

The Success of Da'wah in Integrating Islamic Values into the Cultural Heritage of Terengganu

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Abstract

The success of Islamic da'wah in spreading the principles of Islam has profoundly influenced the cultural values of Terengganu society since the 11th century. The period of consolidation began in the 13th century and extended to the 16th century, while the golden era emerged between the 17th and 19th centuries. The Islamic values introduced in Terengganu have shaped a distinct and unique cultural heritage, meticulously integrating these values into cultural expressions to create a harmonious, attractive, and comprehensive lifestyle. Core Islamic principles such as Tawhid (belief in the oneness of God), natural disposition (fitrah), servitude to God (Ubudiyah), moral conduct (akhlaq), and intellectual development have become fundamental in shaping Terengganu's cultural heritage. These values were propagated through educational systems and the dissemination of Islamic teachings, facilitating understanding and encouraging profound internalization. The resulting cultural heritage has effectively strengthened faith, eliminated idolatry, fostered emotional and spiritual resilience, and cultivated a sense of identity and Islamic unity. The influence of Islamic civilization has carved a unique Malay civilization in Terengganu, harmonizing traditional customs and societal practices through the refinement of Islamic culture and civilization. The adaptation of cultural elements into Islamic values has created a spiritually and aesthetically enriching heritage, encompassing Malay art, literature, and traditional practices. This study aims to demonstrate that Islamic values are intricately embedded within the cultural heritage of Terengganu, as practiced by the Malay community in the region. By exploring the synthesis of Islamic values and local traditions, the study underscores how these values continue to inspire and sustain the cultural identity of Terengganu society.

Keywords: Islamic Da'wah, Cultural Heritage, Terengganu, Islamic Civilization, Malay Traditions, Islamic Values, Faith, Identity

Introduction

The cultural heritage of Terengganu has received limited scholarly attention, particularly in terms of its intrinsic moral values that showcase its beauty and profound appeal. Often associated with Malay cultural heritage, the arrival of Islam in Terengganu marked a significant transformation in societal practices and cultural expressions. This heritage reflects a synthesis of Malay traditions harmonized with Islamic principles, enriched by references to the Quran and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The Islamization effort, led by scholars and preachers, successfully introduced changes emphasizing the importance of knowledge. This intellectual foundation became the cornerstone for preserving a cultural heritage that aligns with the Malay identity, character, and ethos—traits of the dominant demographic in Terengganu.

The inner struggles of the Malay community and the social pressures faced by the populace were addressed through the refinement of Islamic culture. The integration of Islamic values into problem-solving and alleviating social tensions served as a significant endeavor to highlight the dignity of Islamic culture, which ultimately evolved into Terengganu's cultural heritage. Concepts such as Ubudiyah (servitude to God), Rububiyah (belief in God's Lordship), and human morality (akhlaq insaniah) in all aspects of life fostered serenity, sweetness, and confidence within the society. These were further propagated through structured and systematic da'wah efforts.

The incorporation of these values aimed to transform existing mindsets that were often influenced by superstitions and unfounded beliefs. Da'wah initiatives utilized cultural arts as a key medium for conveying Islamic messages. Cultural expressions became a foundational tool for disseminating the message of Islam, culminating in the acceptance and internalization of these values in daily life.

This study explores the process of embedding Islamic values into Malay culture, which has reshaped lifestyles and deepened the practice of Islamic teachings among the people of Terengganu. It focuses on the practices and attitudes of the community, identifying the factors that have led to shifts in thought, behavior, roles, values, and traditions to align with Islamic principles. The cultural elements showcased in the past must be revitalized in contemporary social life. Such efforts are invaluable for ensuring the continuity of this heritage for generations to come.

This study aims to achieve several objectives, including:

1. Identifying Islamic Values in Terengganu's Cultural Heritage
2. Explaining the Integration of Islamic Values in Terengganu's Culture
3. Elucidating Islamic-Influenced Cultural Practices in Terengganu
4. Demonstrating the Practice of Islamic Values as Part of Terengganu's Cultural Heritage

This study holds several significant contributions:

1. Demonstrating the Adaptability of Malay Culture to Islamic Values
Highlighting how Malay society has successfully embraced Islamic values, leading to transformative changes in daily practices.

