



Da'wah Methods of Islamic Religious Instructors in Increasing Community Religious Awareness in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village, Tanjung Morawa District

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the da'wah methods used by Islamic religious instructors in increasing religious awareness among the community in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village, Tanjung Morawa District, Deli Serdang Regency. Islamic instructors play a strategic role in guiding society to correctly understand Islamic teachings. This research employs a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that the da'wah methods applied include bil hikmah (wisdom), mau'izah hasanah (good advice), mujaadalah (discussion), bil kitabah (through writing), and consultation (face-to-face guidance). Supporting factors include active preachers, continuous religious programs, and government support, while inhibiting factors include low public participation and limited time of instructors. The study recommends improving the quality and quantity of da'wah activities to continuously enhance the community's religious awareness.

Keywords: Da'wah Methods, Islamic Religious Instructor, Religious Awareness.

Abstract

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan metode dakwah yang digunakan oleh penyuluh agama Islam dalam meningkatkan kesadaran beragama masyarakat di Gang Madirsan, Desa Bangun Sari, Kecamatan Tanjung Morawa, Kabupaten Deli Serdang. Penyuluh agama memiliki peran strategis dalam membimbing masyarakat untuk memahami ajaran Islam secara benar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa metode dakwah yang digunakan meliputi pendekatan bil hikmah (kebijaksanaan), mau'izah hasanah (nasihat yang baik), mujaadalah (diskusi), bil kitabah (melalui tulisan), dan konsultasi (tatap muka langsung). Faktor pendukung keberhasilan dakwah meliputi dukungan Ustaz-ustaz yang aktif, kegiatan keagamaan yang berkelanjutan, serta dukungan pemerintah. Faktor penghambatnya adalah rendahnya partisipasi masyarakat dan keterbatasan waktu penyuluh. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan perlunya peningkatan kualitas kegiatan dakwah agar kesadaran beragama masyarakat dapat terus meningkat secara berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Metode Dakwah, Penyuluh Agama Islam, Kesadaran Beragama.

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Introduction

Islam is the foundation for all Muslims in living their lives. Understanding Islamic teachings is very important for Muslims so they can practice their religion correctly and in accordance with the guidance brought by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). One effort that can be made to disseminate the teachings of Allah SWT among the community is through da'wah activities. Da'wah in Islam is a process of inviting or calling someone to the right path and prohibiting someone from doing evil. Allah says in Surah Ali-Imran [3]: verse 104,

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

'Let there arise from among you a group that invites to goodness, enjoins what is right, and forbids what is wrong. Those are the successful ones.'

In Indonesia's religious institutional structure, Islamic Religious Instructors are the spearhead of the Ministry of Religious Affairs who work directly in the field. Their existence has a very strategic position, not only as spiritual guides but also as agents for mental and moral development of society. Therefore, Islamic Religious Instructors play a significant role in conveying religious messages and guiding society to understand and practice Islamic teachings properly and in accordance with correct guidance (Al-Qur'an and Prophetic Sunnah). The duty of religious instructors is also to guide and counsel the entire community in fostering mental, moral, and devotion to Allah the Almighty.¹

Several previous studies have examined aspects related to da'wah and religious awareness. Ibnu Sakdan in his research explored the role of religious leaders in increasing community religious awareness, while Hamdani studied da'wah strategies implemented by religious instructors.^{2 3} However, this research has scientific novelty with specific focus on analyzing da'wah methods applied by Islamic Religious Instructors in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village, which faces complex challenges in the form of low community participation in religious activities. Recent literature reviews also show that adaptive and contextual da'wah methods, especially those utilizing social media, can increase da'wah effectiveness in the modern era.⁴

¹ Wawan Sopiyan et al., "Strategi Dakwah Penyuluh Agama Islam Dalam Peningkatan Pemahaman Praktik Ibadah Kemasyarakatan:(Studi Pada Penyuluh Agama Islam Di Kelurahan Lubuk Linggau Ulu Kecamatan Lubuk Linggau Barat 2 Kota Lubuk Llinggau)," *Jurnal Khabar: Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam* 6, no. 1 (2024): 17–26.

