



Hadrah, Cultural Da'wah, and National Identity in the Indonesia–Malaysia Borderland Community

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ABSTRACT

*This article analyses the Hadrah as a form of cultural da'wah in strengthening Malay-Islamic and Indonesian identity among the border communities of Temajuk (West Kalimantan) and Telok Melano (Sarawak). This study employs a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, involving community leaders, religious figures, and members of Hadrah groups in Temajuk and Telok Melano. The findings reveal that Hadrah functions as a strategic medium for strengthening Malay-Islamic identity, social solidarity, and Indonesian nationalism in border communities. Through practices that include *zikir*, the recitation of the Barzanji, religious study sessions, regular practice, and cross-border performances in Telok Melano—Hadrah reinforces Malay-Islamic identity whilst simultaneously embodying symbols of Indonesian identity. This article emphasises that community-based cultural da'wah can serve as a vital strategy in maintaining social cohesion and national identity in the border regions. This study contributes to da'wah studies by demonstrating how cultural performance serves as a mechanism for identity construction and social cohesion in border societies.*

Keywords: *Border regions; cultural da'wah; Hadrah; Sambas Malay; Malay-Islamic identity.*

INTRODUCTION

The border functions as an administrative line separating the two countries, created for the sake of each country's national identity and integration. Modern states often produce such boundaries as imagined lines of sovereignty and identity to easily describe existence and power.

Temajuk, West Kalimantan, Indonesia, and Temajuk and Telok Melano exemplify the dynamics and complexity of border communities. Communities in western Borneo that once shared close cultural ties came to be administratively

separated by two nation-states.

The two communities, which mostly come from the same roots, share a cognate cultural space, living in different state systems. The movement to strengthen border nationalism recast these neighbouring communities as citizens of different nation-states, and at times even as outsiders to one another and even positioned as opposites. This situation was mentioned by Anderson (1991) as a paradox of national life. The nation as a community of imagination is imagined through symbols, narratives, and a sense of togetherness. Though the complexity of borders is more than just a dividing line. Newman (2006) and Brambilla (2015) show that borders are actually spaces for relationships, mobility, and the formation of social meaning.

The demographic, political, and social space in Temajuk–Telok Melano presents a complex situation, associated with the historical and cultural ties of the Telok Melano community. The communities share closely related languages, a common Islamic tradition, Malay customs, and interconnected economic relations. This finding is consistent with studies showing that tradition can foster harmony in border communities (Azwar et al. 2024). Studies by Shin, Tuah, and Yusriadi (2022), Tuah, Shin, and Khiri (2023), and Rachmawati and Dewi (2021), show that border nationalism cannot be separated from social experience, welfare, infrastructure, and cross-border relations in Temajuk–Telok Melano.

One important socio-cultural practice in Temajuk–Telok Melano is represented by the Hadrah group or sometimes called the Hadrah and Zikir group. Hadrah was born from a collective awareness of local culture and the need for people to maintain traditions and strengthen solidarity. Therefore, Hadrah, as an Islamic performing art, must also be seen as a form of cultural da'wah. Recent research shows that hadrah functions as a medium for integrating local wisdom and religious values (Afandi & Arifin, 2025)

Sarbini (2015) explained that local culture-based da'wah can be an effective way to present Islamic messages in the social space of the community. Aliyudin (2016), Humaningsih (2021), and Saefulloh and Malik (2024) also show the same thing; Local traditions such as traditional ceremonies, earth alms, tahlilan, selawatan, and joint prayer can be a medium for cultural da'wah that strengthens social harmony. Recent studies by Nurcahyono et al. (2025), Laelani and Mukarom (2025), and Wildan and Gandhi (2025) show that cultural da'wah remains relevant in contemporary society because it connects religious values, local customs, and social identity. This perspective provides a useful basis for understanding Hadrah as a cultural-religious practice among Malay communities.

