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CHARISMATIC–EGALITARIAN DA'WAH LEADERSHIP AND NON-MILITANT MOBILISATION: A HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE LASKAR DARUSSALAM MOVEMENT AND THE INTELLECTUAL LEGACY OF PESANTREN

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Abstract

Purpose *– This study reconstructs the historiography of the Laskar Darussalam da'wah movement in Garut, West Java, and examines how the religious leadership of KH. Yusuf Tauziri and the intellectual legacy of Pesantren Cipari shaped a non-militant, community-based model of da'wah mobilisation.* ***Design/methodology/approach*** *– A qualitative historical design combined archival documentation (family manuscripts, the Catatan Cipari 1950 and archived lecture videos), in-depth interviews conducted between 2023 and 2025 with descendants, senior santri and local informants selected purposively, and limited participant observation (2023–2024). Data were analysed through source criticism, contextual reading and interpretive synthesis, complemented by reflexive thematic analysis, and validated through source, perspective and method triangulation.* ***Findings*** *– Laskar Darussalam evolved from pengajian circles into tariqa jamaah and then a village-defence laskar bound by three principles: never strike first, never oppose the state, and protect the people as fardu kifayah. Yusuf Tauziri's charismatic–egalitarian leadership operated through the four da'wah management functions of planning, organising, directing and controlling, embedded in tariqa practices such as baiat, dhikr and manaqib, and it explains his refusal of the Darul Islam/TII project. Five intellectual legacies are identified.* ***Research limitations/implications*** *– The single-case design and the selectivity of archival and oral sources limit generalisation; the proposed model requires testing in other settings.* ***Practical implications*** *– The study offers pesantren, da'wah organisations and policymakers a historically grounded model of peaceful, locally rooted religious leadership.* ***Originality/value*** *– It documents an undocumented non-violent alternative to militant Islamic mobilisation and links da'wah management theory with Islam Nusantara historiography.*

Keywords: *da'wah leadership, Laskar Darussalam, Pesantren Cipari, Sufi order (tariqa), Islam Nusantara historiography*

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

This article documents a little-known Islamic movement in Garut, Indonesia, that mobilised villagers for self-protection without taking up political militancy. It shows how a charismatic yet egalitarian Sufi scholar, KH. Yusuf Tauziri, used study circles, devotional gatherings and community work to build moral discipline, social solidarity and loyalty to the nation. The findings matter to readers, pesantren leaders, da'wah organisations and policymakers seeking peaceful, locally rooted models of religious leadership, and they correct a historiography that has largely remembered only armed Islamic movements.

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INTRODUCTION

Religious leadership has re-emerged as a central question in the study of Muslim societies, because the authority of those who speak for Islam is increasingly contested between tradition and modernity and between localisation and globalisation (Khamis, 2024; Timol, 2023). Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, illustrates the stakes. Its Islamic politics have been shaped by long-standing disagreements between modernists and traditionalists (Barton et al., 2021a), by Islamist populism that has at times endorsed violence (Barton et al., 2021b), and by continuing debate over the sources of Muslim support for Islamist organisations (Mujani et al., 2023). The Darul Islam movement of West Java, from which many later Islamist groups trace their lineage, remains the most prominent historical reference point for these debates (Machmudi, 2021). Against this background, pesantren and the Sufi orders (tariqa) connected to them have been repeatedly identified as institutions that sustain moderation, social cohesion and national commitment (Ahmad et al., 2021; Faisal et al., 2022; Sahri, 2024). In Garut, the early twentieth century combined colonial political pressure, internal rural conflict and waves of national change, conditions that enabled pesantren-based militias to emerge (Noer, 1980; Feillard, 2010). Laskar Darussalam, rooted in Pesantren Cipari under KH. Yusuf Tauziri, was one such formation.

The scholarly literature offers three relevant strands. First, research on kiai leadership consistently identifies charismatic authority as the foundation of pesantren life (Dhofier, 1985; Horikoshi, 1987) and links it to moderation, spiritual leadership and community trust (Faisal et al., 2022; Karim et al., 2022). Second, historical studies show that Muslim religious space and ulama authority were actively contested under colonial rule (Faizi, 2023; Ja'far et al., 2022), and that tariqa networks were bound up with nationalist sentiment (Mawardi, 2022; Sahri, 2024). Third, the historiography of political Islam in West Java has been dominated by Darul Islam, whose place in official and scholarly narratives has itself been reconstructed and contested (Formichi, 2012, 2021). These strands are not fully reconcilable. Charisma is described as a stabilising resource, yet also as a relation that depends on recognition and on structure–agency dynamics (Timol, 2023); Sufi spirituality is treated as socially engaged, yet its public meaning remains debated (Dickson, 2022; Muttaqin et al., 2023).

Three gaps follow from this review. First, studies of pesantren da'wah management concentrate on the period after the 1970s and rely on modern management frameworks; none has systematically analysed pesantren da'wah management during the colonial and early independence periods through an Islamic da'wah management lens. Second, ulama leadership in West Javanese pesantren has been examined mainly through major institutions and nationally prominent figures (Dhofier, 1985; Horikoshi, 1987; Saepuloh, 2020), whereas KH. Yusuf Tauziri, a local Garut ulama with a distinctive charismatic–Sufi model, has not been studied academically. Third, accounts of Islamic mobilisation in West Java concentrate on Darul Islam or on large pesantren such as Suryalaya (Junaedi, 2022), leaving Laskar Darussalam, an explicitly non-violent, community-based movement, undocumented. A methodological gap compounds these: leadership scholarship itself has begun to call for evidence beyond questionnaires and for attention to unresolved conceptual puzzles (Banks, 2023; Fischer et al., 2023), yet historical and archival evidence on religious leadership remains scarce.

This study therefore pursues three research questions: (1) How is the historiography of the Laskar Darussalam da'wah movement constructed within the local history of Garut and the broader dynamics of Islam Nusantara? (2) How did the religious leadership of KH. Yusuf Tauziri shape the movement's orientation, social structure and da'wah character? (3) What are the intellectual, spiritual and social legacies of Pesantren Cipari for the development of local Islam in Garut and for pesantren education in West Java? The objectives are to reconstruct the

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movement from archival, oral and observational evidence, to analyse its leadership and organisation through the four functions of da'wah management, and to identify the legacies that persist.

