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Islamic Education, SDGs, and Javanese Syncretism in Kidung Rumecko by Sunan Kalijaga

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Abstract

Objective: This study explores the intersection of Islamic education, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Javanese cultural syncretism through Kidung Rumecko by Sunan Kalijaga. It aims to examine syncretism as a cultural–pedagogical strategy in the Islamization of Java, focusing on how Islamic teachings are integrated with Javanese traditions and their implications for culture-based Islamic education aligned with SDGs, particularly inclusive and quality education. **Theoretical framework:** The study employs the concept of syncretism supported by hermeneutic and phenomenological approaches to analyze the integration of Javanese cosmology and Islamic monotheism within the text. **Literature review:** Existing scholarship indicates that Islamization in Java occurred adaptively through cultural accommodation; however, specific studies positioning Kidung Rumecko as an epistemological reconstruction remain limited. **Methods:** This research uses a qualitative philosophical method with a hermeneutical–phenomenological approach, examining textual content, relevant literature, and historical-cultural contexts. **Results:** The findings reveal that Kidung Rumecko represents a profound model of Javanese-Islamic syncretism operating across three dimensions: (1) theological, reflected in the alignment of Manunggaling Kawula Gusti with the principle of tawhid; (2) ritual, seen in the transformation of traditional chants or mantras into Islamic prayers; and (3) symbolic, demonstrated through the use of Javanese cultural symbols to communicate Islamic teachings contextually. These dimensions illustrate how religious values are transmitted in culturally resonant forms, supporting socially sustainable education. **Implications:** This model contributes to the development of contextual Islamic education that is adaptive, inclusive, and rooted in local wisdom, aligning with SDGs' emphasis on cultural sustainability and equitable learning. **Novelty:** The study offers a new perspective by interpreting Kidung Rumecko as an epistemological reconstruction bridging Javanese mysticism and Islamic orthodoxy, rather than merely a form of cultural accommodation.

Keywords: islamic education, sdgs, javanese culture, syncretism, sunan kalijaga.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary discourse on Islamic education increasingly emphasizes its role in addressing global challenges framed within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in fostering inclusive, culturally responsive, and sustainable learning systems. In plural societies such as Java, the integration of religion and local culture becomes a strategic pathway to achieve SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 11 on cultural sustainability. Islamic education, therefore, cannot be detached from its socio-cultural context, as it serves not only as a medium of knowledge transmission but also as a process of value internalization rooted in local wisdom. This perspective highlights the importance

of exploring indigenous models of religious pedagogy, including those developed by Sunan Kalijaga, to understand how cultural adaptation contributes to sustainable and inclusive educational transformation [1].

The introduction of Islam to Java exemplifies one of the most complex cultural-religious syncretism phenomena in the history of the Indonesian archipelago [1]. This process transcends mere cultural acculturation, signifying a profound restructuring at the epistemological, cosmological, and ontological levels of Javanese society. Sunan Kalijaga, the principal architect of Javanese-Islamic syncretism, developed a missionary strategy through symbolic reconstruction that yielded unique spiritual hybridity [2]. This emerged from the meeting of Javanese mysticism (Kejawen) with Islamic monotheism (tauhid) within a dynamic cultural negotiation space. In his work, *Kidung Rumecko Ing Wengi*, Sunan Kalijaga, not only facilitated the penetration of Islamic teachings but also conceptualized a paradigmatic transformation by appropriating the deeply entrenched Hindu-Buddhist cosmological framework and infusing Islamic values into that symbolic structure [3].

Prior research by Muhammad Sakdullah has only scratched the surface of this phenomenon through theological analysis but has yet to delve into the depths of syncretism as an instrument of socio-spiritual engineering [4]. The *Kidung Rumecko* is not merely a theological accommodation; rather, it embodies the notion of what Woodward terms "syncretic mysticism," in which the monotheistic concept of Islam (tauhid) is integrated with Javanese monistic views (*manunggaling kawula-Gusti*), thereby creating both spiritual continuity and fundamental transformation [1]. The form of syncretism that occurs is not restricted to ritual and symbolic superficiality but instead touches the core epistemology of Javanese society, where local knowledge systems and Islamic teachings create a synthesis, resulting in an Islamic interpretation of Kejawen, a cultural formation that reflects the distinctive characteristics of Islam in the archipelago [5].

The existing research gap necessitates bridging through a philosophical analysis that uncovers the mechanisms of syncretism as a pedagogical strategy employed by Sunan Kalijaga. *Kidung Rumecko Ing Wengi* must be interpreted as a multilayered text that contains syncretic codes: vernacular prayers are transformed into Islamic supplications, the mention of deities is replaced with names of prophets and companions, and Hindu-Buddhist cosmology is reconceived within Islamic theological structure [6]. This process represents a model of Islamic education that operates through the appropriation and transformation of pre-existing symbolic systems rather than through their rejection or destruction, thus enabling the transfer of Islamic knowledge without engendering cultural resistance [7].

The novelty of this research lies in the utilization of a hermeneutic-phenomenological approach to uncover the layers of syncretism present in *Kidung Rumecko* ranging from the linguistic layer (the use of Javanese language and idioms for Islamic concepts), the symbolic layer (the transformation of pre-Islamic symbols into indicators of Islamic teachings), to the ontological layer (the reconceptualization of the relationship among humanity, nature, and the Divine). This approach provides a deeper understanding of how the Javanese-Islamic syncretism developed by Sunan Kalijaga not only fostered the coexistence of two traditions but also created a new epistemology that became the foundation for the formation of a distinctive Javanese Muslim identity, a cultural formation that continues to influence the socio-religious landscape of the archipelago today. This research makes a significant contribution to developing a theoretical framework for understanding the dynamics of culturally-based Islamic education, wherein syncretism is perceived not as a theological deviation, but rather as a creative mechanism for transmitting Islamic teachings through established cultural pathways.

This study advances the discourse by positioning *Kidung Rumecko Ing Wengi* as an epistemological reconstruction that bridges Javanese mysticism and Islamic orthodoxy through a culturally embedded pedagogical framework developed by Sunan Kalijaga.

Unlike prior studies that treat syncretism as mere accommodation, this research conceptualizes it as a transformative educational strategy that reshapes meaning systems and knowledge transmission. The implications extend to the development of culturally responsive Islamic education aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 11 (cultural sustainability), by promoting inclusive learning models rooted in local wisdom while sustaining religious authenticity and social cohesion [8].

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly discussions on Islamic education have increasingly highlighted the importance of integrating cultural context into pedagogical frameworks, particularly in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Within this discourse, SDG 4 (quality education) emphasizes inclusive and equitable learning, while SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) underscores the preservation of cultural heritage as a foundation for social sustainability. In the context of Java, Islamic education has historically evolved through adaptive engagement with local traditions, resulting in a distinctive form of religious expression that reflects both normative Islamic teachings and indigenous cultural values [7].

Studies on Javanese Islam, including those influenced by the work of Sunan Kalijaga, demonstrate that the Islamization process did not occur through cultural rupture but rather through gradual accommodation and symbolic negotiation. Scholars such as Mark R. Woodward have conceptualized this phenomenon as “syncretic mysticism,” where Islamic monotheism interacts with pre-existing metaphysical frameworks, particularly Kejawen spirituality. This perspective is further supported by anthropological and historical analyses which argue that cultural forms—such as wayang, tembang, and ritual practices—serve as effective media for transmitting Islamic values in ways that are accessible to local communities [7].

However, despite extensive studies on Javanese syncretism, the specific examination of *Kidung Rumecko Ing Wengi* as a philosophical and epistemological text remains limited. Existing research often focuses on theological or ritual dimensions without fully exploring its role as a pedagogical instrument that reconstructs knowledge systems. Moreover, there is a lack of integration between these cultural-religious analyses and contemporary educational frameworks aligned with the SDGs. This gap indicates the need for a more comprehensive approach that not only interprets syncretism as a cultural phenomenon but also situates it within broader discussions on sustainable and inclusive education. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by bridging classical analyses of Javanese-Islamic syncretism with modern educational paradigms, positioning *Kidung Rumecko* as a model for culturally grounded Islamic education that supports the realization of SDGs through adaptive, context-sensitive learning strategies [8].