Hadrah is also important in the multicultural context of Malay communities in West Kalimantan, where ethnic identity is historical and shaped through social encounters (Yusriadi, 2019). Studies on Sambas Malay traditions

show that local cultural practices preserve togetherness, respect, and social identity (Pradika, 2025; Yusriadi et al., 2024). Previous studies on da'wah management also provide a basis for understanding Hadrah as a local socio-religious institution. Community-based da'wah works through local resources, social proximity, participation, and the organisation of living traditions (Dewi & Zulkifli, 2020; Machendrawaty & Safei, 2001). In this sense, Hadrah can be read as a practice of cultural da'wah management that organizes values, solidarity, and identity through religious-cultural media.

Although studies on the Indonesia-Malaysia border have discussed many trans-national issues, state sovereignty and security, nationalism and nation-state relations, studies that specifically place Hadrah as a cultural da'wah in strengthening the identity of border communities are still limited. Similarly, the study of cultural da'wah has discussed local traditions, traditional media and symbolic communication, but not much has been done to connect it to Malay-Islamic identity and Indonesianness within the border space. This is the gap that the present article seeks to address. Recent studies of Indonesian border communities also show that nationalism is shaped by state policy, education, culture, and social relations (Martono et al., 2022; Dewantara et al., 2024).

Theoretically, this article draws on three main perspectives. First, it employs the concept of cultural da'wah. Cultural da'wah refers to the transmission of Islamic messages and values through cultural forms, practices, and strategies that are familiar and meaningful to local communities. In this perspective, culture is not treated as separate from religion, but as a medium through which Islamic values are communicated, accepted, and reproduced in social life. In Malay society, devotional traditions such as *dhiker*, *Barzanji* recitation, Hadrah, and related religious performances can be understood as forms of cultural da'wah because they combine Islamic teachings, local aesthetics, communal participation, and the preservation of cultural identity (Mamat & Zarif, 2019; Syarifuddin et al., 2025; Afandi & Arifin, 2025; Hidayah et al., 2025).

Second, this article situates religion within its social context. Religion can function as a source of social solidarity. This argument draws on Durkheim's (1995) view that religion is not merely a matter of individual belief, but also a collective practice that binds members of society into a moral community. Through shared religious rituals, emotional bonds are cultivated, collective consciousness is strengthened, and common identity is reaffirmed. Studies of religious-cultural communities in West Kalimantan show that religious and cultural practices influence identity construction and intergroup communication (Ruslan et al., 2025). This perspective is complemented by Geertz's (1973) symbolic approach, which views religion as a system of symbols that shapes

people's understanding of social reality and gives meaning to their actions. In addition, religion is also understood as a continuing and dynamic social practice. Asad (2003) conceptualizes religion as a discursive tradition, namely a set of values, knowledge, and practices that are inherited, maintained, and reinterpreted by religious communities across time and social contexts.

Third, this article uses Parsons' AGIL framework, which consists of adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency or pattern maintenance (Parsons, 1951). The AGIL framework is used to analyse the social functions of the Hadrah group in the Temajuk border community. Adaptation refers to the ability of a social group to adjust to changes in its social environment, including cross-border dynamics and shifting relations between Temajuk and Telok Melano. Goal attainment refers to the capacity of the group to formulate and pursue collective goals, particularly the preservation of Malay-Islamic traditions and the representation of Indonesian identity. Integration concerns the role of the group in building internal solidarity through routine activities, participation, and interaction among members. Finally, latency or pattern maintenance refers to the group's role in transmitting values, norms, and religious-cultural practices to the next generation. In this article, the AGIL framework is not used as an abstract theoretical scheme, but as an analytical tool to explain how the Hadrah group maintains Malay-Islamic identity, strengthens social cohesion, and represents Indonesian identity in the Temajuk–Telok Melano borderland.