The study contributes in three ways. Theoretically, it proposes a charismatic–egalitarian Sufi da'wah leadership model that links Weberian charisma, transformational leadership and da'wah management (takhthith, tanzim, tawjih and riqabah), and shows that control (riqabah) in this context was exercised through ethical–spiritual mechanisms rather than formal hierarchy. Empirically, it brings into the scholarly record previously inaccessible family manuscripts, the Catatan Cipari 1950, archived lecture videos and oral testimonies. Methodologically, it demonstrates how archival, oral and observational sources can be triangulated within a critical historiographical design. Practically, it offers pesantren, da'wah organisations and policymakers a historically grounded model of peaceful, locally rooted religious leadership.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Da'wah management and da'wah leadership

Da'wah management integrates management science and Islamic da'wah science to organise the communication of Islamic teachings in an effective and planned manner. Munir and Ilaihi (2006) define it as the planning, organising, directing and controlling of da'wah activities, an adaptation of the classical POAC functions into the Islamic terms takhthith (planning), tanzim (organising), tawjih (directing) and riqabah (supervision). Mahmuddin (2004) adds an ethical dimension: effectiveness is measured by the quality of moral and spiritual transformation rather than by quantitative outcomes, a criterion especially relevant to pesantren, which prioritise character formation (tarbiyah). Hafidhuddin and Tanjung (2003) argue that effective da'wah management requires synergy between visionary leadership, adaptive structure and contextually appropriate communication. Pimay (2013) distinguishes traditional, modern and integrative models of pesantren da'wah management, and Amin (2009) shows that the da'i's capacity to read the target community's culture largely determines effectiveness. Research on da'wah organisations with limited formal structure likewise shows that shared religious meaning and informal practices can sustain organisational activity (Baikuni et al., 2026), and that locally trusted authorities act as guardians of norms and mediators of disputes (Qomariyah et al., 2026).

Leadership in da'wah rests on a dual legitimacy: scholarly authority (sanad keilmuan) and spiritual authority, the inner bond between mursyid and murid in the tariqa tradition. Dhofier (1985) shows that kiai authority derives from depth of religious knowledge, personal charisma and exemplary conduct. Weber (1978) distinguishes traditional, legal-rational and charismatic authority, and pesantren leadership typically combines the charismatic with the traditional; Horikoshi (1987) shows the West Javanese kiai acting simultaneously as spiritual patron and social mediator. Bass and Avolio (1994) add that transformational leaders influence followers through inspiration, intellectual stimulation and individual attention rather than hierarchy or material reward, and Arifin (2012) argues that transformational leadership yields more durable change in da'wah than transactional models. Recent work confirms the centrality of the kiai's traditional authority in fostering moderation (Faisal et al., 2022) and identifies spiritual leadership behaviours as a distinctive feature of pesantren workplaces (Karim et al., 2022). Because charisma is relational, it depends on recognition by followers and on the interplay of structure and agency within a movement (Timol, 2023; Weber, 1978). Studies of West Javanese pesantren find that combining spiritual authority with participatory approaches

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strengthens cohesion and the continuity of da'wah programmes (Saepuloh, 2020; Junaedi, 2022; Mastuhu, 1994).

Pesantren and tariqa as da'wah organisations

Pesantren are understood not merely as educational institutions but as multifunctional da'wah organisations. Madjid (1997) describes them as a subculture with their own values and structure, Azra (2004) situates them within transregional networks of ulama, and Steenbrink (1986) traces their evolution alongside madrasah and secular schools. From a management perspective Mastuhu (1994) identifies organic elements: the kyai as chief executive, santri as da'wah human resources, kitab kuning as curriculum and pengajian as method. Dhofier (1985) adds that networks of teacher–student ties (sanad) and kiai marriages create durable da'wah networks. Contemporary scholarship continues to treat pesantren as sites where moral identity and religious moderation are cultivated through everyday educational culture (Mujahid, 2021; Sauri et al., 2022; Muafiah et al., 2022; Mappiasse & Hayadin, 2022) and where Sufi-inspired practice can be translated into community and environmental action (Irawan, 2022). Tariqa-based pesantren add emotional–spiritual bonds between murid and mursyid that function as social capital for mobilisation (Howell, 2001), and the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah networks of West Java were central to religiously grounded solidarity (Van Bruinessen, 1990, 1995). Recent studies show Sufi orders acting as institutions that counter radicalism (Ahmad et al., 2021), strengthen nationalism (Sahri, 2024; Mawardi, 2022) and negotiate the relation between Sufi expression and shari'a (Dickson, 2022), while remaining locally embedded in indigenous symbols and figures (Smith, 2022). Comparative work on Sufism and nationalism beyond Indonesia points in the same direction (Saeidi & Mohammadpour, 2025), although the authenticity and public role of Sufi spirituality remain debated among Indonesian Muslim organisations (Muttaqin et al., 2023). Sufism, in short, has remained an enduring part of Muslim life despite reformist, nationalist and colonial criticism (Zarrabi-Zadeh, 2024).

Islamic social movements and the historiography of local Islam

Tarrow (2011) identifies political opportunity, collective identity framing and mobilisation structures as the conditions of social movements, and McAdam et al. (1996) develop the political process model. In pesantren-based movements, colonial pressure supplies the opportunity, Islamic–Sundanese identity the framing, and the pesantren–tariqa network the mobilising structure. Kartodirdjo (1973, 1992) shows that pesantren-based resistance in Java was typically moral–spiritual rather than politically ideological, and Formichi (2012) maps a spectrum from state-oriented movements such as DI/TII to community da'wah movements. Colonial authorities themselves sought to reproduce and moderate Muslim religious space, provoking counter-spaces of resistance (Faizi, 2023), and ulama in other colonial contexts combined education, intellectual work and politics (Ja'far et al., 2022). How such movements are remembered is a historiographical problem: official narratives can displace Islam from the story of figures such as Kartosuwiryo and recast political Islam as a negative force (Formichi, 2021). Nugraha and Rahmatulloh (2025) and Wibowo (2024) therefore argue for incorporating neglected local movements into the historiography of Islam Nusantara, and Sudarmo (2022) for including the social relations among kiai, santri and community. Narrative scholarship reminds us that accounts of the past are constructed by emplotting events (Gull, 2026), and research on shifting religiosity attends to changes in community life (Schafer & Upenieks, 2026).

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Research Propositions

Because this is a qualitative historical study, it advances propositions rather than hypotheses. They are derived from the synthesis above and guide the analysis. P1: Where colonial pressure (political opportunity) meets a tariqa-based mobilising structure, pesantren study circles can evolve into community-defence formations, but whether these become militant depends on the moral–spiritual framing supplied by the leader (Kartodirdjo, 1992; Tarrow, 2011). P2: Charismatic authority grounded in scholarly depth, spiritual presence and exemplary conduct, and expressed through an egalitarian self-image, produces voluntary compliance and defensive restraint rather than coercive control (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Dhofier, 1985; Weber, 1978). P3: In tariqa-based pesantren, the da'wah management functions of planning, organising, directing and controlling are embedded in devotional and ethical practices (baiat, dhikr, manaqib), which substitute for formal bureaucratic control (Munir & Ilaihi, 2006; Howell, 2001). P4: Locally grounded, culture-based da'wah bil hal and the continuity of pengajian and wirid sustain a movement's moral authority across generations beyond the lifetime of its founding leader (Amin, 2009; Mastuhu, 1994).