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research design with a hermeneutic–philological approach to examine the structure, meaning, and symbolism of *Kidung Rumecko Ing Wengi* by Sunan Kalijaga. The hermeneutic method is used to interpret the text within its historical, cultural, and religious context, particularly the Islamization period in Java, while the philological approach facilitates textual criticism, manuscript verification, and linguistic analysis. This methodological integration supports a culturally grounded understanding of Islamic education aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 4 (quality education) through context-based learning and SDG 11 (cultural preservation) [8][9].

The primary data source consists of the *Kidung Rumecko Ing Wengi* manuscript obtained from the Surakarta Palace manuscript collection. Secondary data includes

scholarly works on Javanese Islamization, dakwah strategies, Sufi traditions in the Nusantara, and studies on cultural syncretism. These sources provide a broader intellectual framework to contextualize the text within both Islamic and Javanese epistemological traditions [10].

Data analysis is conducted using qualitative content analysis to identify key themes, including Sufi concepts, theological expressions, and symbolic elements embedded in Javanese culture. Intertextual analysis is applied to trace connections between the kidung and Middle Eastern Sufi literature, as well as classical Javanese texts, revealing patterns of adaptation and transformation. A comparative approach is also employed to examine the relationship between the teachings in Kidung Rumecko and orthodox Sufism alongside Javanese mysticism, highlighting points of convergence and divergence [11].

To ensure the validity and credibility of interpretation, data triangulation is conducted through expert consultations with scholars of classical Javanese literature and Sufism. Additionally, this research adopts an interdisciplinary perspective by integrating philology, history, cultural anthropology, and Islamic studies. This comprehensive approach not only deepens the analysis but also contributes to SDG 16 by promoting inclusive knowledge production and intercultural understanding within the study of Islamic education [12].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Representation of Javanese-Islamic Syncretism in Kidung Rumecko

The *Kidung Rumecko* Ing Wengi, authored by Sunan Kalijaga, represents a remarkable manifestation of the process of cultural acculturation and syncretism between Javanese and Islamic cultures during the early spread of Islam in Java [13]. This work transcends mere literary heritage; it functions as a historical document that illustrates how Islam was introduced in a manner acceptable to the Javanese populace, who had previously established cultural foundations and belief systems. Through this Kidung, Sunan Kalijaga demonstrates his ingenuity in harmoniously blending Islamic values with Javanese cultural constructs, thereby avoiding significant conflict or resistance [14].

The aspect of syncretism within *Kidung Rumecko* is evident in the reinterpretation of local terminologies infused with Islamic values. Terms such as "wengi" (night) do not merely signify the literal dimension of time but are metaphorically associated with a period of spiritual darkness that necessitates divine protection. Similarly, the concept of "rumecko" (to guard) is transformed into the idea of God's protection over His servants [15]. The poetic and metaphorical use of the Javanese language serves as a bridge linking Javanese cosmology with Islamic monotheism, as the Javanese, accustomed to protective incantations, are introduced to the concept of protection rooted in Allah SWT.

The structural organization of *Kidung Rumecko* reflects a harmonious integration of Javanese poetic tradition (tembang) with Islamic messages. The characteristic meter and rhyme patterns of the tembang macapat are maintained, while subtly embedding the concepts of monotheism and obedience to Allah within the content. This illustrates that Sunan Kalijaga did not seek to eradicate local traditions; rather, he utilized them as a medium to transmit Islamic values. Such an approach establishes an important precedent for the model of cultural preaching, which subsequently became a hallmark of Islamization in the archipelago, particularly in Java [16].

The symbolism within *Kidung Rumecko* serves as concrete evidence of how Islamic concepts have been assimilated into the Javanese cultural imagination. The incorporation of symbols such as light, water, and wind elements, long recognized in Javanese mythology, now carries new meanings aligned with Islamic concepts [17]. For example, light, which in pre-Islamic tradition was often connected to specific spiritual powers, is now interpreted as

a representation of Allah's guidance. This transformation of meaning is executed with great subtlety to prevent alienation among the listeners or readers of the *Kidung* [18].

The phenomenon of syncretism in *Kidung Rumecko* is further exemplified by Sunan Kalijaga's introduction of Islamic practices through narratives familiar to the Javanese community. Activities such as dhikr (remembrance), prayer, and veneration of Prophet Muhammad SAW are conveyed in a manner that feels accessible to individuals still significantly influenced by Hindu-Buddhist traditions and local beliefs [19]. This approach reflects a high cultural sensitivity, wherein the new teachings are not imposed but rather integrated harmoniously within the existing value system.

Table 1. Representation of Syncretism in *Kidung Rumecko*

Element	Javanese	Islamic	Integration Form
Protection Concept	Protective mantras	Prayers of protection to Allah	Songs as a medium of prayer directed to Allah SWT
Cosmology	Natural forces and spiritual beings	Allah's power over the universe	Nature and spiritual beings are subject to Allah's will
Language and Literature	Tembang macapat (traditional poetry)	Teachings of tauhid and sharia	Use of traditional verse meters to convey Islamic values
Symbolism	Local symbols (light, water)	Concepts of divine guidance and Allah's mercy	Reinterpretation of local symbols with Islamic meanings
Ritual Practices	Offerings and ceremonies	Islamic dhikr and worship	Transformation of rituals toward worship aligned with Sharia
Spiritual Approach	Javanese mysticism	Islamic Sufism	Syncretism of Javanese mysticism with Islamic Sufism
Concept of Salvation	Cosmic balance	Afterlife salvation	Integration of worldly and afterlife salvation
Sacred Figures	Local spiritual entities	Allah and Prophet Muhammad	Replacement of worship objects toward the concept of tauhid

The Sufi dimensions within *Kidung Rumecko* illustrate how Sunan Kalijaga successfully accommodates the mystical inclinations of Javanese society within the framework of Islamic spirituality [20]. The Javanese, who have long engaged with spiritual practices that are mystical and contemplative in nature, are guided toward Islamic Sufism that emphasizes closeness to Allah. The spiritual path presented in this *Kidung* offers a continuity of the mystical experiences deeply embedded in Javanese tradition, while unmistakably orienting toward monotheism [21].

The pedagogical aspects of *Kidung Rumecko* reflect the intelligence of Sunan Kalijaga in introducing Islam. He recognized that the transformation of belief is not an instantaneous process; rather, it unfolds gradually and necessitates a contextual approach. This *Kidung* serves as an effective educational medium as the messages of Islam are conveyed through an artistic form that has been an integral part of Javanese society [22]. The method of teaching through art effectively transcends cultural and psychological barriers that may arise if the approach is confrontational or dogmatic.

Furthermore, *Kidung Rumecko* exemplifies the unique process of Islam's indigenization in Java. The universality of Islamic teachings is not presented rigidly and formally but is instead contextualized with the local wisdom that has evolved over centuries [23]. This approach not only facilitates the acceptance of Islam but also enriches the expression of the Islamic faith itself. Islam, as it has developed in Java, as reflected in *Kidung Rumecko*, possesses distinct nuances and characteristics without compromising the fundamental substance of its teachings [24].