METHODS

The main question addressed is how the practice of Hadrah shaped, maintained, and displayed Malay-Islamic identity and Indonesianness in the lives of border communities. To answer this question, this study uses a qualitative approach. The Hadrah group in Temajuk was chosen as the primary focus of analysis because it remains one of the most active community-based religious groups involved in preserving local cultural traditions and conducting cultural da'wah activities. The group is also actively engaged in cross-border social and religious interactions between Indonesia and Malaysia.

The research was conducted in Temajuk Village, Paloh District, Sambas Regency, West Kalimantan, Indonesia, with additional data verification undertaken in Telok Melano, Sarawak, Malaysia (see Map 1). Despite their close historical and cultural ties, contemporary national boundaries have increasingly positioned the two communities as citizens of different nation-states, creating a unique setting for examining the relationship between ethnic identity and national identity.

The study involved ten informants selected through purposive sampling based on their active involvement in socio-religious activities. The informants

consisted of community leaders, religious leaders, and members of the Hadrah group who possessed extensive knowledge of local religious and cultural practices. Data were collected through in-depth unstructured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and understandings of Hadrah and its role in the socio-religious life of the community. An FGD was conducted in Temajuk on 14 August 2025 involving six participants, including Hadrah leaders and community leaders. The discussion was intended to obtain collective perspectives and to validate information gathered through individual interviews. Documentation was also used to examine videos recorded by community members, social media materials, and other relevant records that captured Hadrah activities and symbolic expressions of Malay and Indonesian identities in the border region.

The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis following the procedures proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Interview transcripts, FGD results, and documentary materials were reviewed repeatedly to identify recurring patterns and themes. The data were then coded into several thematic categories, including the strengthening of Malay-Islamic identity, national identity, cross-border interaction, and cultural da'wah. These themes were subsequently interpreted through Geertz's symbolic approach to religion, Durkheim's concept of social solidarity, Asad's notion of discursive tradition, and Parsons' AGIL framework.

The trustworthiness of the findings was enhanced through source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different informants, while methodological triangulation involved comparing evidence gathered through interviews, FGDs, and documentary materials. Important information was further verified through follow-up interviews with key informants and discussions among members of the research team. These procedures were undertaken to strengthen the credibility, consistency, and trustworthiness of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A Brief Overview of the Temajuk-Telok Melano Border

Temajuk is a border village in Paloh District, Sambas Regency, West Kalimantan, which is geographically directly adjacent to Telok Melano, Sarawak, Malaysia. See Map 1. The proximity of these two neighbouring regions is not only geographical, but also historical and cultural. The Temajuk and Telok Melano communities both live in a coastal Malay cultural landscape

characterized by the use of the Malay language, Islamic practices, kinship relationships, and collective memories of cross-border movements. Therefore, we see Temajuk in the perspective of a fluid and layered identity. In that layer there are Malays, Islam, Temajuk localities, and Indonesianness. Studies of the Indonesia-Malaysia border region also show that border communities share cultural bonds across national boundaries (Sulistyarini et al., 2026).



Source: Author's Observation, 2026

Map 1. Temajuk–Telok Melano Border Area (Adapted from Google Maps)

Within this layered border identity, the Hadrah group in the Temajuk community occupies an important position. This group, which exists as a small, informal organisation, has grown and developed as a community-based socio-religious institution born out of the community's need to preserve traditions, strengthen solidarity, and provide a space for identity expression. This Hadrah group also drives the recitation, Yasinan, and Tahlilan. An informant explained:

"The structure is informal; there is no decree, there are no organisational rules in writing..."