² Ibnu Sakdan, "Peran Tokoh Agama dalam Meningkatkan Kesadaran Beragama Masyarakat," 2017.

³ Muslem Hamdani, "Strategi Da'wah Penyuluh Agama Dalam Pembinaan Masyarakat:(Studi Analisis Strategi Penyuluh Agama Di Kemenag Kab. Bireuen)," *Jurnal Al-Mizan* 7, no. 1 (2020): 1–17.

⁴ Muhammad Munir, *Manajemen Dakwah* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2021).

Based on observations and interviews conducted by the researcher with Ustaz Ahmad Solihin as an Islamic religious instructor, the researcher found that many people still lack religious awareness and are reluctant to participate in religious activities carried out by religious instructors, such as neglecting the five daily prayers in congregation at the mosque for men, being reluctant to participate in ta'lim assemblies, lack of interest in following religious activities conducted by ustaz, preachers, and instructors, and minimal knowledge of religious values among the community. This is evidence that community religious awareness still needs more intensive attention and guidance. This condition is the background for research to examine more deeply the role of Islamic Religious Instructors in that area.

The research location is in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village, Tanjung Morawa District, Deli Serdang Regency, with a population of 16,309 people, the majority of whom are Muslim. This research specifically aims to identify, describe, and analyze the da'wah methods applied by Islamic Religious Instructors in Gang Madirsan, and to see the extent of effectiveness of these methods in increasing community religious awareness. By exploring the strategies and approaches used, this research is expected not only to provide academic contributions in the treasury of da'wah science, especially in the field of Islamic guidance and counseling, but also to become evaluation material and recommendations for da'wah practitioners and related local governments in formulating more targeted, contextual, and sustainable religious guidance programs in the future.

This research uses a qualitative approach with field study design to extract data deeply. Data collection techniques were conducted through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with key informants (Islamic Religious Instructors, Village Head, Hamlet Head, and community), and documentation study. Research focus is directed at exploring applied da'wah methods, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the effectiveness of these methods in the socio-cultural context of local communities. The theory that becomes a reference and foundation refers to Surah An-Nahl verse 125 which emphasizes bil-hikmah approach, mau'izah hasanah, and mujadalah billati hiya ahsan as principles of da'wah communication. Data obtained from primary sources are grouped and analyzed to draw conclusions, with support from secondary data from books and journals related to da'wah methods and increasing community religious awareness. To test data validity, researchers use technique triangulation by checking data from the same source with different techniques, namely interviews, observation, and documentation until all data are valid

Result and Discussion

Religious Awareness Condition of Gang Madirsan Community, Bangun Sari Village

General Overview of Community Religious Condition

Based on intensive observations conducted in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village during the research period, the condition of community religious awareness shows challenges that need serious attention from various parties, especially religious instructors, community leaders, and local government. This can be seen from daily community life, such as low attendance at Qur'anic studies in mosques, minimal congregational prayer attendance especially among adult men, and limited community participation in religious activities that have been regularly held in Bangun Sari Village.

This phenomenon of low religious participation becomes an important indicator showing that community religious awareness has not reached an optimal level, although demographically the majority of the population is Muslim. This condition aligns with Al Nouri's writing explaining that religious awareness is not only measured from someone's religious identity but from three interrelated dimensions: cognitive dimension (religious knowledge), affective dimension (spiritual appreciation), and motor dimension (worship practice).⁵ In the context of Gang Madirsan community, there appears to be a gap between religious identity (Islam) and religious practices that are not yet consistent..

Perspektif Pemangku Kepentingan tentang Kesadaran Beragama

To comprehensively understand the religious awareness condition of Bangun Sari Village community, researchers interviewed several key informants who have different but complementary perspectives, including the Village Head of Bangun Sari as village government leader, Religious Instructor as executor of religious guidance programs, and Hamlet Head and community as objects and subjects of da'wah.