2. Showcasing the Success of Da'wah Efforts in Integrating Islamic Values
Underscoring the achievements of Islamic propagation in embedding Islamic principles into Terengganu's cultural heritage.
3. Revealing the Beauty and Nobility of Terengganu's Cultural Heritage Post-Islamization
Illustrating the enhanced aesthetic and moral appeal of Terengganu's heritage after adopting Islamic values.
4. Highlighting the Integration of Aesthetics and Ethics in Terengganu's Heritage
Demonstrating how Terengganu's cultural heritage seamlessly blends Islamic aesthetics and ethics into an inseparable whole.
5. Elevating Terengganu's Heritage through Islamic Values
Emphasizing how Islamic values have dignified and established Terengganu's cultural heritage as a treasured symbol of the state.

Islamic Values in the Cultural Heritage of Terengganu

Islamic values have been deeply integrated into the cultural practices of Terengganu's society. These values were widely propagated and warmly embraced by the local community, supported by the collaborative efforts of scholars and preachers. This collective endeavor resulted in a resilient Malay cultural heritage that became a symbol of Terengganu's Islamic civilization. Among the notable Islamic values embedded in Terengganu's culture are Rububiyah, Ubudiyah, human instinct, intellectualism, and morality.

Rububiyah Values

The value of Rububiyah in Terengganu's cultural heritage emphasizes the oneness of Allah and the purity of human hearts. This value is linked to the concept of "Rabb" (Lord), which signifies Allah's sovereignty over all things, and the principle of *Tanzih* (transcendence), which rejects idolatry (al-Qardhawi, 1996:26–28). This value is reflected in the region's artistic heritage, particularly in its cultural arts and Malay civilization. Expressions of Rububiyah are visible in charitable acts, behaviors, symbols, carvings, melodies, vocal performances, and decorative arts.

Ubudiyah Values

Ubudiyah values are omnipresent in the cultural practices of Terengganu's community, emphasizing human servitude to Allah. This value highlights the essence of human creation and the act of worship and obedience to the Creator (Ayyub, 1979:266). It manifests in daily behaviors and rituals such as recitation of *wirid*, *tahlil*, *zikr*, *tasbih*, supplications, and *iftitah kalam* (opening prayers) during community gatherings or martial arts performances.

Human Instinct Values

The cultural practices of Malay society often align with the values of human instinct and natural tendencies. The core objective is to demonstrate that sincerity, purity of heart, and social unity stem from innate human virtues. These values ensure tranquility and happiness in communal life (al-Qardhawi, 1996:88). In Terengganu, such values counter practices of witchcraft, shirk (polytheism), and magical healing rituals. By fostering reliance on Allah's power, these values unify the artistic and spiritual aspirations of the community under the umbrella of Tawhid (monotheism).

Intellectual Values

The intellectual values in Terengganu's heritage foster a process known as *al-Mathal* (parable or proverb). These values arise from good conduct and are rooted in knowledge and recognition of Allah (Ayyub, 1979:11). Intellectual values were disseminated through religious texts and community teachings, often embedded in religious poetry, *gurindam*, and *pantun*. This dissemination marked the beginning of a new intellectual and societal transformation, shifting Malay beliefs from polytheistic practices to monotheism.

Moral Values

The people of Terengganu are deeply inclined toward purifying their souls through spiritual practices, making Sufism a central medium for achieving this goal. The spread of Sufi education and spiritual training was structured within Terengganu's early educational system. Prominent works, such as the *Kitab al-Luma'* (Book of Illumination), provided Sunni Sufi teachings and gained widespread influence. Other texts like *al-Durr al-Manzum* combined Sunni theology influenced by Asy'ari thought, al-Ghazali's Sunni Sufism, and Shafi'i jurisprudence (Piah, 2000:43). These teachings encompassed various Islamic sciences, including Quranic exegesis, Hadith, pillars of faith and Islam, jurisprudence, Sufism, philosophy, and ethics (Zuber, 1963:19–20). Through these values, Terengganu's cultural heritage not only embodies Islamic principles but also offers a rich legacy that harmonizes aesthetic and ethical dimensions of life.