The findings of the study show that Hadrah in Temajuk operates at two levels of identity. First, Hadrah strengthens Malay-Muslim identity through the habit of dhikr, the recitation of *Barzanji*, the use of the Sambas Malay language, appearance and dress, as well as the inheritance of local Islamic traditions. Second, Hadrah also serves to display Indonesian identity when this group was present in cross-border activities in Telok Melano and was introduced as a group from Indonesia. During the FGD, all participants agreed that although they were unofficially invited to perform in the celebration at the Malay family home in

Telok Melano, however, when the host introduced the audience in several meetings, the Hadrah group from Temajuk was introduced as a group of guests from Indonesia. A FGD participant said that:

"So said the host, also present with us, guests from Indonesia. They appointed us as distant guests"

Hadrah as a Local Socio-Religious Institution

The Hadrah group in Temajuk shows a distinctive form of institution in the border community. Hadrah does not have a formal organisational structure like modern organisations, but it has a fairly clear leadership and division of roles. This group has a respected leader, Haji Saman as the head of the Hadrah group. Under such leadership, group members participate voluntarily and multifunctionally. Regular Hadrah rehearsals provide a weekly opportunity for members to gather in rotation from house to house. In addition to honing performance skills, this rotating pattern strengthens social cohesion and builds community solidarity.

This form of institution shows that the organisation of da'wah is not always seen through formal parameters. In local communities, organisational effectiveness is often determined by beliefs, personalities, habits, emotional closeness, and social acceptance. The Hadrah group runs because the community considers it important, not because it has written legality. This is in line with Dewi and Zulkifli (2020) who show that community-based da'wah strategies work through the use of local resources, social proximity, and the ability of institutions to respond to community needs. In the context of Temajuk, the Hadrah is also on the same logic, appearing as a social node that organizes values, people, spaces, and traditions.

Leadership in the Hadrah group is informal, but it has a strong social legitimacy. Leaders are respected for their technical abilities in Hadrah or dhikr, and for their strong moral position in society. In the context of da'wah, this kind of leadership is important because religious messages are conveyed through words and example of deeds. Machendrawaty and Safei (2001) refer to the development of Islamic society as a process that involves the delivery of teachings, empowerment, organisation, and the formation of a living social tradition. Thus, the Hadrah group in Temajuk can be read as a form of cultural development of an Islamic society.

The religious function of Hadrah can be seen from *dhikr* activities, recitation, Barzanji, and joint prayer. These activities make Islam present in forms that are close to the everyday experiences of community members. This is what Geertz (1973) calls that religion is a system of symbols that shapes the inner atmosphere and motivation of humans. In the practice of Hadrah, Islamic

symbols are present through salawat, praise to the Prophet, recitation of religious texts, and tambourine rhythms. These symbols form a religious sense.

Meanwhile, Hadrah's social function can be seen in its involvement in celebrations, congratulations, weddings, thanksgivings, and community events. An event featuring Hadrah marks the occasion as festive and communal. Thus, Hadrah becomes a social mechanism that maintains relations between citizens. The data show that the Hadrah group functions as a social space that strengthens relationships among community members. Social interaction is maintained through routine group activities, communal celebrations, and involvement in various religious and social events. Through these practices, members create regular spaces for communication, mutual support, and social cohesion.

Hadrah activities therefore do not only preserve religious performance, but also connect individuals, families, and community members within a shared social network. In Parsons' terms, this illustrates the function of integration, namely the role of a social system in maintaining solidarity and regulating relationships among its members. This kind of function is in line with Pradika's (2025) findings about eating besaprah in the Sambas Malay community in Jawai, that local traditions are a means of strengthening friendship, increasing solidarity, and building collective happiness. In a different way, Hadrah binds citizens through religious-cultural practices that are carried out together. These findings are consistent with Anam et al. (2025), who show that hadrah can function as a religious and social space for youth.

The cultural function of Hadrah can be seen from its ability to maintain the Islamic heritage of the Sambas Malay. The practice of dhikr, Barzanji, Hadrah, the use of the Sambas Malay language, and the tradition of celebrations became markers of local Malayism. In Temajuk society, Malay identity is closely associated with practising Islam through culturally embedded forms. Islam and Malay are two entities that support each other in daily practice. Asad (2003) reminds that religion must be understood as a discursive tradition shaped by practice, authority, history, and social discipline. Hadrah in Temajuk shows that Islam is present as a tradition that is carried out, repeated, taught, and legitimized by the community.