Table 2. Lyrics of Kidung RumeKso Ing Wengi

Original Poem	English
Ana Kidung RumeKso ing wengi, Teguh hayu luputa ing lara, Luputa bilahi kabèh, Jim setan datan purun, Paneluhan tan ana wani, Miwah panggawé ala, Gunaning wong luput, Geni atemahan tirta, Maling adoh tan ana ngarah ing mami, Tuju duduk pan sirna.	There is a song that guards in the night, Strong and safe, free from illness, Free from all misfortunes, Jinn and devils are unwilling to approach, Black magic cannot harm, Nor can evil deeds, The skills of those who miss their mark, Fire turns to water, Thieves stay away, none targeting me, Spells and curses disappear.
Sakehing lara pan samya bali, Sakeh ngama pan sami miruda, Welas asih pandulune, Sakehing braja luput, Kadi kapuk tibaning wesi, Sakehing wisa tawa, Sato galak tutut, Kayu aeng lemah sangar, Songing landhak guwaning wong lemah miring, Myang pakiponing merak.	All diseases will return (depart), All pests will flee away, With a compassionate gaze, All weapons will miss their mark, Like cotton is the falling iron, All poisons become neutralized, Fierce beasts become tame, Strange trees and dangerous grounds, Porcupine holes and caves of ill-intent, And the peacock's dwelling.
Pagupakaning warak sakalir, Nadyan arca myang sagara asat, Temahan rahayu kabèh, Apan sarira ayu, Ingideran kang widadari, Rineksa malaekat, Sakathahing Rasul, Pan dadi sarira tunggal, Ati Adam utekku Baginda Esis, Pangucapku ya Musa.	The wallowing place of all rhinoceros, even though statues and seas may dry up, eventually all will be safe, for the body is beautiful, surrounded by heavenly nymphs, guarded by angels, and all the Prophets, who become one body, Heart of Adam, my brain is of Seth, my speech is that of Moses.
Napasku Nabi Isa linuwih, Nabi Yakup pamiyarsaningwang, Yusup ing rupaku mangke, Nabi Dawud suwaraku, Jeng Suleman kasekten mami, Nabi Ibrahim nyawaku, Edris ing rambutku, Baginda Ngali kulitingwang, Getih daging Abubakar singgih, Balung Umar sinuda.	My breath is of the exalted Prophet Jesus, Prophet Jacob is my hearing, Joseph is now my face, Prophet David is my voice, King Solomon is my strength, Prophet Abraham is my soul, Idris is in my hair, The honorable Ali is my skin, Blood, and flesh of the noble Abu Bakar, Bones of the respected Umar.
Sungsumingsun Fatimah linuwih, Siti Aminah bayuning angga, Ayup ing usuku mangke, Nabi Nuh ing jejantung, Nabi Yunus ing otot mami, Netraku ya Muhammad, Cahyaku Rasulu, Muhkamat pamiyarsaningwang, Mupangati ing sariratu sakalir, Sampun pepak sakarsa.	My marrow is of the noble Fatimah, Siti Aminah is the strength of my body, Job is now my intestines, Prophet Noah is in my heart, Prophet Jonah is in my muscles, My eyes are Muhammad, My light is the Messenger, Muhammad is my hearing, Beneficial to my entire body, All desires are complete.

The *Kidung RumeKso Ing Wengi* not only exemplifies Sunan Kalijaga's success in cultural dakwah but also serves as historical evidence of Islam's ability to adapt to local contexts without compromising the integrity of its teachings. The syncretic model reflected in this hymn offers valuable lessons on how cultural differences can be bridged through approaches that respect local wisdom while maintaining the purity of the core tenets of the faith [25]. In the context of Indonesia's diverse society, this work serves as a reminder of the importance of cultural approaches in fostering constructive interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

The Values of Islamic Education in Kidung RumeKso

Kidung RumeKso Ing Wengi is a monumental work by Sunan Kalijaga that not only reflects a syncretism of cultures but also embodies profound and rich teachings of Islamic education. Through verses intricately composed within the tradition of Javanese tembang, Sunan Kalijaga adeptly incorporates fundamental Islamic values that are pertinent to the everyday lives of the community. This approach demonstrates his wisdom in recognizing that the most effective means of value education occurs when conveyed through media that have become integral to the cultural life of the target community; in this case, the tradition of tembang, which is deeply rooted in Javanese society [26].

The most prominent educational value in *Kidung RumeKso* is the reinforcement of tauhid, or faith in Allah SWT as the sole source of protection. While employing language and metaphors familiar to the Javanese, the core message of this song consistently directs its audience toward reliance on Allah's power in confronting various life threats and challenges

[27]. In a context where belief in supernatural powers and spirits is prevalent, Sunan Kalijaga skillfully redirects the spiritual orientation of the community from these forces towards a firm belief in Allah, the Ever-Protective. This education on tauhid is imparted without confrontation with existing local beliefs.

The elements of prayer and dhikr also constitute significant aspects of education within Kidung Rumekso. In essence, the song itself serves as a formulation of a protective prayer articulated in a language and structure familiar to the Javanese populace [28]. Through this composition, Sunan Kalijaga teaches that prayer is not merely a mechanical ritual but rather a form of spiritual communication and acknowledgment of man's dependence on Allah. The work educates the community to engage in dhikr and remember Allah in every situation, particularly in times of hardship or threat. This education regarding the potency of prayer and remembrance is conveyed in a manner that resonates with the emotional and spiritual dimensions of the populace, making it more readily comprehensible [29].

The value of tawakkal, or surrendering oneself to Allah, is also distinctly evident in Kidung Rumekso. Each stanza teaches that after having made utmost efforts to face life's challenges, the final step is to entrust the outcome to Allah [16]. This attitude of tawakkal does not imply a passive or fatalistic approach; rather, it recognizes human limitations and affirms that Allah determines the outcomes of all endeavors. In the context of Javanese society, which is already familiar with the concept of "*sumeleh*" (acceptance with tranquility), Sunan Kalijaga transforms this local concept into the Islamic principle of tawakkal, thus facilitating its understanding and acceptance [30].

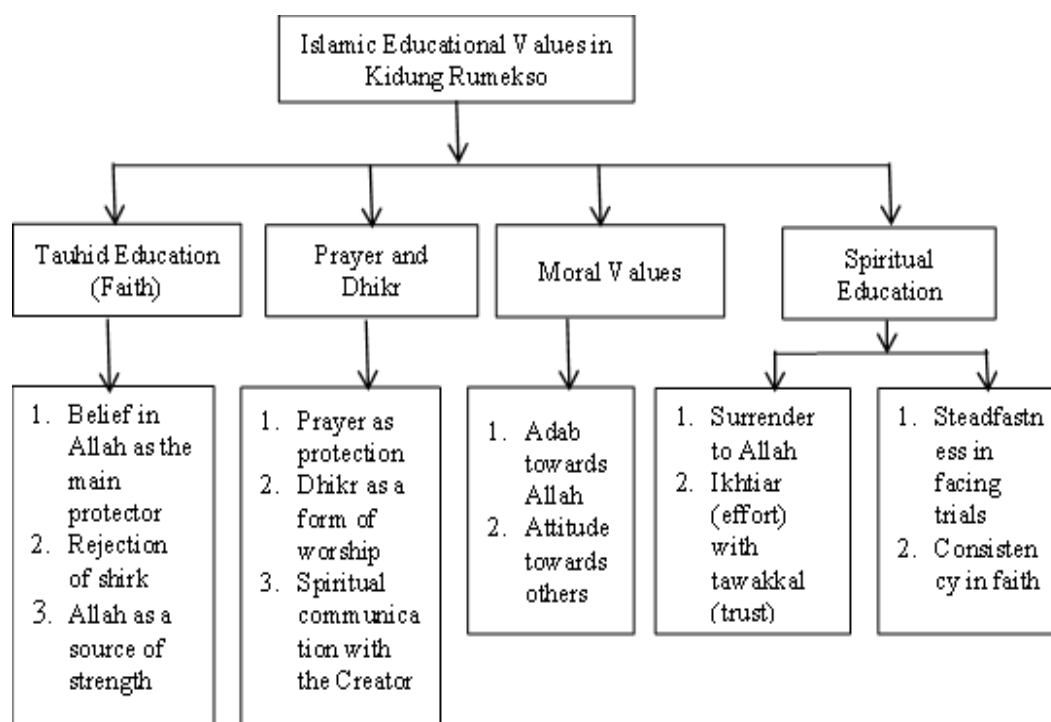


Figure 1. The Values of Islamic Education in Kidung Rumekso

Furthermore, Kidung Rumekso imparts values of patience and resilience in confronting life's trials. Through metaphors depicting protection from various threats and dangers, Sunan Kalijaga indirectly instills the understanding that life is replete with tests and challenges that must be faced with patience and perseverance. This demeanor of patience is underpinned by the belief that Allah is perpetually present with His faithful servants, as stated in a multitude of verses in the Qur'an. The education on patience is particularly relevant to the societal conditions during the early phase of Islamization in Java, a period characterized by significant social, cultural, and spiritual transformations.