Integration of Islamic Values into Terengganu's Culture

The arrival of Islam in Terengganu catalyzed a transformation across all aspects of human life, including spirituality, physical practices, and intellectual thought. Islamic propagation, conducted by scholars and preachers from the Arab world, China, and the Malay Archipelago, was harmonized with the refined cultural sensibilities of Terengganu's society. This adaptation of cultural expressions to convey Islamic teachings created a captivating and effective means of reaching every member of the community.

Islam ushered in a cultural evolution in Terengganu, beginning in the 11th century and peaking in the 16th century. This evolution, particularly within the framework of Malay culture, emphasized knowledge and intellectual pursuits, the development of the Malay language, Quranic studies, cultural activities, Malay civilization, and the cultivation of noble character. The culmination of these efforts resulted in what is now recognized as Terengganu's cultural heritage, with Islamic values intricately embedded in its fabric.

Development of Knowledge Culture

One of the most significant impacts of Islamization was the introduction and adaptation of Arabic script, which evolved into *Jawi* for writing the Malay language. The *Jawi* script retained the fundamental forms of Quranic Arabic letters, reflecting its inherent sanctity. Over time, *Jawi* script was developed into various calligraphic styles, enhancing its aesthetic appeal. Knowledge dissemination flourished through *Jawi* writings, covering Islamic studies, social sciences, natural sciences, history, and community affairs.

Islamization of Language and Terminology

According to Al-Attas (1969:12), the arrival of Islam in the Malay Peninsula also led to the Islamization of the Malay language. This linguistic transformation facilitated the

acceptance and understanding of Islamic teachings and knowledge. Malay became the primary medium for propagating and teaching Islam across the Nusantara, enriched with Islamic-Arabic and Persian terminologies.

Arabic terms were adapted to Malay, enhancing clarity and comprehension. Examples include *solat* (prayer), *ihsan* (compassion), *fardhu* (obligation), *rahmat* (mercy), *nikmat* (blessing), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *sabar* (patience). These terms became embedded in Malay vocabulary, enriching the cultural lexicon and shaping daily practices and human interactions. Piah (2000:45) observed that Malay terminology, influenced by Arabic, permeated every field of knowledge, particularly Islamic studies and Malay civilization. These terms were subsequently disseminated throughout the Nusantara in Malay via the *Jawi* script, signifying the profound integration of language, knowledge, and culture under the influence of Islam. Through this linguistic and cultural evolution, Terengganu emerged as a hub of Islamic scholarship, preserving its heritage while contributing significantly to the broader Islamic civilization in the region.

The Development of Writing Culture

The introduction of Islamic knowledge in Terengganu deeply influenced the adoption of *Jawi* script in various domains, including religious texts, literary works, historical records, legal manuscripts, classical prose and poetry, and inscriptions on artifacts. A significant historical artifact—the *Batu Bersurat* (Inscribed Stone) of Kuala Berang, dated 702H or 1303CE—provides evidence of the arrival of Islam and the early adoption of *Jawi* script in Terengganu (Al-Attas, 1970:24). *Jawi* evolved from Arabic script with additional letters such as *nga*, *cha*, *ga*, and *nya* to accommodate the phonetics of the Malay language.

This writing culture established *Jawi* as the official script of Terengganu from the 13th century until the mid-20th century. It became an integral part of Terengganu's cultural identity. European, Chinese, and Indian traders operating in Terengganu adopted the Malay language and *Jawi* script for formal agreements, trade permits, and official correspondence with the Malay government (*Arkib Negara, S.T. 209/1357*).

The *Jawi* script, modified from Arabic characters, symbolized the literary heritage of Terengganu. Winstedt (1961:139) noted that *Jawi* replaced the earlier *Kawi* and *Nagari* scripts derived from Hindu civilizations. This transformation reflected the Quranic influence and the emphasis on religious education, fostering the belief that religious studies were inseparable from *Jawi*.

The Advancement of Knowledge Culture

The culture of writing stimulated Islamic scholars and preachers to intensify efforts to disseminate Islamic knowledge in the Malay language. This led to the composition, translation, and verification of texts that conveyed foundational Islamic teachings, such as theology and worship practices.