In summary, the presence of Hadrah in Temajuk illustrates the presence of cultural da'wah through a simple organisation. The organisational structure is informal and flexible, allowing Hadrah to be attached to people's lives. This is what makes Hadrah a community-based cultural da'wah institution. The informant explained that the Hadrah group has a shared collective goal. This goal is directed toward preserving Malay-Islamic culture and maintaining the group's social relevance within the community. For example, when residents

need a religious performance for weddings, thanksgiving events, or other communal celebrations, the Hadrah group is ready to take part and enliven the occasion through religious songs, Barzanji recitation, and Hadrah performance. Regular training is carried out to prepare members for such performances and to ensure that the group can be mobilized when needed. In this sense, the function of goal attainment is reflected in the group's ability to organize its members and activities around collectively recognized cultural and religious purposes.

Cultural Da'wah and Strengthening Malay-Islamic Identity

As mentioned above, Hadrah serves as an important medium for strengthening Malay-Muslim identity. This identity is formed through cultural-religious practices that are carried out repeatedly. In addition to weekly meetings within the group with practice of playing instruments, there are also sometimes *dhikir* activities, *Barzanji* recitation, *tablilan (ruvahan)* and prayer.

Through Hadrah, community members express Islam as a source of meaning, a method of communication, and a cultural symbol. In the practice of Hadrah, Islamic teachings are expressed not only through language, but also through sound, rhythm, bodily performance, clothing, domestic spaces, celebrations, food, and social relations.

The main strategy of Hadrah is to revive and defend the Islamic-Malay tradition of Sambas. Traditions inherited from previous generations continue to be practiced in social life. In addition, Hadrah also accommodates the interests and tastes of the community. During the FGD, several informants performed various hadrah songs, ranging from older styles to newer versions with Dangdut rhythms.

This situation helps explain why Hadrah is effective. Cultural da'wah does not view culture as an opponent of religion, but as a medium of communication of Islamic values. Nurcahyono et al. (2025) show that the *walimatul aqiqah* tradition in the people of Lampung is a symbolic communication space that connects religion, customs, and social identity. Wildan and Gandhi (2025) also emphasized that traditional media can be a means of sustaining religious traditions, especially when religious values are conveyed through cultural forms that are already known to the public. With this perspective, Hadrah in Temajuk has become a traditional medium of da'wah that connects Islamic values with the identity of their ethnic group. This suggests that cultural da'wah remains effective when religious values are communicated through familiar artistic and communal forms (Afandi & Arifin, 2025; Anam et al., 2025).

Hadrah strengthens Malay-Islamic identity through the internalization of values. This internalization occurs because activities are carried out routinely and in a participatory manner. Weekly rehearsals, rotating meetings, celebrations, and

public appearances form a collective habit. Young people, adults, men, and women know Hadrah not only as a spectacle, but as part of village life. In fact, research reports show that almost everyone in Temajuk has basic skills in the recitation of *Barzanji* or Islamic verses. This is an indicator that the Islamic-Malay tradition has taken deep root in the community.

The Sambas Malay language is an important element in the cultural preaching of Hadrah. The use of local languages in conversation, poetry, prayer, and social activities strengthens the linguistic identity of the community. Language is a means of communication and at the same time a symbol of cultural membership. In border communities, the use of local languages has strategic significance because Malay is also used in Telok Melano. Referring to Anderson (1991), in the context of Temajuk, the Sambas Malay language strengthens the imagination of the local Malay-Muslim community, while at the same time not erasing the Indonesian identity.

The practice of Hadrah also shows a close relationship between customs and religion. *Barzanji*, *salawat*, *doa*, and tambourine are Islamic practices that have been cultivated in Malay life. This is the essence of cultural da'wah, that Islamic values are conveyed through a cultural medium that is understood and accepted by the community. Saefulloh and Malik (2024) show that cultural da'wah in local traditions can create harmony between religion and culture because da'wah works through symbols, customs, and social solidarity. The findings in Temajuk reinforce that argument. Hadrah is an example of how religion and culture do not negate each other but animate each other. The findings also indicate that the Hadrah group functions as a vehicle for maintaining Malay values and identity in Temajuk. Through routine activities, religious performances, Barzanji recitation, and the use of Malay cultural expressions, the group continuously transmits values and meanings to the next generation.