The values of morals or Islamic ethics also constitute an integral part of the education found within the *Kidung Rumecko*. Through various metaphors and symbols, Sunan Kalijaga imparts the significance of safeguarding oneself from reprehensible actions while continuously adorning one's character with commendable behavior. This moral education encompasses a vertical relationship with Allah (*hablun minallah*) as well as a horizontal relationship with fellow human beings and the surrounding environment (*hablun minannas*). Within the context of Javanese society, which possesses local ethical concepts such as "*unggah-ungguh*" (etiquette), Islamic moral education is integrated with these local values, thereby creating a comprehensive ethical system.

The *Kidung Rumecko* also contains teachings regarding the importance of spiritual self-protection. In a life rife with temptations and threats, both physical and metaphysical, individuals require a robust spiritual defense. Sunan Kalijaga teaches that the most effective form of spiritual protection is through drawing nearer to Allah and making Him one's fortress. This education concerning spiritual protection is particularly relevant in a societal context where belief in malevolent supernatural forces still prevails, thus Sunan Kalijaga offers an Islamic solution to these anxieties.

Table 3. Islamic Educational Values in Kidung Rumecko

Educational Value	Representation in the Kidung	Relevance to Community Context
Tauhid (Faith)	" <i>Ana Kidung Rumecko ing wengi, Teguh hayu luputa ing lara</i> " (There is a song that guards in the night, Strong and safe, free from illness)	Shifting dependence from supernatural powers toward belief in Allah
Prayer and Dhikr	The entire kidung functions as a prayer for protection	Instilling the habit of prayer and dhikr as daily religious practices
Tawakkal (Trust in God)	" <i>Temahan rahayu kabèh, Apan sarira ayu</i> " (Eventually all will be safe, For the body is beautiful)	Fostering an attitude of surrender after maximum effort
Patience	" <i>Sakehing lara pan samya bali, Sakeh ngama pan sami miruda</i> " (All diseases will depart, All pests will flee away)	Strengthening resilience in facing life's challenges and trials
Moral Character	" <i>Welas asih pandulune</i> " (With a compassionate gaze)	Developing attitudes and behaviors that reflect Islamic values
Spiritual Protection	" <i>Jim setan datan purun, Paneluhan tan ana wani</i> " (Jinn and devils are unwilling, Black magic cannot harm)	Providing Islamic solutions to concerns about supernatural forces
Gratitude	" <i>Rineksa malaekat, Sakathahing Rasul</i> " (Guarded by angels, and all the Prophets)	Cultivating thankfulness for Allah's protection
Exemplary Figures	Mentioning the names of prophets and messengers as role models	Encouraging emulation of the characteristics and behaviors of the prophets and messengers
Self-Control	" <i>Sato galak tutut</i> " (Fierce beasts become tame)	Teaching control over base desires and improper wants
Unity of Faith and Action	" <i>Pan dadi sarira tunggal</i> " (Who becomes one body)	Emphasizing the importance of harmony between belief and deed

Additionally, the aspect of gratitude education is present in the *Kidung Rumecko*. Through expressions that depict various forms of Allah's protection and assistance, Sunan Kalijaga indirectly teaches the importance of being grateful for the blessings bestowed by Allah, particularly the blessings of safety and protection. This sense of gratitude is manifested not only in words but also in attitudes and daily actions that reflect obedience to Allah. Such education in gratitude serves as a counterbalance to individuals' tendencies to become forgetful and negligent when in secure and comfortable situations.

The value of exemplary conduct (uswah Hashanah) is also conveyed in the *Kidung Rumecko*, particularly through the mention of the names of prophets and messengers. By referencing various exemplary figures in Islam, Sunan Kalijaga invites the community to recognize and emulate the noble qualities embodied by these prophets and messengers. This education in role modeling is highly effective as it provides concrete examples of the implementation of Islamic values in real life, rather than abstract concepts that are difficult to comprehend. Through the introduction of these exemplary figures, it is hoped that society can internalize Islamic values more profoundly.

Consequently, *Kidung Rumecko* exemplifies a remarkable instance of how Islamic education can be harmoniously integrated with local traditions, thereby creating an effective and contextual model of value-based education. Through this work, Sunan Kalijaga demonstrates that Islamic education does not necessarily have to be conveyed through formal and dogmatic methods; rather, it can be embedded within various forms of cultural expressions that have become integral to community life. This approach not only facilitates the transmission of Islamic values but also preserves the richness of local traditions as a medium for expressing the universality of Islamic teachings. The model of value-based education contained within *Kidung Rumecko* remains relevant today, particularly in the context of multicultural societies that require sensitive and contextual approaches to religious education.

Pedagogical Strategies of Sunan Kalijaga in The Dissemination of Islam

Sunan Kalijaga is recognized as one of the Wali Songo, notable for his unique and adaptive approach to preaching Islam in the context of Javanese culture. In contrast to confrontational and dogmatic methods, Sunan Kalijaga developed pedagogical strategies that utilized local cultural mediums as vehicles for spreading Islamic teachings. The "*Kidung Rumecko Ing Wengi*" serves as a monumental testament to his effective use of traditional art forms as educational instruments to introduce Islamic values to the Javanese populace. This approach reflects Sunan Kalijaga's profound understanding of societal psychology and his wisdom in developing contextual and sustainable methods of outreach.

A primary strategy employed by Sunan Kalijaga was the utilization of "tembang" or songs as a medium for conveying Islamic messages. In Javanese tradition, "tembang" functions not merely as entertainment but also as a means of transmitting values, knowledge, and wisdom across generations. By leveraging the esteemed position of "kidung" within the cultural life of the community, Sunan Kalijaga effectively instilled Islamic teachings in a manner that felt familiar and non-threatening to the local population. Through melodic and memorable renditions of these songs, fundamental Islamic principles were naturally absorbed into the collective consciousness of the community, without provoking significant psychological resistance.

The gradualist approach is also a hallmark of Sunan Kalijaga's pedagogical strategy. He recognized that the transformation of beliefs and religious practices is a lengthy process that necessitates patience and wisdom. Through the "*Kidung Rumecko*," he did not directly introduce complex and alien Islamic concepts. Instead, he commenced with familiar elements to the Javanese people, such as notions of protection and safety. Gradually, these concepts led to a deeper understanding of monotheism and other Islamic teachings. This incremental approach allowed the community to adopt Islamic values without feeling that their cultural identity was threatened or diminished.

The utilization of local language and symbols in transmitting Islamic teachings also represents an astute pedagogical strategy employed by Sunan Kalijaga. In "*Kidung Rumecko*," he employed the Javanese language, selecting words, metaphors, and symbolism that resonated with the local populace to elucidate concepts of Islam that are inherently complex. For instance, the abstract notion of monotheism was articulated through symbolic representations of protection from various threats that could only be mitigated by divine

intervention. This approach facilitated the bridging of cognitive and cultural gaps, enabling the community to comprehend Islamic teachings without entirely abandoning their pre-existing frameworks of thought and systems of meaning.