As conveyed by Mr. Muhammad Rifai as Village Head of Bangun Sari, the majority of the community is Muslim, but religious awareness still needs significant improvement. He conveyed quite surprising data that from the comparison of population with religious participation, where each hamlet has about 400 households but only 20-30% actively participate in the mosque. With Bangun Sari Village having 17 hamlets, this comparison shows that from about 6,800 households (17 x 400

⁵ Fatima Al-Nouri, Abdulaziz Al-Homayan, and Mohammed Aljaman, "Religion and Spiritual Well-Being: A Qualitative Exploration of Perspectives of Higher Education Faculty in Qatar and Its Challenge to Western Well-Being Paradigms," *BMC Public Health* 24, no. 1 (2024): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-024-18345-2>.

households), only about 1,360 to 2,040 households are active in religious activities. This figure indicates that there are still about 70-80% of people who are not optimal in participating in religious activities.

This quantitative data strengthens Ramayulis' argument that religious awareness does not grow automatically even though someone is born and raised in a Muslim environment.⁶ A systematic, continuous process of guidance using appropriate methods is needed so that religious awareness can be internalized in individual personality structures and manifested in consistent religious behavior.

Based on interviews with Ustaz Ahmad Solihin as Religious Instructor of Bangun Sari Village, the perspective conveyed is slightly different but still within the same corridor. He stated that generally the community of Bangun Sari Village can still be categorized as religious in the sense of still practicing religious teachings, as seen from religious activities that are still followed by some people with quite good enthusiasm. However, he also acknowledged that there is still a segment of society that is reluctant, unwilling, or even does not care at all about religious activities held, which shows that religious awareness still needs improvement through more innovative and contextual da'wah approaches.

The difference in perspective between the Village Head (who tends to see quantitatively with 20-30% participation data) and the Religious Instructor (who tends to be more optimistic by seeing the positive side that there are still active communities) actually reflects the complexity in measuring religious awareness. This aligns with Bastomi's opinion stating that measuring religious awareness cannot rely on only one indicator but must look at various dimensions including participation intensity, quality of religious understanding, consistency of worship practice, and religious impact on social behavior.⁷

In line with the above views, Mr. Indra as Hamlet Head provides perspective from a more micro level, namely the hamlet level. He said that people in his hamlet in worship aspects can still be categorized as good and obedient in religion, although it must be acknowledged there is still a small group of people who are not fully aware of the importance of being consistently religious. What is interesting from this finding is that participation in religious activities is still fluctuating or unstable, where people sometimes attend one activity but are absent in the next, and this phenomenon is caused mainly by external factors, namely work busyness.

⁶ Ramayulis, *Psikologi Agama* (Jakarta: Kalam Mulia, 2019).

⁷ Hasan Bastomi, "Penguatan Moderasi Beragama Bagi Calon Konselor Dalam Layanan Konseling Multikultural," *Kifah: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* (Institut Pesantren Mathali ul Falah, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.35878/kifah.v1i2.561>.

Mr. Indra explained further that the characteristics of people in his hamlet are mostly workers who work outside the village or in the formal sector with long working hours, namely leaving in the morning around 08.00 and only returning in the afternoon around 17.00. This condition causes them to experience physical and mental fatigue, making it difficult to attend congregational prayers at the mosque, let alone to attend regular studies or recitations usually held at night. This finding confirms the theory proposed by Pimay and Savitri that da'wah challenges in the modern era are very different from the traditional era, where modern society faces what is called 'time poverty' due to high economic demands, so time for spiritual activities becomes limited.⁸

Analysis of Factors Affecting Religious Awareness

From interviews with the three key informants above, it can be concluded that the religious awareness condition of Bangun Sari Village community is still fairly good but not optimal, with several inhibiting factors that need to be identified and solutions found. These factors can be categorized into external and internal factors.

The most dominant external factor is work busyness with long working hours (08.00-17.00), causing physical fatigue so motivation to participate in religious activities becomes low. Other external factors include minimal free time for spiritual activities, work environment influences that do not support religious practices, and limited adequate and accessible religious facilities.