By the 19th century, Terengganu experienced a rapid expansion in Islamic knowledge production. Religious books addressing various disciplines—including theology, jurisprudence, ethics, and poetic forms like *nazam* and *syair*—were widely authored and became central to public learning. Among the notable contributors was Sayyid Muhammad

bin Zainal Abidin bin Hussain bin Mustaffa Al-Idrus (Tok Ku Tuan Besar), an esteemed Terengganu scholar. His notable works include:

- **Poetic Forms:** *Kanz al-Ula* (Life of the Prophet), *Sirah al-Nabawiyah* (Prophetic History), *Jawahir al-Saniyyah*, and *Tahiyat al-Wildan*.
- **Prose Works:** *Tarhib al-Sibyan fi Hifzi 'Aqaid al-Iman*, *Diya' 'Uquud al-Durratain fi Tarjamat Kalimatain al-Syahadatain*, and *Mukhtasar Sullam al-Tawfiq*.

His contributions earned him the title “Father of Terengganu Literature” for embedding Islamic elements into local literary traditions. Similarly, texts on governance, such as *Kitab Adab Raja-Raja di Terengganu* and *Kitab Nasihat Raja-Raja di Istana Terengganu* by Syeikh Duyung, highlight the integration of Islamic values into statecraft (Arkib Negara, 2004:4 & 5).

Another significant work, *Syair Tawarikh Zainal Abidin*—the longest historical poem comprising 3,335 stanzas—was composed by Tengku Dalam Kalsom binti Tengku Wook Khazaki during the 1930s. This poem chronicles the reigns of three Terengganu sultans: Sultan Zainal Abidin III (1888-1919), Sultan Muhammad Shah II (1919-1920), and Sultan Sulaiman Badrul Alam Shah (1920-1942) (Hashim M.Y. 1991).

Legacy of Knowledge Culture

The development of a knowledge culture laid the foundation for Terengganu’s cultural heritage, with Islamic values seamlessly integrated into its traditions. Religious books continue to serve as core references in mosques and traditional schools (pondok and Islamic community schools). This enduring tradition underscores the pivotal role of Islamic teachings in shaping Terengganu’s cultural identity.

The Development of Reading Culture

Islamic scholars in the Malay Peninsula, including Terengganu, emphasized the importance of cultivating a reading culture within the Malay community. This initiative began with promoting the study and recitation of the Quran using the *al-Baghdadi* method. This approach involved precise pronunciation and structured techniques under the guidance of teachers, with the aim of encouraging lifelong Quranic reading at home or in sacred places. This practice eventually inspired interest in reading other religious texts and Islamic-themed magazines.

Initially, the reading culture was propagated through Quranic and religious studies conducted in various communal spaces such as mosques, suraus, *langgars* (communal halls), public halls, *pondok* schools, madrasas, or private homes. This led to the establishment of informal educational institutions managed by imams and religious teachers. The system of Quranic and religious instruction in the homes of *Tok Guru* (religious educators) became a hallmark of Terengganu's educational tradition, preserving practices from earlier stages of Islamic education (Bakar, 1997:8).

Historical Observations

Munshi (1965:32), during his voyage to the East Coast of the Malay Peninsula from *Dhul-Hijjah* to *Muharram* 1253 (March-April 1838), noted the exceptional Quranic recitation skills of Terengganu residents. According to him, 50% of the population could read the Quran fluently, and over 25% were proficient in reading *Jawi* newspapers. This observation

underscores the prominence of a reading culture in Terengganu, with religious and literary education deeply ingrained in society.

Significance of Reading Culture

The reading culture in Terengganu served as the foundation for individuals to explore the meaning of life and their relationship with Allah SWT. Quranic education instilled Islamic values, embedding the notion that life without Quranic recitation was incomplete. This deep integration of Islamic teachings and reading into daily life contributed to a sense of spiritual tranquility and personal fulfillment within the community. The reading culture in Terengganu remains a vital aspect of its heritage, reflecting the enduring influence of Islamic education on the intellectual and spiritual development of the region.