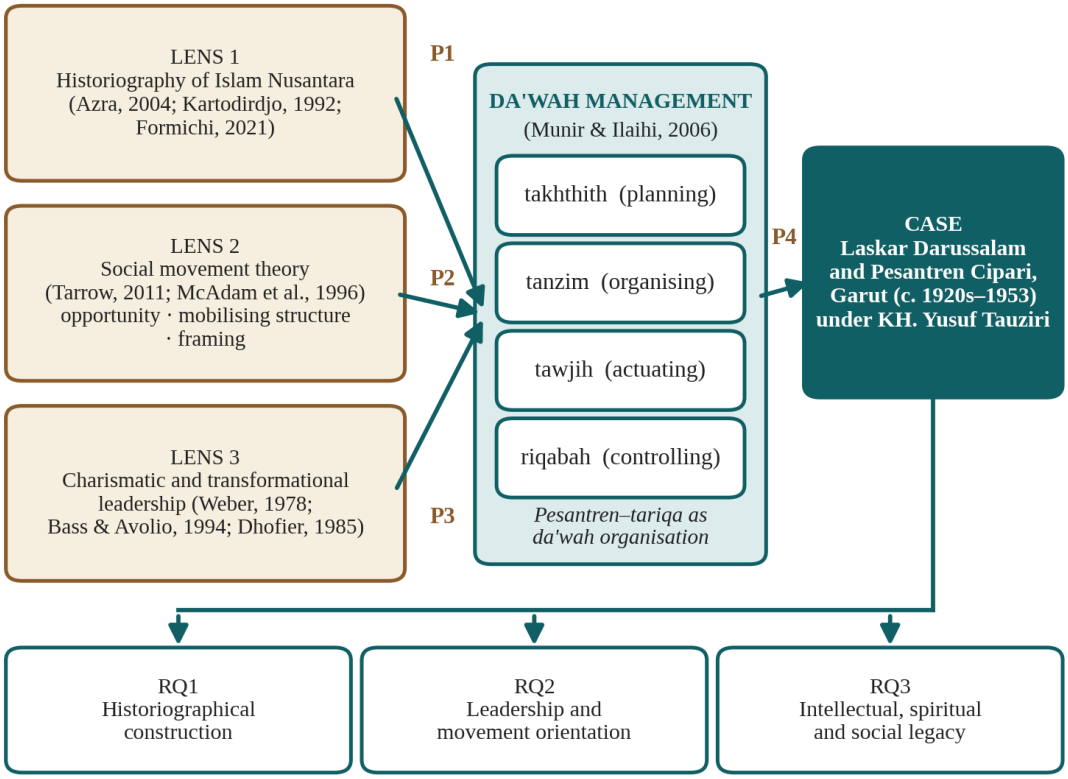
Research Model

Figure 1 presents the research model. Three analytical lenses (the historiography of Islam Nusantara, social movement theory and charismatic–transformational leadership) are integrated through da'wah management, the lens that treats the pesantren–tariqa as a da'wah organisation. Propositions P1 to P4 specify the relations among the lenses, the case and the research questions. The model ensures coherence between objectives, theory, propositions and the analytic procedures described below.

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Figure 1
Theoretical Framework and Research Model

Three analytical lenses integrated through da'wah management (POAC)



Source: Authors' conceptualisation (2026), based on Munir and Ilaihi (2006), Tarrow (2011), Weber (1978) and Formichi (2021).

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a historical research design oriented to reconstructing past events through source criticism and the systematic construction of a historiographical narrative. The design combines two traditions: classical historical research, which emphasises external and internal source criticism, and contemporary critical historiography, which foregrounds power, representation and narrative bias in sources (Carr, 1961; Tosh, 2015; Said, 1978). It was selected because it can uncover both the factual and the interpretive dimensions of socio-religious practice within the Cipari tariqa movement, and because a qualitative approach allows oral and written sources to be interpreted in the social–political framework that evolved from the colonial era to the early independence period (Creswell, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using oral testimony alongside archival and published sources also addresses the shortcomings of relying on oral evidence alone (Dominy, 2022).

The research was conducted at and around Pesantren Cipari in Garut, West Java, the institution led by KH. Yusuf Tauziri from 1933 and the centre of the Darussalam movement. The informant population comprised descendants of KH. Yusuf Tauziri and of his students, senior students and santri, and local informants with direct experience or genealogical knowledge of the movement. Informants were selected through purposive sampling (Creswell, 2013; Denzin, 2012). Seven key informants are quoted in this article (Table 1), drawn from the

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wider purposive pool and complemented by the family custodians of the manuscripts. Because qualitative studies aim at transferability rather than statistical generalisation, the adequacy of the sample was judged by informational richness and by convergence across archival, oral and observational sources.

Table 1
Key Informants Quoted in the Study

Informant	Relation to the movement	Date	Main use
Sofyan Salaf	Chairman, Pesantren Cipari Foundation; descendant of a student	20 Nov 2025	Purpose of da'wah
Ustaz Abdul Malik	Great-grandchild of KH. Yusuf Tauziri	2024	Origins of jaga lembur
Ajengan M. Rasyid	Senior figure of the pesantren community	2023; 11 Sep 2024; 2024	Laskar functions; jihad
K.H. Ahmad Thabrani	Descendant of a senior Cipari student	15 Sep 2024	Refusal of DI/TII
Asep Saeful	Local informant	12 Nov 2024	Cipari family history
Ustadz Eman	Participant in dhikr gatherings	2025	Charisma in practice
K.H. Miftahuddin	Senior santri / teacher	2024	Cadre formation
Family custodians	Keepers of the family manuscripts	4 Sep 2024	Risalah al-Mahabbah wa al-Jihad

Source: Authors' fieldwork (2023–2025).