Internal factors include personal laziness, lack of intrinsic motivation to improve religious quality, weak understanding of the urgency of congregational worship and collective religious activities, and life priorities that are more inclined toward material needs compared to spiritual needs. Kusnawan in his study explains that internal factors are often more difficult to overcome than external factors, because they require mindset transformation and paradigm change that can only be achieved through intensive and continuous religious guidance processes.⁹

This research finding also indicates an interesting phenomenon, namely that the community is not completely apathetic toward religion but faces a dilemma between economic demands and spiritual demands. They still have awareness of the importance of religion, but this awareness is not strong enough to overcome the practical obstacles they face. This aligns with the theory proposed by Munir that religious awareness has several levels, from nominal awareness (acknowledging religious identity), cognitive awareness (having religious knowledge), affective awareness (having spiritual

⁸ Awaluddin Pimay and Fika Maya Savitri, "Dinamika Dakwah Islam di Era Modern," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 41, no. 1 (2021): 1–18.

⁹ Aep Kusnawan, "Urgensi Penyuluhan Agama Islam," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah: Academic Journal for Homiletic Studies* 5, no. 17 (2017): 275–90.

feelings), to behavioral awareness (consistently practicing religious teachings).¹⁰ Gang Madirsan community can be said to be at cognitive-affective awareness level but not yet optimal at behavioral awareness level.

This condition requires a da'wah approach that not only focuses on cognitive aspects (providing religious knowledge) but also on motivational and behavioral aspects, where religious instructors need to develop strategies that can facilitate the community to integrate religious practices into their busy life routines, for example by developing da'wah programs that are flexible in terms of time, using digital media for remote da'wah, and building community support systems that can mutually strengthen in religious practices..

Da'wah Methods Applied by Islamic Religious Instructors

Variety of Da'wah Methods

To increase community religious awareness, appropriate da'wah methods suitable for local conditions are needed. Research in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village found several methods used by religious instructors in efforts to increase community religious awareness.

According to Mr. Muhammad Rifai as Village Head of Bangun Sari, da'wah methods include three main approaches. First, persuasive method, namely inviting people to be religiously obedient through formal and informal appeals. Second, bil lisan method, namely short lectures and structured or spontaneous advice. Third, silaturahmi method, namely direct visits to residents' homes for personal guidance. This approach is top-down with village government support, in line with Qadaruddin's concept that effective da'wah requires synergy between instructors and local government.¹¹

Ustaz Ahmad Solihin as Religious Instructor provides a more detailed picture of applied methods. First, providing short 5-10 minute tausiah after Maghrib with practical materials. Second, providing guidance on the obligation of congregational prayer and religious life. Third, delivering intensive tausiah during Ramadan. Fourth, being Friday sermon speaker with deep da'wah messages. Fifth, personal approaches to solve personal, family, or social problems. Sixth, spreading religious information through Facebook and WhatsApp. Seventh, conducting religious consultations for those needing guidance.

Applied da'wah methods are varied and comprehensive with several categorizations. From delivery media perspective, they include oral methods (lectures, tausiah, sermons), written methods (social media), practical methods (exemplary, accompaniment), and dialogue methods (consultation,

¹⁰ Munir, *Manajemen Dakwah*.

¹¹ Muhammad Qadaruddin, *Pengantar Ilmu Dakwah* (Surabaya: CV. Qiara Media, 2019).

discussion). From communication approach perspective, they include mass approaches (public lectures, Friday sermons), group approaches (ta'lim assemblies, regular recitations), and personal approaches (home visits, individual consultation). From implementation time perspective, they include scheduled routine da'wah, intensive temporal da'wah at certain times like Ramadan, and incidental da'wah according to needs.

This categorization aligns with Bastomi's concept that da'wah effectiveness is determined by the ability to choose and combine various methods according to context and community characteristics. There is no one most effective method for all situations, so varied and flexible approaches are needed.