Development of Artistic Culture

The development of artistic culture in Terengganu flourished with the integration of Islamic values into various forms of art. The influence of Islam enriched traditional Malay art forms, creating a harmonious blend of aesthetics and spirituality.

Evolution of Calligraphy and Khat

Islamic calligraphy (*khat*) has long been a cornerstone of Terengganu's artistic tradition. As noted by al-Attas (1970:24), the oldest Malay inscription in Jawi script is the Terengganu Stone Inscription (*Batu Bersurat*) discovered in Kuala Berang. Dated to Friday, 4th Rejab 702 Hijrah (22 February 1303 CE), it reflects the early adoption of Jawi script with its unique style of calligraphy.

This distinctive script style evolved from the 7th century during the Umayyad Caliphate and matured into a perfected form by the 9th century. By the 16th to 19th centuries, calligraphy became a vital artistic expression in Terengganu, serving as both a decorative and meditative practice. It adorned a variety of objects, including carvings, architectural embellishments, and crafted artifacts. The art of *khat* represented a fusion of spiritual devotion and artistic beauty, offering both tranquility and inspiration to the community.

Vocal Arts Appreciation

Islamic traditions introduced vocal arts into the Malay cultural milieu, enriching communal and ceremonial life. The vocal forms practiced include *tarannum* (melodic Quranic recitation), *zanji* (recital of the Prophet's biography), *tahlil* (prayers of remembrance), *marhaban* (welcoming songs), and *nazam* (poetic recitation). These vocal expressions were integral to significant social and religious events, emphasizing the elegance and depth of Islamic teachings.

Additionally, elements like *pantun* (quatrains) and *seloka* (traditional poetic expressions) exemplified the finesse and creativity of Malay oral traditions. Such forms of expression became cherished cultural assets, reflecting the harmonious blend of Islamic teachings with the artistic heritage of Terengganu (Abdullah, 2007:195).

Performance Arts

Performance arts in Terengganu were particularly embodied in the tradition of martial arts (*silat*), which served dual purposes as a means of self-defense and as a ceremonial performance. *Silat* was taught systematically in *gelanggan* (training grounds) under the supervision of a master, often a religious or Quranic teacher. Training began and concluded with rituals such as prayers and modest feasts, emphasizing the spiritual foundation of the practice (Yazid, 1999:12).

Popular forms of *silat* in Terengganu included:

- **Silat Pendekar:** The warrior's martial art.
- **Silat Jihad:** A form emphasizing self-defense with an Islamic spirit.
- **Silat Pulut:** Often performed at ceremonies as a form of art.
- **Silat Tongkat and Gayung:** Techniques using staffs or other tools.

Graduation ceremonies marking the mastery of various *silat* stages were conducted solemnly, with rituals overseen by the *silat* master. These traditions continue to reflect the cultural and spiritual significance of *silat* in the lives of the people of Terengganu.

The integration of Islamic principles into the artistic culture of Terengganu not only preserved traditional Malay arts but also elevated them with spiritual and intellectual dimensions, ensuring their enduring relevance and legacy.

Development of Social Culture

Social practices and traditions in Terengganu are deeply influenced by Islamic teachings, which shape how the community interacts with important life events. These traditions reflect the values of gratitude, empathy, and unity.

Culture of Welcoming Birth

In Terengganu, the tradition of welcoming a newborn involves expressions of gratitude to God. Upon birth, the baby is greeted with the recitation of the *Azan* (call to prayer) in the right ear and the *Iqamah* in the left ear. This practice, replacing the ancestral rituals of spirit invocations, symbolizes a spiritual and physical welcome into the world (Yazid, 1999:47-48).

Following this, several other rites are performed, including the *tahnik* (the practice of rubbing dates on the baby's palate), shaving the baby's hair, and holding a celebratory *aqiqah* feast. These customs are rooted in Islamic teachings, and although many people may not be fully aware of the theological reasoning behind them, they have become ingrained as cultural norms. The practice symbolizes gratitude for the safe arrival of the child and is a communal way to celebrate new life.