Data were collected through three techniques. First, archival documentation: the internal manuscripts and archives of Pesantren Cipari served as primary sources, namely the manuscript notes *Risalah al-Mahabbah wa al-Jihad*, preserved by the family of KH. Yusuf Tauziri, and the *Catatan Cipari 1950*, which records his prohibition on involvement in armed political strife, together with archived video recordings of his lectures ("Kawani," "ISO Mi'raj 2," and "KH Yusuf Tauziri dan Cikal Bakal"). All were treated as historical texts requiring authentication, credibility assessment and contextual interrogation (Tosh, 2015). Second, in-depth interviews were conducted between 2023 and 2025 to excavate collective memory about the leader's role in building the movement, the formation of Laskar Darussalam, his refusal of the Darul Islam/TII project and the transformation of tariqa teachings into da'wah practice. Third, limited participant observation was carried out in 2023–2024 at Pesantren Cipari, focusing on tariqa rituals, bandongan pengajian, monthly manaqib gatherings and village food-security programmes. Table 2 summarises the corpus.

Table 2
Data Corpus and Analytic Use

Source type	Items	Period	Analytic use
Archival manuscripts	Risalah al-Mahabbah wa al-Jihad; Catatan Cipari 1950	1930s–1950	Ethics of struggle; prohibition of armed strife
Video lectures	"Kawani"; "ISO Mi'raj 2"; "KH Yusuf Tauziri dan Cikal Bakal"	Pesantren archive	Leader's own voice; intellectual legacy

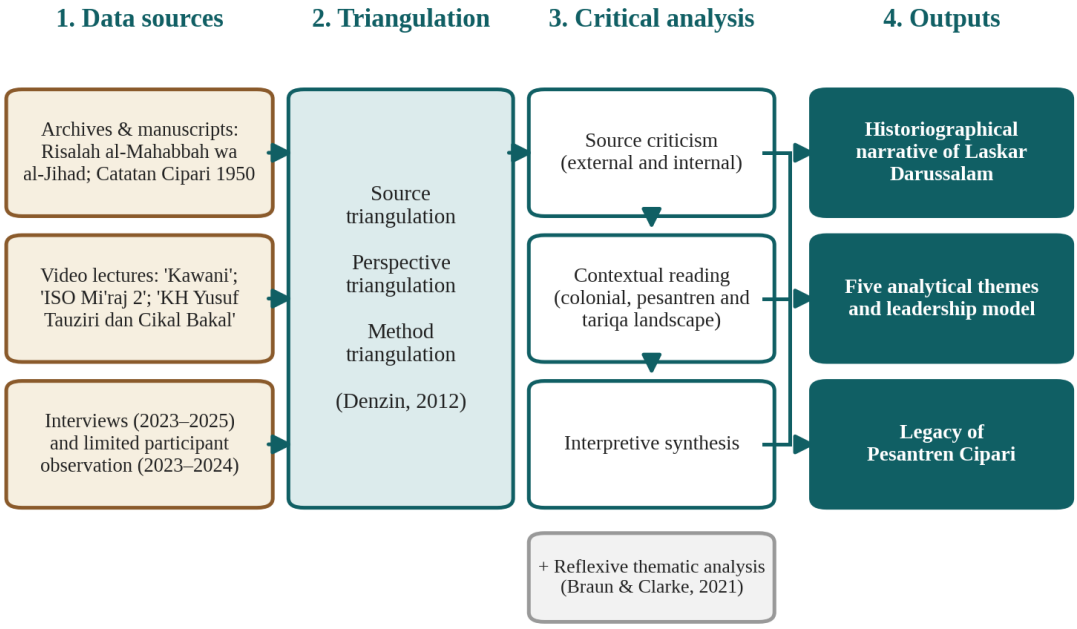
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Source type	Items	Period	Analytic use
In-depth interviews	Descendants, senior santri, local informants	2023–2025	Collective memory; movement evolution
Participant observation	Tariqa rituals, bandongan pengajian, monthly manaqib, food-security programmes	2023–2024	Continuity of practice; legitimacy of the kiai
Published literature	Local history and Islam Nusantara scholarship	1955–2026	Contextualisation and comparison

Source: Authors' compilation (2026).

Analysis followed a critical historiographical approach (Carr, 1961; Tosh, 2015; Said, 1978) in three stages (Figure 2): source criticism, to test authenticity and credibility; contextual reading, to interpret sources within the colonial, pesantren and traditional Islamic-movement landscape of West Java; and interpretive synthesis, to integrate archival data, interviews and observations into a narrative of the leader's role and the movement's development. Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2021) was added to identify patterns in the leader's intellectual heritage, such as spiritual leadership, the ethics of struggle and tariqa-based da'wah strategy; consistent with that approach, researcher subjectivity was treated as an analytic resource and not as bias to be eliminated. Validity was ensured through source, perspective and method triangulation (Denzin, 2012). Oral testimonies were treated as narratives requiring critical interpretation (Gull, 2026) and were cross-checked against archives and published sources.

Figure 2
Research Design and Analytic Procedure



Source: Authors' elaboration (2026), based on Tosh (2015), Denzin (2012) and Braun and Clarke (2021).

RESULT

The findings are presented in five parts that correspond to the research questions: the evolution of the movement, the relation between laskar and rural society, the polemic with

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Kartosuwiryo, the leadership and organisation of Pesantren Cipari, and the intellectual legacy, which is then synthesised into five themes.

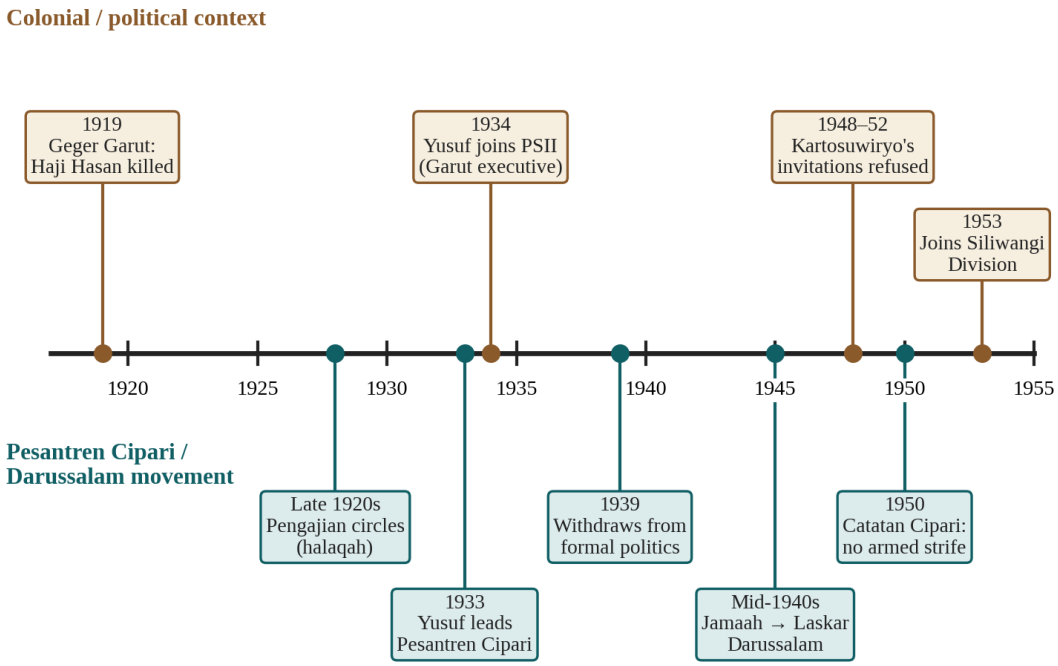
Historical Reconstruction and Evolution of the Movement