Hadrah functions as a form of Malay cultural expression that preserves Malay-Muslim identity in the borderland. This role is particularly important because the Temajuk community lives in a social space shaped by both local cultural ties and national boundaries. From the perspective of AGIL, this situation reflects the function of latency or pattern maintenance, namely the preservation and transmission of values, norms, and cultural practices that enable the social system to endure over time. This finding is consistent with Yusriadi et al. (2024), who show that Malay traditions in West Kalimantan can defend identity while maintaining social openness.

Representation of Indonesianness in Cross-Border Space

An important finding of this study is that Hadrah presents an Indonesian identity in a cross-border space. When the Hadrah Temajuk group performed

and enlivened the atmosphere of the host celebration at Telok Melano, they were also present as a group from Indonesia. The research report said that in cross-border events, the Hadrah Temajuk group was often introduced by the host as a "group of guests from Indonesia".

Through Hadrah, Indonesian identity appears in another form, namely through Islamic-Malay art. Hadrah conveys national identity in a subtle, non-coercive, and non-binary way. Here, the Hadrah becomes a bridge that connects the two layers of national and ethnic identity, religion and custom, local and national at a single point. In the case of Temajuk, national identity is actually carried by local identity.

This shows that the Malay-Islamic local identity and the Indonesian national identity are not two categories that contradict each other and contrast. In Temajuk, being a Malay-Muslim does not make people stay away from Indonesia. These findings broaden the understanding of borderline nationalism. Nationalism is not always born from the affirmation of boundaries, but also from the ability of citizens to represent themselves with dignity before the communities of neighbouring countries. Recent research by Zabadi et al. (2025) and Wahyudi et al. (2024) supports the argument that cultural preservation contributes to the maintenance of national identity.

Border studies show that borders are complex spaces of crossings, relations, and negotiation (van Schendel & Abraham, 2005; Ishikawa, 2010). In Temajuk–Telok Melano, Hadrah allows cultural closeness and national difference to appear simultaneously.

Within the AGIL framework, Hadrah's cross-border appearance reflects goal attainment and adaptation. The group maintains tradition while representing Indonesian identity in a changing border context. The Hadrah group helps maintain cultural traditions while adapting socio-religious practices to the social and national context of the Temajuk border community. Its participation in cross-border socio-religious events in Telok Melano demonstrates the group's ability to adjust to the borderland environment. Hadrah is not confined to local ritual space in Temajuk, but also moves across social and cultural boundaries through invitations, celebrations, and religious gatherings. In Parsons' AGIL framework, this reflects the function of adaptation, namely the capacity of a social group to respond to its surrounding environment while making use of available opportunities to sustain its social role.

These findings are also important for reading the role of state in border areas. Scott (2009) shows that the state often views the periphery through the logic of regulation from above, while local communities have their own way of managing their lives. In Temajuk, strengthening Indonesianness requires not

only the presence of officials, roads, border posts, and formal symbols, but also recognition of cultural-religious institutions that are trusted by the community. This is in line with Fitriasari (2022) and Kurniasih & Umar (2022), who argue that cultural revitalization and policy implementation in border areas are important for strengthening national resilience. Temajuk residents do not need to reject cross-border Malay to become Indonesian. They can still feel cognate with Telok Melano, but at the same time realize that they are part of Indonesia. This is a more flexible and contextual form of border nationalism, which does not demand a disconnection from culture.

The representation of Indonesianness through Hadrah also contains an integration dimension. Hadrah connects the emotional bonds of citizens with national ties, and the bonds of the village with the state. When their traditions and presence are recognised in Telok Melano, the pride of the residents increases. This sense of pride can strengthen attachment to the community and the state, fostering their collective imagination of the nation (Anderson, 1991).