Rituals of Visiting the Sick and Mourning the Deceased

Visiting the sick and the dying, as well as rituals surrounding death, hold significant cultural importance in Terengganu. When a family member falls ill or is nearing death, relatives and friends gather to offer support. Visitors typically read *al-Quran* verses to the sick person, with the belief that the recitation helps alleviate pain or offers healing. This practice, influenced by Islamic teachings, replaces pre-Islamic rituals such as exorcisms or chants to ward off evil spirits.

As death approaches, the dying individual is encouraged to recite the *kalimah syahadah* (declaration of faith) or at least to utter the name of Allah. After death, family

members continue the support by reciting *al-Fatihah* and other prayers to ensure the deceased's soul receives mercy. The process of handling the deceased, from bathing and shrouding to performing the funeral prayer (*salat al-janazah*) and burial, is carefully carried out in accordance with Islamic rites.

After burial, the family often holds a *tahlil* gathering (recitation of prayers) at the graveyard, home, mosque, or surau to seek comfort and protection from harmful spirits or ancestral curses. *Al-Quran* verses, especially from *Surah al-Baqarah*, are recited to help provide peace to the grieving family and ensure the deceased's peaceful rest. This practice helps the bereaved avoid feelings of isolation and grief, fostering ongoing social and spiritual support.

Traditions of Engagement and Marriage

The customs surrounding engagement and marriage in Terengganu have a unique blend of Islamic and local traditions. The process typically begins with an informal inquiry or *risik* between families to ensure mutual compatibility (Deraman, 1995:32). Once both parties agree, a formal engagement ceremony is held, followed by the setting of the wedding date.

The wedding ceremony itself is deeply rooted in Islamic principles, with prayers and blessings offered to seek divine approval for the union. While some traditional Malay practices, such as the *bersanding* (bride and groom sitting on a throne), remain part of the celebration, the central focus is on the religious aspects of the marriage. A *kenduri kesyukuran* (feast of gratitude) is often held as a way to celebrate the union, thanking God for the blessings and joy brought by the marriage.

These cultural practices are guided by the belief that a successful marriage, underpinned by Islamic values, brings not only happiness to the couple but also blessings for the extended family and community.

These cultural traditions of birth, illness, death, and marriage reflect the strong influence of Islam on the social practices of Terengganu. They highlight the values of gratitude, solidarity, and the importance of spiritual well-being, which remain central to the community's way of life.

Majlis Khatam al-Quran

The *Khatam al-Quran* ceremony marks the completion of one's reading of the Quran. In Terengganu, there is a strong emphasis on Quranic education, with the belief that simply reading the Quran brings spiritual reward, let alone completing it with understanding and devotion. This ceremony is often held in the form of a *halaqah* (study circle) where participants read from *Surah al-Duha* to *Surah al-Nas*, followed by the prayer for the completion of the Quran (*doa khatam al-Quran*). The ceremony is commonly held at family homes or mosques.

Traditionally, a girl who completes her Quranic studies would often celebrate the completion during her engagement or wedding ceremony. Over time, the *Khatam al-Quran* ceremony has evolved, and it is now often conducted on a larger scale in mosques or community halls, reflecting its growing communal importance.

Majlis Berkhatan (Circumcision Ceremony)

The *Berkhatan* (circumcision) ceremony, also known as *masuk jawi* or *bersunat*, serves as a rite of passage for young children, marking their transition into adulthood. This event is intended to calm and prepare the child for the procedure. During the ceremony, symbolic items such as a white cloth, a banana, betel leaves, and water in a *buyung* (container) are prepared (Alwi, 1980:11). The event typically begins with a *doa selamat* (prayer for safety) led by the *Mudim* (circumcision practitioner), replacing the traditional incantations of spirit healers.

In the past, the *Berkhatan* ceremony was an intimate family event, but nowadays, it is often performed in larger community gatherings at hospitals, clinics, mosques, or community halls. For girls, circumcision is typically done shortly after birth, usually between seven days and three months old, often in conjunction with the *tahnik* ceremony. Modern practices have led to circumcision being performed either during infancy or in a clinical setting.

