such as women and the younger generation, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the social dynamics in the implementation of community-based sanitation programs.

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