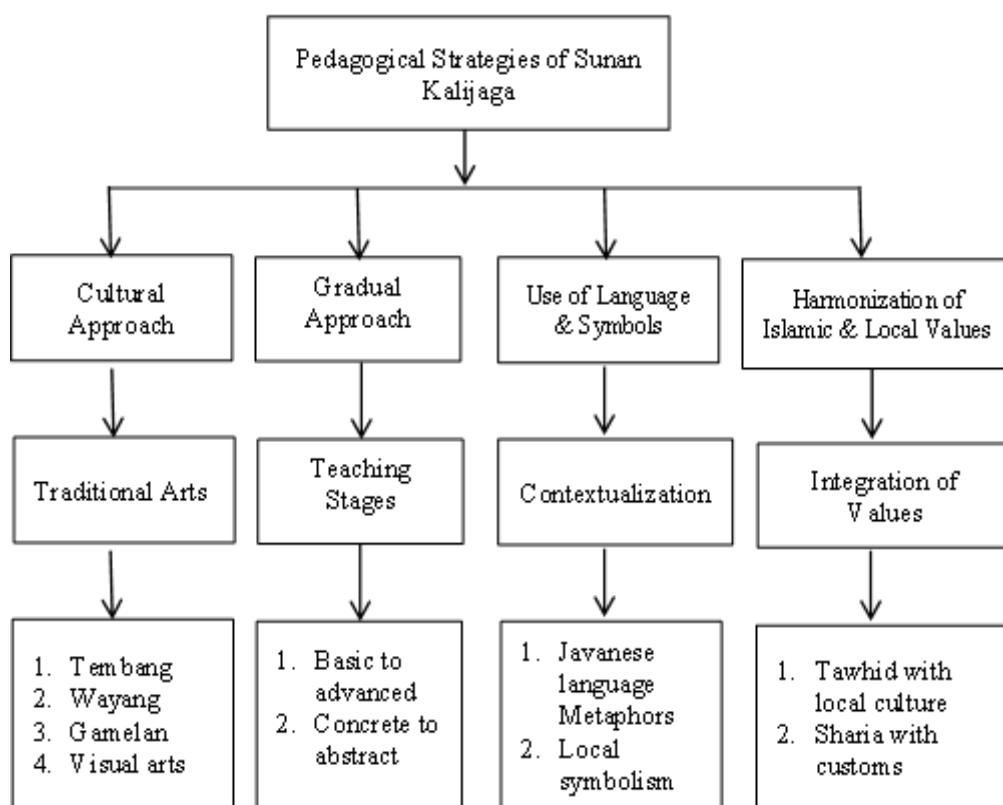


Figure 2. Pedagogical Strategies of Sunan Kalijaga

The strategy of harmonizing Islamic values with local wisdom also constitutes an effective educational approach spearheaded by Sunan Kalijaga. Rather than creating a dichotomy between Islamic teachings and local traditions, he wisely identified the confluences between the two, establishing them as a foundation for the development of contextual Islamic understanding. In "*Kidung Rumecko*," universal Islamic values such as divinity, protection, and safety are interwoven with Javanese wisdom values like harmony and balance. This harmonization fosters a dialogic space between Islam and local culture, wherein both are not perceived as conflicting entities but rather as complementary forces in shaping a cohesive spiritual identity.

The experiential learning approach, defined as learning through experience, constitutes an integral component of Sunan Kalijaga's pedagogical strategy. By integrating *Kidung Rumecko* into the everyday practices of the community, such as its recitation before sleep or during moments of fear, Sunan Kalijaga enables individuals to directly experience the benefits of Islamic teachings in their concrete lives. This positive spiritual experience serves to reinforce their beliefs and commitment to the values of Islam being introduced. Such an experiential learning approach is demonstrably more effective than theoretical and abstract forms of education, as it provides tangible evidence of the relevance and utility of Islamic teachings within the context of daily life.

Table 4. Sunan Kalijaga's Pedagogical Strategies in the Dissemination of Islam through Kidung Rumekso

Pedagogical Strategy	Implementation in Kidung Rumekso	Educational Impact
Use of Artistic Medium	Delivery of Islamic teachings through melodic and poetic songs/kidung	Facilitates the process of memorization and internalization of teachings; creates an aesthetic experience that strengthens the emotional connection with the teachings
Gradualistic Approach	Introduction of protection concepts familiar to society before introducing more abstract tauhid concepts	Reduces psychological resistance; builds a foundation of understanding gradually
Contextualization of Language & Symbols	Use of the Javanese language and local symbolism to explain Islamic concepts	Bridges cognitive gaps; facilitates understanding through already familiar reference frameworks
Harmonization of Islamic and Local Values	Integration of Islamic values with Javanese local wisdom	Creates dialogue space between Islam and local culture; reduces the perception of "conflict" between the two
Experiential Learning	Use of the kidung as a daily spiritual practice that provides direct experience of the benefits of Islamic teachings	Strengthens belief through empirical evidence; connects teachings with everyday life realities.
Indigenous Knowledge Recognition	Acknowledgment and appreciation of local knowledge systems as a starting point for introducing new teachings	Builds a sense of ownership; avoids spiritual colonization
Community-Based Learning	Community involvement in the process of transmitting and practicing the kidung	Creates social support systems; facilitates collective learning
Transformative Learning	Use of the kidung as a means for spiritual paradigm transformation	Enables perspective change without causing an identity crisis
Multisensory Engagement	Involvement of various sensory modalities (hearing, speaking) in the learning process	Enriches learning experience; accommodates various learning styles.
Value-Based Education	Emphasis on universal values rather than formal rituals	Builds a strong ethical foundation; prioritizes essence over formality

The strategy of recognizing indigenous knowledge constitutes a significant component of Sunan Kalijaga's pedagogical approach. He did not position the Javanese community as a tabula rasa devoid of knowledge and wisdom; rather, he acknowledged and esteemed the local knowledge systems that have evolved over centuries. This recognition fosters a sense of ownership among the community regarding the new teachings introduced, as they perceive their cultural identity to be respected. Such an approach also mitigates the potential for "spiritual colonization," wherein one belief system forcibly supplants another without meaningful dialogue.

Additionally, the approach to community-based learning is evident in Sunan Kalijaga's pedagogical strategies. The *Kidung Rumekso* was not designed as an individual spiritual practice; rather, it serves as an activity that engages the community. Through the collective recitation of the hymns on various occasions, a space for collective learning is created, wherein Islamic values can be discussed, internalized, and practiced together. This community-based approach cultivates a vital social support system essential for the sustainability of the learning process and spiritual transformation, while simultaneously reinforcing social cohesion within the community in the face of various life challenges.

The strategy of transformative learning also represents a vital characteristic of Sunan Kalijaga's approach. Through *Kidung Rumekso*, he not only transferred new knowledge or

skills but also facilitated a transformation of the community's spiritual paradigm. This transformation occurs subtly and gradually, without provoking identity crises or excessive cognitive dissonance. The community is guided to revisit their fundamental assumptions regarding spiritual reality, and they gradually adopt a tawhidic perspective, which is central to Islamic teachings. This transformative process enables the community to develop a more comprehensive and profound understanding of the spiritual dimensions of life.

In conclusion, Sunan Kalijaga's pedagogical strategies in disseminating Islam through *Kidung Rumecko* demonstrate a remarkable cultural sensitivity and depth of psychological understanding. His approach, which values local wisdom, facilitates dialogue between traditions and prioritizes essence over formality, serves as a highly relevant model of dakwah in contemporary multicultural contexts. *Kidung Rumecko* stands not only as a treasured literary and spiritual heritage but also as a historical monument that exemplifies how religion and culture can engage in constructive dialogue to create a synthesis that enriches human life, both individually and collectively.

Philosophical Implications of Syncretism on Contextual Islamic Education

The phenomenon of syncretism in *Kidung Rumecko* by Sunan Kalijaga carries profound philosophical implications for the development of contextual Islamic education models aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The syncretism reflected in this work transcends superficial blending; it represents a creative synthesis grounded in a deep understanding of Islamic principles and Javanese wisdom. This approach shows that Islam, as a universal religion, can adapt to diverse cultural contexts without losing its core values, offering a foundation for adaptive, inclusive Islamic education relevant to SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 11 (cultural sustainability).