Dynamics of Supporters and Challenges of Hadrah Cultural Da'wah

The data show four main factors supporting Hadrah cultural da'wah in the border community. First, the local leadership factor. Second, the social cohesion of Temajuk residents. Strong cohesion has been an important social capital. Hadrah activities can run because the people of Temajuk and Telok Melano still have a culture of gathering, helping each other, attending celebrations, and maintaining relationships between members. Third, the social reward system. This system motivates members and encourages wider participation. The opportunity to perform at official or cross-border events gives members pride and is a symbolic incentive for engagement.

Fourth, the depth of the roots of the Islamic-Malay tradition in the Sambas society. Hadrah did not emerge in a social vacuum. So far, Hadrah has indeed been accepted and has become an important part of customs or cultural rituals. Therefore, da'wah through Hadrah does not require additional legitimacy. The community understands Hadrah as part of Malay-Muslim life.

However, Hadrah also faces a number of challenges. The research report said that internal factors such as leadership, social cohesion, internal reward systems, and financial independence strengthen local and national identities. Meanwhile, external factors such as the economy's dependence on Malaysia, fluctuating border policies, limited infrastructure, and popular cultural currents are challenges that must be negotiated.

The challenge of regenerating Hadrah players was mentioned by the informant as one of the important issues. Hadrah can survive if the younger generation sees it as a meaningful tradition, not just a legacy of the parents.

Studies of education and nationalism in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region show that national and local identities among younger generations need to be maintained through cultural and civic strengthening (Ramadhan et al., 2025; Wahyudi et al., 2024). Therefore, Hadrah cultural da'wah needs to be managed in a more creative way without losing its traditional roots. This strategy is also relevant to the ethnopedagogical approach in border communities (Ramadhan et al., 2025). Here, the study of Laelani and Mukarom (2025) is relevant because it shows that cultural da'wah can still strengthen religious identity when it is able to dialogue with social and technological changes. The findings of Wildan and Gandhi (2025) are also important because they show that traditional media needs to be transformed to remain relevant to the younger generation without losing its cultural and religious meaning.

This study argues that local da'wah institutions should be recognized as cultural infrastructure in border communities. Theoretically, this study contributes to da'wah studies by showing how da'wah can be integrated with local culture and shaped by the political context of border societies. On a broader level, this cultural initiative can be seen as a form of identity consolidation and collective effort that helps maintain social relations among communities along the Indonesia-Malaysia border (Handayani et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Hadrah in Temajuk performs multiple functions: it serves as a Malay-Islamic performing art and a form of cultural da'wah. Hadrah provides a space for expressing both Sambas Malay-Islam identity and Indonesian national identity in a layered and non-contradictory form. Through activities such as routine exercises, *dhikir*, *Barzanji*, *salawat*, celebrations, and cross-border performances, Hadrah manages religious values, strengthens social solidarity, maintains the Sambas Malay language and culture, and presents a symbol of Indonesianness in a cognate cultural space.

Here, on the cultural side, Hadrah is a tool for defending the Malay-Islamic identity of Sambas. Meanwhile, Hadrah, although associated with customs, has a national appearance. Hadrah Temajuk also played a political role as an ambassador of the nation, when it was present in the cross-border space of Telok Melano, Malaysia. These functions show that local da'wah institutions can be important actors in strengthening the identity of border communities, as well as carrying out religious, social, and cultural functions as social glue and guardians of local traditions of the Temajuk community.

The identity here is multi-layered and fluid. Practically, these findings show the importance of strengthening cultural da'wah institutions as part of social development in border areas. The state, religious institutions, and local

governments need to see the Hadrah group as a social capital of the community that can support national cohesion and the inheritance of local values. Further research can expand the study by comparing Hadrah groups or socio-religious groups in several other border areas, to find other patterns, or to corroborate existing findings.

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