The development of pesantren and tariqa networks in early twentieth-century Garut unfolded against intense socio-political tension. Under Dutch rule Garut was characterised by agrarian–economic dynamics marked by the expansion of European plantations, tighter administrative control and the emergence of pesantren-based social resistance (Kartodirdjo, 1973). These conditions allowed tariqa communities to become centres of religious and social solidarity, and Pesantren Cipari occupied a significant position in this network by supplying a spiritual base, Islamic education and moral protection for rural communities.

Analysis of the internal archives indicates that the Darussalam movement originated in the late 1920s as halaqah study circles (pengajian) that evolved into a network of tariqa jamaah across numerous villages. The manuscript notes in the *Risalah al-Mahabbah wa al-Jihad* (family interview, 4 September 2024) show that Cipari Sufi teaching emphasised not only spiritual practice but also the ethics of struggle, discipline, self-reliance and social piety. This foundation gave rise to small village security groups (*jaga lembur*), an action-based form of da'wah. Ustaz Abdul Malik, a great-grandchild of KH. Yusuf Tauziri, recounted that "the jamaah were initially only asked to guard the mosque and the pesantren compound, but as the political situation intensified before the Japanese occupation, that function expanded into village security and social assistance" (interview, 2024). By the mid-1940s, as Japanese power waned and independence euphoria grew, these groups transformed into the more structured organisation known as Laskar Darussalam. The sequence from pengajian to jamaah to laskar (Figure 4) reflects a pattern common to pesantren in West Java, in which spirituality supplies a basis for social mobilisation that intensifies when external circumstances demand a collective response (Van Bruinessen, 1990, 1995). Figure 3 places the movement's milestones alongside the political events that framed them.

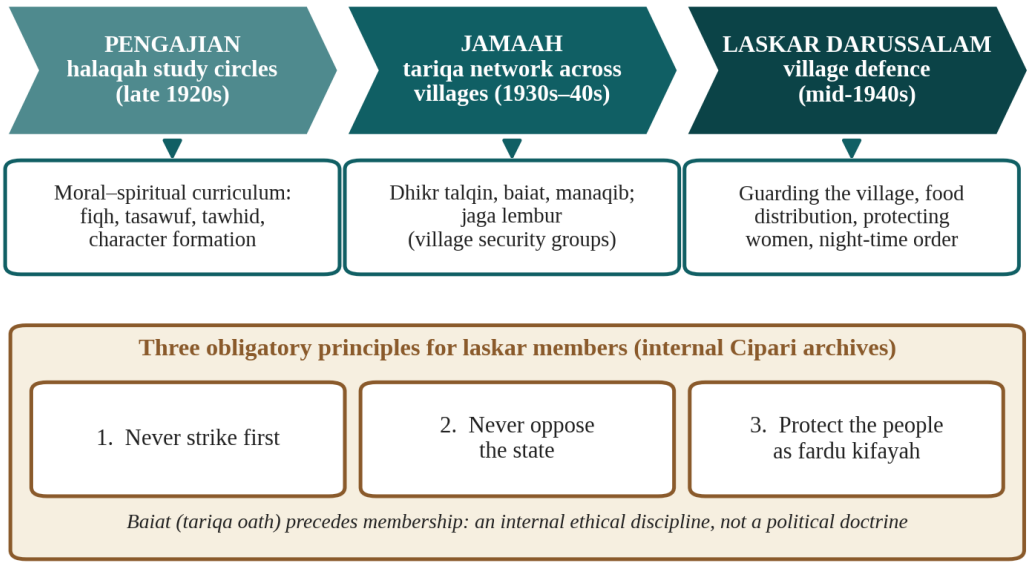
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Figure 3
Chronology of the Darussalam Movement and Its Political Context



Source: Authors' reconstruction from internal pesantren archives, interviews and Imadudin (2010), Rahmawati (2021) and Zada (2017).

Figure 4
Organisational Evolution and Defensive Principles of Laskar Darussalam



Source: Authors' analysis of Catatan Cipari 1950, interviews (2023–2025) and field observation (2023–2024).

Laskar, Rural Society and the Polemic with Kartosuwiryo

Laskar Darussalam maintained an organic relationship with rural communities. Unlike formal militias with modern command structures, it was built on kinship networks, village solidarity and community trust in KH. Yusuf Tauziri as spiritual leader of the Cipari tariqa.

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This emotional and spiritual bond meant that the laskar was accepted as part of the village rather than as an external authority; observation of tariqa rituals in 2023 confirms that the kiai's spiritual authority remains the principal source of legitimacy for collective action to the present day. According to Ajengan M. Rasyid (interview, 11 September 2024), the laskar "supervised food distribution, protected women during periods of conflict, and maintained night-time order." Its mobilisation base was therefore social–communitarian, oriented to strengthening village resilience through the values, ethics and solidarity generated by the tariqa, and not to politics or the seizure of power. Even recent village-level studies of religion stress how local practice organises belonging and space (Zuhri, 2024).

A significant finding is the sharp polemic between KH. Yusuf Tauziri and S.M. Kartosuwiryo during the formation of Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia (1948–1952). K.H. Ahmad Thabrani, a descendant of a senior Cipari student, reported that Kartosuwiryo sent several envoys inviting KH. Yusuf to join the project of "establishing an Islamic state," and that the invitation was categorically refused: "religion must not be made an instrument of power struggles, and the blood of the people must not be shed in the name of shari'a" (interview, 15 September 2024). The *Catatan Cipari 1950* corroborates this, recording a prohibition on Cipari tariqa jamaah becoming involved in "armed political strife." Critical analysis indicates that the polemic was not merely a difference in strategy but a divergence in Islamic political epistemology: Kartosuwiryo proceeded from formal Islamic statehood as the precondition for implementing shari'a, whereas KH. Yusuf emphasised social morality, character formation and community spirituality as the essence of religiosity (Formichi, 2012; Benda, 1955). Table 3 contrasts the two orientations.