Celebrations of Islamic Festivals

Islamic holidays and celebrations play a vital role in the cultural life of Terengganu, with events like the *Maulid al-Rasul* (celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday), *Hari Raya Fitriah* (Eid al-Fitr), *Hari Raya Adha* (Eid al-Adha), *Nuzul al-Quran*, *Israk Mikraj*, *Nisfu Syaaban*, and *Ma'al Hijrah* (Islamic New Year) being celebrated with great enthusiasm (Yazid, 1999:10). These celebrations have become integral to the cultural heritage, continuing to be observed throughout the year.

The celebrations often take place in mosques, homes, community halls, or other sacred spaces. Common activities include the recitation of *wirid* (spiritual invocations), *zikir* (remembrance of God), *tasbih* (praise), prayers, and festive meals. These events are not only spiritual occasions but also serve as important social gatherings that strengthen community bonds.

Upholding Etiquette and Courtesy

In Terengganu, cultural etiquette is deeply tied to Islamic teachings and social respect. Key aspects of this etiquette include dressing modestly, maintaining order during social gatherings, and respecting elders. Over the years, traditional clothing has evolved, with the *kain kilas* being replaced by modern garments like the *baju kurung* and *Baju Melayu* with *sarong* or *pelikat*. In religious and social gatherings such as weddings, religious studies, or funerals, strict adherence to proper decorum is expected to ensure that the event complies with religious principles. One notable cultural practice is the tradition of communal eating. During meal times, family members wait for everyone to gather before beginning the meal, and the meal begins with a prayer (*doa*). It is also customary for people to pass food to others, ensuring that all can partake in the meal, fostering a sense of sharing and unity.

Alternative Healing Practices

Historically, the people of Terengganu sought medical treatment through traditional healers, such as *dukun* (shamans) and *bomoh* (witch doctors). However, over time, the influence of Islamic teachings led to a shift away from these practices. Islamic scholars, *ulama*, and religious teachers began to play a significant role in healing through spiritual means, such as

performing *solat hajat* (special prayers), reciting *Yasin* (a chapter from the Quran), and offering supplications and invocations.

In rural areas, especially near religious schools (*pondok*) or homes of religious leaders, people would turn to *ulama* for guidance and healing, avoiding the superstitions of the past. Sometimes, natural remedies derived from plants, fruits, or water would also be used, aligning with Islamic principles and steering the community away from practices associated with *shirk* (associating partners with God), *khurafat* (superstitions), and *bid'ah* (innovation in religious practice). This shift reflects the community's efforts to preserve Islamic purity and promote spiritual well-being over traditional, superstitious beliefs.

These cultural practices and traditions in Terengganu demonstrate a strong adherence to Islamic values while maintaining rich local customs. They encompass a range of life's significant events, from birth and circumcision to death and weddings, all infused with spiritual and communal significance. Through these traditions, the people of Terengganu continue to preserve their cultural identity while fostering a deep connection to their faith and community.

Preservation of Values and Its Impact

The Islamic values that have been integrated into the culture of Terengganu remain entrenched, forming an essential part of Terengganu's cultural heritage. These values have become deeply ingrained within the culture through various efforts and actions taken by the community members themselves, reflecting their shared commitment to these practices. The efforts to preserve this culture include the following:

1. *Continuous Efforts of Da'wah*: Religious preachers (da'i) have played an essential role in maintaining the Islamic values within the culture. They have adopted a method of dawah that aligns closely with existing practices to minimize disruption. Practices that conflict with Islamic law (Shari'ah) have been gradually abandoned and replaced by those that are in accordance with Islamic teachings and permissible actions.
2. *Ongoing Spiritual Engagement*: The community's long-term commitment to these values has been nurtured by religious scholars, preachers, and teachers of Islam. Every action to be undertaken is first referred to scholars or religious guides, as they are considered the closest to the community and provide the necessary guidance to ensure that practices align with Islamic principles.
3. *Harmony with Personal Demeanor and Civilization*: Special attention has been paid to ensuring that the softness of character and civilization within the Malay community is preserved. The Islamic values embedded in Terengganu's cultural heritage do not contradict the values of personal refinement and civility, despite their incorporation of religious practices such as prayer, dhikr (remembrance of God), and other religious obligations.
4. *Adaptation Through Evolutionary Implementation*: The approach adopted by the religious scholars, teachers, and preachers of Terengganu is wise and evolutionary, which has prevented resistance from the community. Their patience, perseverance, meticulousness, and courage in implementing Islamic values were paramount, ensuring that the community felt no undue hardship or loss from these changes.
5. *Role of Religious Leaders in Guarding Against Foreign Cultural Influence*: Religious scholars and preachers have played a crucial role in preventing the influx of foreign