From an ontological standpoint, the syncretism in *Kidung Rumecko* challenges the rigid dichotomy between "pure Islam" and "local traditions." Instead, it presents religious reality as pluralistic and layered, encouraging Islamic education models that recognize complexity and avoid reductionist, textualist tendencies. This perspective supports SDGs by promoting inclusive and culturally sensitive educational paradigms.

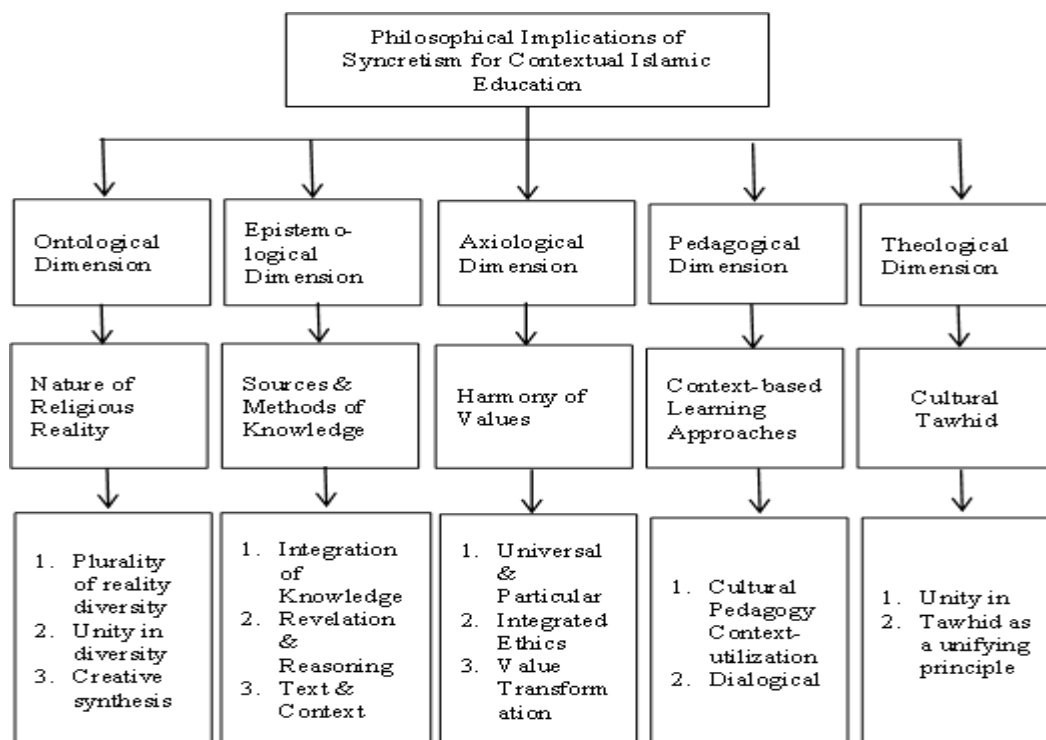


Figure 3. Philosophical Implications of Syncretism on Contextual Islamic Education

Epistemologically, the text highlights diverse sources of knowledge. Sunan Kalijaga integrates normative Islamic teachings with local wisdom, social experience, and cultural intuition. This approach expands the knowledge base of Islamic education to include interdisciplinary and locally grounded perspectives, aligning with SDG 4's emphasis on relevant and holistic learning. Axiologically, the syncretism demonstrates the harmonization of Islamic values with local ethics, fostering universal principles such as justice, compassion, and wisdom. This alignment reinforces the role of Islamic education as a transformative force that supports social cohesion and sustainable cultural development, in line with broader SDGs objectives.

The pedagogical dimensions of syncretism found in *Kidung Rumecko* present a model of learning that is contextual, dialogical, and transformative. Through the use of culturally familiar media, Sunan Kalijaga established a conducive learning environment for the internalization of Islamic values, one that does not provoke psychological resistance or cultural alienation. This pedagogical approach implies the necessity of developing instructional methods in Islamic education that are relevant to the socio-cultural contexts of the learners [31]. It calls for the use of language and symbols that hold significance for them and for engaging them in critical dialogue regarding the interpretation of Islamic teachings within the realities of their lives. Consequently, contextual Islamic education can emerge as an empowering and liberating process, rather than merely a dogmatic indoctrination that overlooks the learners' real-life experiences [32].

Table 5. Philosophical Implications of Syncretism for Contextual Islamic Education

Philosophical Dimension	Manifestation in <i>Kidung Rumecko</i>	Implications for Contextual Islamic Education
Ontological	Creative synthesis of Islamic elements and Javanese culture in an organic unity	Development of educational models that acknowledge the plurality of religious realities and avoid oversimplification
Epistemological	Integration of revelation, reasoning, and local wisdom as sources of knowledge	Expansion of the knowledge base to include normative Islamic sciences, social humanities, sciences, and local knowledge
Axiological	Harmonization of Islamic values with Javanese local wisdom values	Development of integrated and contextual ethical systems based on universal values
Pedagogical	Use of local cultural media for the transmission of Islamic values	Development of learning methods relevant to students' socio-cultural contexts
Theological	Reinterpretation of tawhid concepts within local understanding frameworks	Development of an inclusive theology that acknowledges diversity in faith expressions
Hermeneutical	Interpretation of Islamic teachings considering local cultural contexts	Development of more contextual interpretation methodologies that consider socio-cultural realities
Anthropological	Recognition of local cultural agents in the Islamization process	Appreciation of students' active roles as subjects, not objects of education
Sociological	Approaches that consider the social structures and dynamics of Javanese society	Development of educational models responsive to society's needs and social dynamics
Historical	Recognition of historical continuity between Islam and local traditions	Education that develops historical awareness and appreciates contributions from various traditions
Political	Non-confrontational approaches that avoid societal polarization	Development of Islamic education as a unifying force, not a divisive element in society

The theological dimension of syncretism in *Kidung Rumecko* illustrates the potential for reinterpreting Islamic theological concepts within the framework of local understanding, without diminishing their substance. Sunan Kalijaga successfully introduced the concept of Tawhid, central to Islamic theology, utilizing language and metaphors that resonate with the spiritual experiences of the Javanese community. This theological approach points to the necessity for developing an inclusive and contextual Islamic theology that acknowledges the diversity of expressions of faith and avoids exclusive truth claims, which often serve as sources of conflict and polarization [33]. Contextual Islamic education must facilitate open theological dialogue, wherein learners are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of their faith in the context of their own lives, rather than merely adopting pre-established theological formulations.

The hermeneutic aspect of syncretism in *Kidung Rumecko* emphasizes the importance of interpreting Islamic teachings with consideration for local cultural contexts [15]. Sunan Kalijaga did not interpret Islamic texts literally and rigidly; rather, he contextualized his interpretations in light of the socio-cultural realities of the Javanese society during his time. This hermeneutic approach implies the need for developing a more dynamic and contextual methodology of interpretation within Islamic education that allows for dialogue between text and context [34]. Thus, contextual Islamic education can facilitate a religious understanding that remains faithful to the fundamental principles of Islam while simultaneously addressing the challenges and needs of contemporary society.

The anthropological dimension of syncretism in *Kidung Rumecko* recognizes the role of local cultural agents in the process of Islamization. Sunan Kalijaga positioned the Javanese community not as passive recipients of Islamic teachings, but as active participants in the contextualization and development of an understanding of Islam that aligns with local realities. This anthropological implication promotes the development of Islamic education that treats learners as subjects rather than objects of education [35]. Contextual Islamic education should provide space for learners to express their own understandings and religious experiences, pose critical questions, and partake in the interpretation and application of Islamic teachings within the contexts of their lives.