Table 3

Laskar Darussalam Compared with the Darul Islam/TII Orientation

Dimension	Laskar Darussalam (Cipari)	Darul Islam/TII (as contrasted in sources)
Premise of religion	Social morality, character formation and community spirituality as the essence of religiosity	Formal Islamic statehood as the prerequisite for shari'a
Orientation to the state	Never oppose the state; leader joined the Siliwangi Division in 1953	Armed rebellion against the Republic; Islamic State declared in 1949
Use of religion	Moral discipline and protection of the community	Theocratic–political legitimation of power
Militancy	Defensive: never strike first; protect the people as fardu kifayah	Militarisation oriented to political–ideological aims
Membership discipline	Tariqa baiat as ethical commitment, not political doctrine	Organisational and ideological allegiance
Long-term trajectory	Pengajian, wirid and manaqib continue to operate	Rebellion crushed by the state; networks later linked to Islamist groups

Source: Authors' analysis of Catatan Cipari 1950, interviews, Formichi (2012, 2021) and Machmudi (2021).

Leadership and Organisation of Pesantren Cipari

KH. Yusuf Tauziri grew up in a scholarly family with a tradition of resistance. Islam in Garut gained strength from the eighteenth century, when the scholar Zainal Abidin settled in Cipari and founded a religious community that became a centre of Islamic education in East Priangan (Imadudin, 2010). The extended kiai family included K.H. Harmaen, a Sarekat Islam activist arrested by the Dutch (Horikoshi, 1987). The Geger Garut incident of 1919, in which his uncle Haji Hasan, who had refused the forced rice-sale policy, was killed, left a collective

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memory that shaped the political consciousness of the family (Darmansyah, 2018; Suminto, 1985). Asep Saeful (interview, 12 November 2024) noted that Yusuf "grew up in an atmosphere of tension from childhood; the Cipari family had been forged from an early age not to submit to the colonisers." His formal education passed from K.H. Ba'ali in Cilame to K.H. Sanusi in Sukabumi, known for critique of colonial government (Zada, 2017), and continued at major pesantren in Cirebon, Buntet, Uyublek, Leles and Suralaya. In 1933 he assumed leadership of Pesantren Daroessalam Cipari, previously a centre of Sarekat Islam activism (Imadudin, 2010); he joined the Indonesian Islamic Sarekat Party (PSII) in 1934 as one of four executives of the Garut branch (Rahmawati, 2021), withdrew from formal politics in 1939 to refocus on the pesantren, and in 1953, when DI/TII destabilised West Java, joined the Siliwangi Division, affirming the moderate Islamic nationalism he held (Zada, 2017).

His leadership may be categorised as charismatic–Sufi, distinguished by spiritual depth, moral exemplariness and the ability to build solidarity in the rural Sundanese community. It was most evident in communal dhikr (dzikir jama'i), manaqib recitation and monthly pengajian attended by jamaah from across Garut. Ustadz Eman recounted that "when Abah led the dhikr, the atmosphere became very calm; people felt guided, not commanded" (interview, 2025), which indicates that his charisma derived from a consistent spiritual presence (*al-hadharah al-ruhiyyah*) and not from rhetoric, consistent with Weberian charisma grounded in personal sanctity (Weber, 1978; Bass & Avolio, 1994). Its moral dimension appears in his stance against violence in the name of religion. Ajengan Rasyid recalled the message that "the foremost jihad is to improve oneself and society, not to unsheathe weapons" (interview, 2023), an orientation that matches transformational leadership through inspiration and moral exemplification (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Arifin, 2012).

As leader of Laskar Darussalam he played a dual role, as spiritual guide directing members' moral orientation and as social mediator maintaining village stability. The laskar did not follow the formal military format of armed groups of the era but was structured around jamaah and khalifah, privileging social closeness and spiritual obedience. "Abah always reminded us that the laskar is for guarding the village, not for attacking others" (Ajengan Rasyid, interview, 2024). The archives record three principles obligatory for members (Figure 4), consistent with the "defensive militancy" documented at moderate pesantren in the early independence period (Benda, 1955). Before joining, each member underwent baiat in the tariqa tradition, a moral commitment and spiritual discipline, not a political doctrine, ensuring high religious ethics, self-control and social loyalty. The pesantren thus performed two strategic functions: an educational centre and a coordination point for community-based militia, a pattern that differs from the theocratic–political militarisation of DI/TII (Formichi, 2012; Kartodirdjo, 1992).

Organisationally, Pesantren Cipari was also a morally and socially oriented centre of cadre formation. The curriculum integrated fiqh, tasawuf, tawhid and character development through rigorous daily discipline, in line with the tariqa emphasis on riyadhah and obedience to the ethical teachings of masters (Howell, 2001; Van Bruinessen, 1995). K.H. Miftahuddin (interview, 2024) explained that cadre formation proceeded through suluk and talqin and through student involvement in assisting harvests, guarding the village and managing village food stores. The da'wah movement centred on three activities: kitab study sessions (pengajian) at the pesantren and in villages, regular tariqa devotions, and community economic development through cooperatives and agriculture. Field observations in 2023–2024 show that bandongan pengajian, monthly manaqib gatherings and village food-security programmes still operate stably. Table 4 maps these practices onto the four da'wah management functions.

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Table 4
Da'wah Management Functions Embedded in Cipari Practice

Function	Cipari practice	Evidence
Takhthith (planning)	Curriculum integrating fiqh, tasawuf, tawhid and character; cadre formation through suluk and talqin	Interview K.H. Miftahuddin (2024); archives
Tanzim (organising)	Jamaah and khalifah structure; jaga lembur groups; networks of alumni, khalifah and pengajian leaders	Risalah al-Mahabbah wa al-Jihad; interviews
Tawjih (directing/actuating)	Communal dhikr, manaqib, bandongan pengajian; da'wah bil hal through irrigation, collective farming and food security; Sundanese cultural delivery	Field observation 2023–2024; lecture videos
Riqabah (controlling)	Baiat before membership; three principles for laskar members; prohibition of armed strife in Catatan Cipari 1950; kiai's spiritual authority as legitimacy	Catatan Cipari 1950; interviews with Ajengan Rasyid

Source: Authors' analysis (2026), applying the POAC functions of Munir and Ilaihi (2006).