cultures, ensuring that the integrity of Terengganu's Islamic heritage remains intact. The influence of Western culture during British colonization and the impact of Hinduism were carefully guarded against, ensuring that they did not contaminate the Islamic cultural values deeply embedded in the local traditions.

6. *Encouragement from the Sultanate and Government:* The support and encouragement from the Sultan and the government of Terengganu have been instrumental in maintaining Islamic values. The role of the Sultan and the local leadership has been vital in elevating the status of Islam and ensuring its continued presence in the cultural heritage of Terengganu.

Through these efforts, the Islamic values have not only survived but continue to thrive as an essential part of Terengganu's identity, shaping both its cultural and spiritual landscape.

Conclusion

The preservation of Islamic values within the culture of Terengganu has been a continuous process, becoming an integral part of the identity of the state's society. These values have been deeply embedded in the culture through various efforts made by the local community, guided by religious scholars, preachers, and religious teachers. This process involves not only religious teachings but also encompasses social and civilizational aspects that are embedded in the daily lives of Terengganu's people. Preachers play a crucial role in strengthening the embrace of Islamic values within Terengganu's culture. They adopt an approach that is closely aligned with the existing practices of the community, ensuring that the changes made do not disrupt the long-established customs and traditions. Practices that conflict with Islamic law are gradually replaced by those in accordance with religious teachings, allowing the community to accept these changes with ease.

The people of Terengganu themselves play a vital role in the continued appreciation of these Islamic values, under the guidance of religious scholars and teachers. Every action that the community intends to take is first consulted with them to ensure it aligns with Islamic teachings. This not only has a positive impact on the individual's life but also strengthens the unity of the Terengganu community, which collectively supports the practice of religion. Moreover, the Islamic culture incorporated into Terengganu's society has never conflicted with the Malay personality and civilization that already existed. Instead, it enriches these characteristics. Religious practices such as prayers, dhikr (remembrance of Allah), and reciting the Qur'an have become a part of daily life, contributing to the refinement and beauty of Malay culture.

The evolutionary approach adopted by the scholars and religious teachers in adapting traditional practices to Islamic teachings has allowed the community to embrace these changes without feeling forced or burdened. Their patience, resilience, diligence, and courage in this process are crucial, as they ensure that the community does not perceive the changes as obstacles, but rather as essential for a better life. This demonstrates the wisdom of the scholars, preachers, and religious teachers of Terengganu in leading the community to practice Islam harmoniously with their traditions and culture. Furthermore, the role of scholars and preachers in safeguarding the local culture from foreign influences, particularly Western influences during British colonization and Hindu cultural influences, is significant. They have been diligent in ensuring that these external elements do not contaminate the

Islam-infused cultural heritage. They remain vigilant, striving to preserve local culture and prevent the intrusion of foreign influences that could undermine the Islamic identity of the community.

Equally important is the support provided by the Sultanate and the government of Terengganu in maintaining Islamic values. The Sultan and the government play a crucial role in upholding Islam and ensuring that these values remain embedded within the cultural heritage of Terengganu. The leadership of the Sultan and the government is fundamental in reinforcing the importance of Islamic values and ensuring their continuity within the community. With their guidance and support, Islamic values continue to serve as the foundation of life for the people of Terengganu, ensuring their transmission to future generations.

Overall, the continuous efforts made by scholars, preachers, and the government in preserving Islamic values in Terengganu have successfully strengthened the cultural heritage based on religious teachings. The preservation of these values not only enriches the lives of the people but also ensures that Terengganu remains recognized as a state firmly rooted in Islamic values and culture. The wise, patient, and consistent approach in implementing these efforts has ensured that Islamic values remain the core of life for the people of Terengganu, continuing to have a positive impact on generations to come.

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