Philosophically, syncretism in *Kidung Rumecko* provides a foundation for the development of adaptive, inclusive, and socially realistic contextual Islamic education. This approach acknowledges that Islam, as a universal religion, is always experienced and practiced within specific cultural contexts, thereby fostering a dialogue between the universality of its teachings and the particularity of these contexts [36]. Contextual Islamic education, developed from this understanding, is not trapped in the dichotomy of "Islam versus local culture," but is capable of identifying common ground between the two, evolving into the basis for authentic and meaningful religious life. Therefore, Islamic education can become a force for empowerment and liberation, enabling individuals and communities to optimally develop their potential while remaining committed to the fundamental values of Islam.

A philosophical reflection on syncretism within the *Kidung Rumecko* ultimately leads to the understanding that authentic Islamic education is not merely a process of transplanting Islamic models from one context to another. Rather, it is a dialogical and creative process in which the universal teachings of Islam engage with local wisdom to produce a unique and authentic synthesis [37]. The contextual model of Islamic education that emerges from this understanding is not only relevant to Indonesia's plural and multicultural context but also holds the potential to make significant contributions to the global discourse on the relationship between religion and culture in an increasingly interconnected yet polarized world. Thus, the creative syncretic heritage of Sunan Kalijaga, as expressed in the *Kidung Rumecko*, is not only of historical value but also possesses profound contemporary relevance for the development of adaptive, inclusive, and transformative models of Islamic education.

Relevance of Kidung Rumecko in Fostering Religious Moderation

The "*Kidung Rumecko Ing Wengi*," composed by Sunan Kalijaga, serves as a historical artifact of profound relevance to the development of religious moderation within the contemporary Indonesian context [38]. Although created several centuries ago, the teachings embodied in this lyrical work reflect moderate Islamic values that are inclusive and harmonious with the socio-cultural environment. The approach to preaching adopted by Sunan Kalijaga, as exemplified in the "*Kidung*," reveals a religious disposition that is neither rigid nor dogmatic, but rather one capable of engaging in dialogue with the cultural realities of society. In Indonesia's pluralistic and multicultural landscape, such an approach is particularly pertinent as a model for how Islamic values can be applied without compromising local cultural richness or engendering destructive social polarization [39].

The concept of *wasathiyah* (moderation), which is central to Islamic teachings, is particularly well-reflected in "*Kidung Rumecko*" [40]. Through a cultural and accommodative framework, Sunan Kalijaga illustrates that the principles of Islam can be implemented without resorting to extreme positions, whether in the form of liberalism that neglects fundamental religious values or rigid conservatism that rejects dialogue with local wisdom [41]. "*Kidung Rumecko*" offers a conciliatory pathway where unwavering Islamic faith may be expressed through local cultural mediums without losing its essence. In the contemporary Indonesian context, which confronts challenges posed by extremism and intolerance, the model of religious moderation exemplified in "*Kidung Rumecko*" stands as an inspiration for cultivating an Islamic understanding that adheres to fundamental principles while remaining open to diverse cultural expressions [42].

The values of intercultural tolerance implied in "*Kidung Rumecko*" are also highly relevant to efforts aimed at fostering social harmony within Indonesia's pluralistic society. Sunan Kalijaga does not position Islam as a faith that seeks to erase all aspects of local tradition and culture, but rather as a teaching capable of engaging and interacting constructively with local wisdom [43]. This approach teaches that cultural differences do not pose a threat to faith; instead, they represent a wealth that can enhance religious expression. In a context where Indonesia faces tendencies toward homogenization and standardization of religious practices, "*Kidung Rumecko*" serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of valuing diverse cultural expressions in religious practice as integral to the richness of Nusantara Islamic tradition [44].

Moreover, "*Kidung Rumecko*" underscores the importance of equilibrium between the esoteric (inner) and exoteric (outer) dimensions of religion, which is a key aspect of religious moderation [45]. Through an approach that emphasizes profound spirituality while remaining committed to Islamic law (*syariat*), Sunan Kalijaga demonstrates that true faith resides not solely in external ritualism or formalism but in a spiritual transformation that influences all dimensions of life. This lyrical work teaches that formal religious practices must be imbued with a deep spiritual understanding to yield authentic social piety. In the context of contemporary Indonesian society, which frequently becomes ensnared in formalism and religious symbolism, the message of "*Kidung Rumecko*" serves as a reminder of the importance of revitalizing the spiritual dimension that lies at the heart of religious moderation.

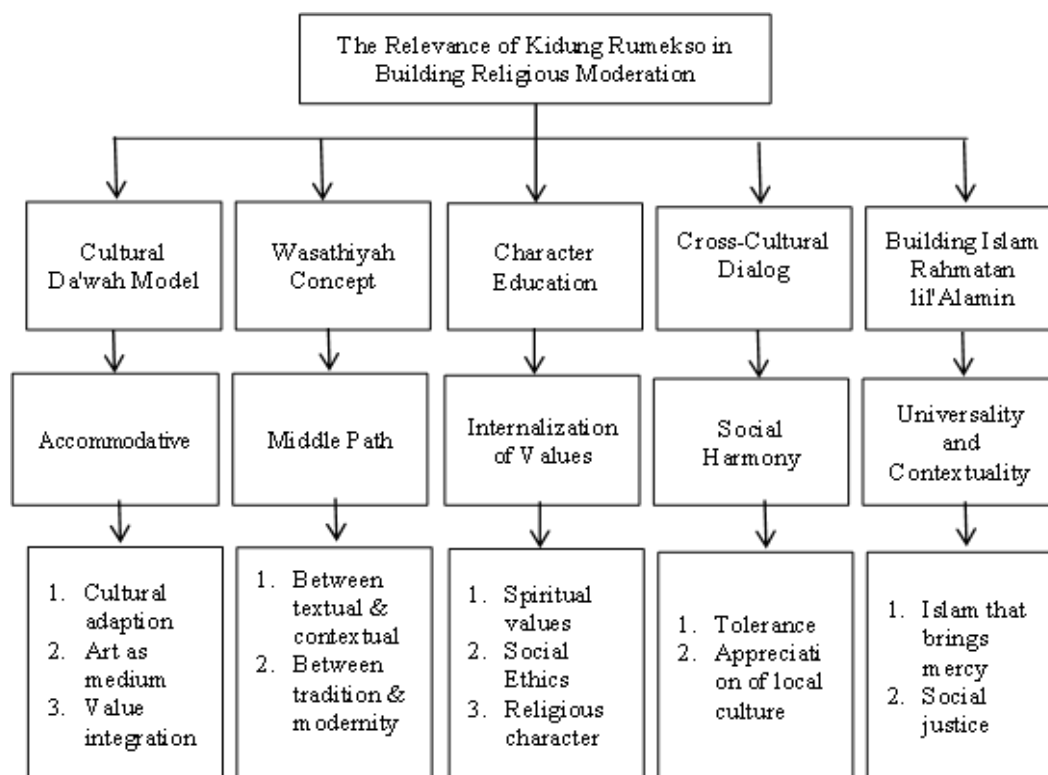


Figure 4. Relevance of Kidung Rumecko in Fostering Religious Moderation

From the perspective of character education, *Kidung Rumecko* possesses significant relevance in cultivating values of virtue rooted in spirituality. Through an approach that synthesizes Islamic values with cultural traditions, this song teaches that the formation of good character is not merely achieved through dogmatic indoctrination, but rather through the internalization of meaningful values within the context of daily life [29]. Values such as patience, gratitude, humility, and compassion towards others, as reflected in *Kidung Rumecko*, provide a robust ethical foundation for the character development of Indonesia's youth. In the national effort to strengthen character education, a values-based education model that is integrated with local wisdom, as exemplified in *Kidung Rumecko*, can serve as an effective alternative to address the moral and ethical crisis faced by contemporary society.