The most powerful form of da'wah was *dakwah bil hal*. Pesantren Cipari was directly involved in building simple irrigation systems, managing collective farming, strengthening village food security and safeguarding the environment, and it developed Quranic literacy programmes for children and adults when formal schooling was hard to reach. Da'wah thus became part of the fabric of daily life, making the pesantren accepted as a religious and social centre providing protection and stability (Azra, 2004; Steenbrink, 1986). Sufi da'wah was equally distinctive: through dhikr talqin, baiat, manaqib and regular gatherings jamaah were strengthened spiritually and emotionally, and these practices became spaces of mutual support and dialogue. Observation confirms that monthly manaqib events continue to attract hundreds of jamaah from various regions. Mobilisation occurred organically through networks of alumni, tariqa khalifah and pengajian leaders dispersed across villages, oriented not to electoral politics but to cohesion, assistance and the strengthening of religious and moral values.

Intellectual Legacy and Thematic Findings

The intellectual legacy can be mapped through the lecture recordings in the pesantren archives. In "KH Yusuf Tauziri – Kawani," the core of his da'wah is character formation: religion must not be confined to ritual or memorisation but embodied in conduct, integrity and benefit to one's surroundings. A Muslim must be someone who "is useful in his village, not merely sitting in a majelis without changing circumstances." The same lecture rejects authoritarian leadership: "A kiai is not a general, but a guide who sits together with the people." In "ISO Mi'raj 2" he delivers pengajian in refined Sundanese (*bahasa Sunda halus*), with humour, everyday metaphors and practical Sufi teachings, a *dakwah berbasis kultur* distinctive of Sundanese pesantren. In "KH Yusuf Tauziri dan Cikal Bakal" he links love of the homeland with the foundation of faith, teaching a moral nationalism rooted in religious values and not in political pragmatism. His thought can be summarised in five elements: religion as character formation, locally and pesantren-grounded da'wah, exemplary ulama leadership, continuity of the pengajian community, and the integration of spirituality and nationalism. The video archives also show efforts to sustain continuity through pengajian and wirid traditions that persisted after

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his death, a transgenerational vision of da'wah that moves through the community that sustains the tradition.

DISCUSSION

Historiographical Interpretation: A Third Path between State and Rebellion

The evidence confirms that Laskar Darussalam was not a militant group but a da'wah community integrated with daily pengajian and regular wirid. In the local Garut context, "laskar" therefore denotes socio-religious mobilisation more than militarism, which supports calls to bring neglected local movements into Islam Nusantara historiography (Nugraha & Rahmatulloh, 2025; Wibowo, 2024) and echoes Kartodirdjo's (1992) emphasis on perspectives "from below." The finding also qualifies a binary that runs through much writing on West Java. Official histories have tended to treat political Islam through the figure of Kartosuwiryo, either as separatist threat or as martyr (Formichi, 2021), and later scholarship follows the genealogy of Islamist groups back to Darul Islam (Machmudi, 2021). Cipari shows that a third path existed: rejection of the Islamic-state project without rejection of public engagement, and loyalty to the Republic without loss of religious distinctiveness. This is consistent with historical accounts of a moderate Islam rooted in Indonesian tradition (Anzaikhan, 2022) and with studies of the compatibility of Islam and national ideals (Badrun et al., 2023), but it adds an empirically documented, locally specific case from the period in which the alternatives were actually contested. It can also be read alongside the argument that colonial authorities produced and moderated Muslim religious space and that counter-spaces emerged in response (Faizi, 2023); Cipari's refusal to treat religion as an instrument of power suggests one such counter-space, although our sources do not show direct confrontation with colonial authorities and the interpretation should be treated as suggestive. Unlike Suryalaya, which is extensively documented (Junaedi, 2022), Laskar Darussalam has attracted minimal attention (Faridah, 2019; Azra, 2001), which is why documentation of oral and family sources is itself a scholarly contribution.

Charismatic–Egalitarian Leadership and Da'wah Management

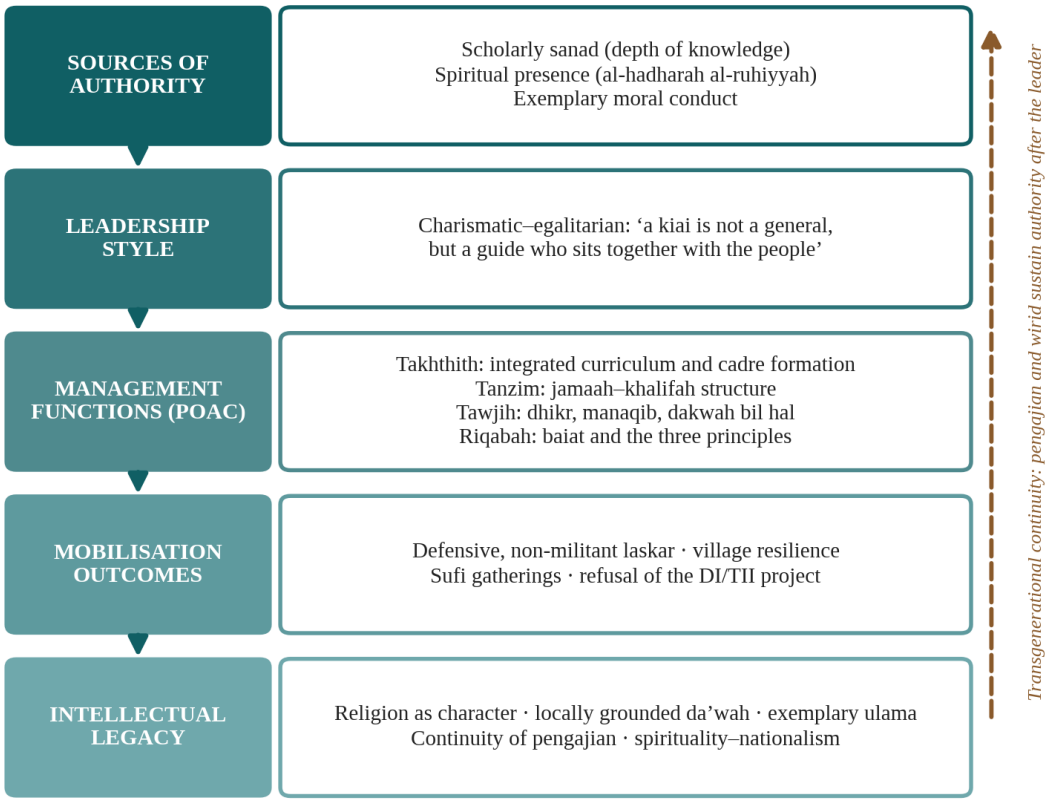
The findings extend Weberian and transformational accounts of kiai leadership. Dhofier's (1985) three sources of authority (knowledge, charisma and exemplary conduct) are all present, but the Cipari evidence adds an explicitly egalitarian self-positioning: the kiai as guide who sits among the people. This rejects authoritarian styles and produced a participatory culture in which the pesantren became a laboratory of moral and spiritual education integrating tariqa discipline, religious teaching and local wisdom (Mastuhu, 1994; Saepuloh, 2020). Because charisma is relational (Timol, 2023; Weber, 1978), the people's testimony that they felt "guided, not commanded" is not incidental; it is the mechanism through which authority was granted and renewed. The result agrees with studies that tie kiai authority to moderation (Faisal et al., 2022) and to spiritual leadership behaviours (Karim et al., 2022), while the extensive record of community work resonates with research on pesantren Sufi practice and environmental stewardship (Irawan, 2022).