Table 6. The Relevance of Kidung Rumecko in Fostering Religious Moderation

Relevance Aspect	Manifestation in Kidung Rumecko	Contemporary Application
Cultural Dakwah Model	Use of artistic medium (tembang/song) to convey Islamic messages	Development of dakwah approaches that utilize contemporary cultural expressions to reach younger generations
Wasathiyah (Moderation) Concept	An approach that bridges Islamic faith and local wisdom	Development of moderate Islamic theology that avoids extremism without losing fundamental principles
Character Education	Delivery of ethical and spiritual values through meaningful narratives	Development of character education models integrated with local wisdom and religious values
Intercultural Dialogue	Constructive synthesis between Islamic values and Javanese traditions	Development of intercultural dialogue to strengthen social cohesion in plural societies

Islam as Rahmatan lil 'Alamin	Emphasis on aspects of compassion and protection in Islamic teachings	Implementation of Islamic values emphasizing compassion, justice, and welfare for all beings
Contextualization of Teachings	Adaptation of Islamic teachings considering local realities	Development of contextual fiqh responsive to contemporary challenges
Integrative Spirituality	Balance between external and internal dimensions of religiosity	Revitalization of spirituality, balancing formal and substantial aspects of religious practice
Social Harmony	An approach that avoids confrontation and polarization	Development of conflict resolution strategies based on local wisdom and religious values
Inclusivity	Recognition of diversity in faith expressions	Development of an inclusive theology that appreciates diversity without losing identity
Religious Nationalism	Harmonization between religious and cultural identities	Strengthening national identity integrated with religious and cultural values

In the context of intercultural and interfaith dialogue, *Kidung Rumecko* presents a constructive and enriching model of interaction. This work by Sunan Kalijaga demonstrates that the interaction between Islam and local culture does not need to result in the dominance of one party over another; rather, it can create a synthesis that enriches both traditions. The dialogue model reflected in this song facilitates the exchange of values and ideas without necessitating the sacrifice of each party's identity. In the face of challenges such as intolerance and identity-based conflicts within Indonesian society, the intercultural dialogue model illustrated in *Kidung Rumecko* can serve as an inspiration for fostering constructive communication among various religious and cultural groups, ultimately contributing to enduring social harmony.

From the perspective of developing Islam as a *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for all creation), *Kidung Rumecko* is of considerable significance. This work by Sunan Kalijaga illustrates that the universality of Islamic teachings is not incompatible with the contextuality of cultural expression. Islam, when understood and practiced in a manner that takes local contexts into account, can indeed serve as a blessing for those communities, rather than a burden or threat to their cultural identity. *Kidung Rumecko* conveys that a blessed Islam can adapt to local contexts without forsaking its universal principles, engages in dialogue with local wisdom without adopting a superior attitude, and positively contributes to the building of a just and prosperous society. In efforts to cultivate an understanding of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin* in Indonesia, the model of religiosity reflected in this song can provide valuable inspiration [46].

From the standpoint of strengthening national identity, *Kidung Rumecko* illustrates that Islamic identity and Indonesian identity are not separate or contradictory entities; rather, they can be harmoniously integrated. Through a creative synthesis of Islamic values and Javanese wisdom, Sunan Kalijaga teaches that a strong faith does not necessitate the abandonment of one's cultural identity [47]. In contemporary Indonesia, which is often confronted with narratives that pit religious identity against national identity, *Kidung Rumecko* serves as a reminder of the historical legacy of Nusantara Islam that successfully harmonized both [6]. This model of identity integration may provide a foundation for the development of inclusive religious nationalism, acknowledging the diversity of religious expressions as a national treasure rather than a threat to unity.

In the context of the challenges posed by globalization and modernization, *Kidung Rumecko* by Sunan Kalijaga offers valuable insights into how cultural and spiritual identity can be preserved while remaining aligned with the broader vision of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The adaptive approach that maintains core Islamic values without rejecting cultural forms reflects the spirit of SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG

11 (cultural sustainability). This model demonstrates that tradition and modernity are not oppositional; rather, they can engage in constructive dialogue, allowing spiritual values to be expressed through culturally relevant forms in contemporary contexts. As global forces increasingly challenge local identities, this approach provides a framework for sustaining Indonesia's cultural and spiritual heritage in a balanced and sustainable manner.

Thus, the relevance of *Kidung Rumecko* in fostering religious moderation in contemporary Indonesia is closely connected to the objectives of the SDGs, particularly in promoting inclusive societies (SDG 16). The integration of universal Islamic teachings with local cultural expressions creates a balanced model that combines strong faith with openness to diversity and intercultural dialogue. In addressing issues such as extremism, intolerance, and identity crises, this syncretic approach offers a middle path that strengthens social cohesion and mutual understanding. Therefore, the legacy of Sunan Kalijaga should not be viewed merely as historical heritage, but as a living paradigm for developing a moderate, inclusive, and contextually grounded Islamic worldview that contributes to sustainable social harmony in line with the SDGs.

This study analyzes *Kidung Rumecko* by Sunan Kalijaga as a philosophical foundation for culturally grounded Islamic education within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The findings indicate that syncretism functions not merely as cultural adaptation but as a strategic epistemological reconstruction that enables the transmission of Islamic values through locally meaningful symbols. This approach reflects an integrative model of education aligned with SDG 4 (quality and inclusive education), as it promotes contextual learning rooted in cultural relevance.

From a theoretical perspective, the research confirms that the integration of Javanese cosmology with Islamic tawhid creates a multidimensional learning system encompassing theological, ritual, and symbolic domains. This synthesis supports SDG 11 by preserving cultural heritage while transforming it into a medium of religious education. Furthermore, the study highlights that knowledge production in this model is not limited to textual sources but includes experiential, cultural, and intuitive dimensions, thereby expanding the epistemological scope of Islamic education.

Analytically, the model developed by Sunan Kalijaga demonstrates relevance in addressing contemporary challenges such as cultural disintegration, extremism, and educational irrelevance. By fostering inclusivity, adaptability, and value-based learning, this syncretic paradigm contributes to SDG 16 through the promotion of social cohesion and religious moderation. Thus, the research affirms that culturally responsive Islamic education can serve as a sustainable strategy for harmonizing tradition, modernity, and global development agendas.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that *Kidung Rumecko* by Sunan Kalijaga exemplifies a profound culturally based dakwah approach that integrates Islamic values into Javanese cultural structures while remaining relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through philosophical analysis, the study concludes that this syncretism is not superficial accommodation, but a deep synthesis producing a distinctive Indonesian spiritual expression. Sunan Kalijaga constructs an epistemological bridge between Javanese cosmology and Islamic tawhid, where protective prayers (*tolak bala*) become a medium for internalizing monotheism without erasing local traditions. The Islamic educational values embedded in *Kidung Rumecko* encompass faith, law, and ethics, communicated through culturally resonant symbols and metaphors. This pedagogical model reflects the principle of gradualism (*tadarruj*) and respect for local wisdom, enabling communities to embrace Islamic teachings without cultural alienation. In this regard, the study supports SDG 4 (quality and inclusive education) by promoting culturally responsive learning, and SDG 11 (cultural sustainability) by preserving local heritage within religious transformation.

Ultimately, this Javanese-Islamic syncretism offers an inclusive and contextual model of Islamic education that acknowledges the plurality of religious expression within a tawhid framework. The findings affirm that cultural approaches in Islamic education are not theological compromises but strategic pedagogical efforts that bridge epistemological and cultural divides, contributing to sustainable, inclusive educational development in line with the SDGs.

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Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to this research, including conceptualizing the study on Islamic education, SDGs, and Javanese syncretism; analyzing primary texts such as Kidung Rumecko; conducting philosophical interpretation; and writing and revising the manuscript. Specific roles included lead author, classical text analyst, and philosophical reviewer. All authors are affiliated with their respective academic institutions and have approved the final version of the manuscript for publication.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest in relation to this study on Islamic education, SDGs, and Javanese syncretism in Kidung Rumecko by Sunan Kalijaga. The research was conducted independently, objectively, and in accordance with academic integrity standards, without any external influence that could affect the findings or conclusions.

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