Theoretically, the key contribution is the way da'wah management functions were realised. Table 4 shows that planning, organising and directing were carried out through curriculum, jamaah–khalifah structure and devotional gatherings, while control (riqabah) operated through baiat, the three principles and the prohibition recorded in the Catatan Cipari. Control was thus ethical–spiritual rather than bureaucratic. This supports Mahmuddin's (2004) view that da'wah effectiveness lies in moral transformation and the observation that shared religious meaning can sustain organisations with limited formal structure (Baikuni et al., 2026),

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and it refines Pimay's (2013) typology by showing a historical form of integrative management that predates modern organisational structures. Figure 5 integrates these relations into a charismatic–egalitarian Sufi da'wah leadership model. The model is a proposition for testing, not a general law; its boundary conditions include a tariqa-based mobilising structure, a rural community with kinship ties and a leader whose legitimacy rests on recognised exemplarity.

Figure 5
Charismatic–Egalitarian Sufi Da'wah Leadership Model



Source: Authors' synthesis (2026) from the findings of this study.

Intellectual and Spiritual Legacy: Character, Locality and Continuity

The legacy of Pesantren Cipari, namely locally grounded da'wah, pesantren education and continuity of pengajian and wirid, reflects the traditional pesantren principle of connecting knowledge, morality and social practice (Madjid, 1997; Mastuhu, 1994). The use of the Sundanese language and everyday analogies reflects the principle that da'wah must engage the moral and practical domains of society (Dhofier, 1985; Amin, 2009). The emphasis on character is in line with research showing that pesantren cultivate moderate, ethically formed identities through everyday educational culture (Mujahid, 2021; Sauri et al., 2022), and the embedding of Sufi spirituality in local idioms parallels findings elsewhere in the archipelago (Smith, 2022). The integration of faith and love of country matches work linking tariqa to nationalism (Sahri, 2024; Mawardi, 2022; Saeidi & Mohammadpour, 2025) and Sufi orders to the counteraction of radicalism (Ahmad et al., 2021). Our case differs from some of this literature in one respect: the nationalism here was articulated in the revolutionary and early-independence period and linked to a concrete refusal of armed Islamism, while most recent studies address contemporary

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education or moderation programmes (Mappiasse & Hayadin, 2022; Muafiah et al., 2022). The persistence of pengajian and wirid after the leader's death, observed in 2023–2024, indicates that charisma was routinised into communal practice; this fits Weber's expectation of routinisation but shows that routinisation need not weaken moral authority when the practices themselves carry the ethos. It also accords with findings from other Indonesian communities that da'wah gains social acceptance when carried by trusted local authority and culturally rooted practice (Lestari et al., 2026).

Practical, Methodological and Contextual Implications

Practically, the study suggests that pesantren and da'wah organisations can build resilience by embedding supervision in ethical–spiritual mechanisms (oaths, shared devotional routines and explicit principles of restraint) and by pairing education with visible community benefit such as food security and literacy. For policymakers, particularly in contexts where Islamist populism has taken violent forms (Barton et al., 2021b), historically grounded models of non-militant mobilisation provide resources for religious-moderation and heritage programmes that emerge from within Muslim communities. For archivists and historians, the study shows the value of safeguarding family manuscripts, lecture recordings and oral testimonies before they are lost. Methodologically, triangulating archives, interviews and observation addressed the weaknesses of oral evidence (Dominy, 2022) and supported a reflexive rather than bias-elimination view of quality (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The approach responds to calls for leadership research to go beyond questionnaires (Fischer et al., 2023) and to confront the discipline's unresolved puzzles (Banks, 2023). Contextually, the findings are tied to rural Sundanese Islam in a developing-country setting where kinship, tariqa networks and pesantren shape social trust; transfer to urban or digitally mediated environments, where religious authority is increasingly fragmented (Khamis, 2024), requires caution.

CONCLUSION

This study reconstructed the history of the Laskar Darussalam da'wah movement in Garut, with attention to the leadership of KH. Yusuf Tauziri and the intellectual heritage of Pesantren Cipari. Laskar Darussalam was not a militant group but a community-based moral–religious movement built on daily pengajian and regular wirid, evolving from study circles through tariqa jamaah to a defensive village laskar bound by three principles. Yusuf Tauziri's charismatic yet egalitarian leadership presented the ulama as a moral and spiritual guide rather than an authority imposing power, and da'wah management functions were realised through tariqa practices, with control exercised through baiat and shared ethical principles. His da'wah drew on local language, everyday analogies and practical Sufism, and Pesantren Cipari instilled a religious nationalism that produced santri who were both devout and responsible citizens.

The study contributes a historiographical documentation of a locally grounded, non-militaristic movement, a charismatic–egalitarian Sufi da'wah leadership model linking charisma theory with da'wah management, and a triangulated archival–oral–observational method. Academically, it invites testing of the model in other pesantren and tariqa settings; practically, it offers pesantren, da'wah organisations and policymakers a historically grounded model of ulama leadership and locally rooted education that remains relevant to society's moral and spiritual development. The study is limited to a single movement in one locality, so its findings cannot be generalised to other pesantren, and the reconstruction depends on the availability and selectivity of archival and oral sources. Future research should compare Laskar Darussalam with other pesantren movements in West Java, apply a deeper historical–anthropological approach, and document the oral sources of santri, families and local

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communities so that the historiography of Islam Nusantara becomes more comprehensive and representative.

Author Contributions
Conceptualization, H. and D.I.E.; methodology, H.; investigation, H.; formal analysis, H. and R.R.; resources, H.; data curation, H.; writing original draft preparation, H.; writing review and editing, D.I.E. and R.R.; visualization, H.; supervision, D.I.E. and R.R. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical review and approval were waived because the study is a historical–qualitative inquiry involving voluntary interviews with adult informants and no sensitive interventions; participants were informed of the purpose of the research.

Informed Consent Statement
Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process
During the preparation of this work the authors used Claude (Anthropic) to assist with structuring the manuscript, language editing and generating the figures' layout. After using this tool, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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Conflicts of Interest
The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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