Analysis of Da'wah Methods Based on Al-Qur'an Surah An-Nahl Verse 125

Theoretical Framework: Three Pillars of Qur'anic Da'wah Method

Based on research informant interview results and analysis of da'wah practices conducted in the field, it can be known that Islamic religious instructors in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village generally use da'wah methods that align with basic Islamic principles as mentioned in Al-Qur'an Surah An-Nahl verse 125. This verse becomes the normative and methodological foundation for all da'wah activities in Islam, providing three main approaches: bil hikmah (with wisdom), mau'izah hasanah (good advice), and mujadalah billati hiya ahsan (dialogue in the best way).

These three methods are not alternative choices that negate each other but are gradations or levels of methods that must be mastered by every preacher and used situationally according to the conditions of the audience faced. Munir explains that these three methods reflect the flexibility and comprehensiveness of Islamic teachings in preaching, where Islam teaches humanistic, persuasive approaches that respect reason and human dignity, not coercive or instructive approaches that can actually cause resistance.¹²

***Bil Hikmah* Method: Da'wah with Contextual Wisdom**

The bil hikmah method is an approach that prioritizes wisdom in conveying religious teachings by considering the psychological condition of the audience, socio-cultural background, level of religious understanding, and situational context. Hikmah means the ability to place something in its proper

¹² Munir, *Manajemen Dakwah*.

place: conveying truth in the right way, at the right time, to the right people, and in the right language.¹³

In implementation, religious instructors approach people who are reluctant to participate in religious activities with a dialogical approach without judging.¹⁴ Instructors listen to the obstacles faced, then provide realistic solutions according to their conditions. For example, for people who cannot pray in congregation because of long working hours, instructors do not reprimand but provide alternatives such as congregational prayers on holidays or at least Fajr and Maghrib prayers in congregation whose times are outside working hours.

This approach proves to be more accepted because people feel valued and understood. This aligns with the concept of bil hikmah da'wah that emphasizes the importance of understanding the audience's condition and inviting gently while providing applicable solutions.¹⁵

Bastomi dalam penelitiannya yang berjudul "Dakwah bi al-Hikmah sebagai Pola Pengembangan Sosial Keagamaan Masyarakat" yang dipublikasikan dalam *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, menegaskan bahwa dakwah bil hikmah yang bersifat personal dan empatik lebih efektif dalam menggerakkan perubahan perilaku keagamaan masyarakat dibandingkan dengan pendekatan yang bersifat instruktif, direktif, atau memaksa. Penelitian Bastomi menunjukkan bahwa mad'u yang didekati dengan metode hikmah cenderung lebih terbuka, lebih reseptif terhadap pesan dakwah, dan lebih termotivasi untuk melakukan perubahan perilaku karena perubahan tersebut muncul dari kesadaran internal (intrinsic motivation) bukan karena tekanan eksternal (extrinsic pressure).¹⁶

Furthermore, Bastomi explains that important components in the bil hikmah method include: (1) empathy, namely the ability of the preacher to understand and feel what is felt by the audience; (2) contextualization, namely the ability to convey universal religious teachings in a particular context relevant to the audience's life; (3) graduation, namely a gradual approach that does not force drastic changes in a short time but rather provides space for the audience to transform gradually; (4) non-judgment, namely a non-judgmental attitude that creates a safe space for the audience to be open and consult without fear of being mocked or blamed; and (5) solutive, namely focusing on providing

¹³ Asna, "Implementasi Dakwah Dalam Pemahaman Metode Dakwah Bil Hikmah di LPKA 1 Tanjung Gusta: Dalam Kajian Aspek Psikologis," *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi Network Media* 4, no. 2 (2024): 145–62, <https://jurnal.dharmawangsa.ac.id/index.php/junetmedia/article/view/4709>.

¹⁴ N Yunita et al., "Application of Da'wah Bil Hikmah: Efforts to Overcome Radicalism," *Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 8, no. 2 (2023): 241–52, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jdk.v8i2.8728>.

¹⁵ Yunita et al.

¹⁶ Hasan Bastomi, "Dakwah bi al-Hikmah sebagai Pola Pengembangan Sosial Keagamaan Masyarakat," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 36, no. 2 (2016): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v36.2.1776>.

practical solutions that can be implemented rather than just giving criticism or reprimands that are not constructive.

The implementation of the bil hikmah method in Gang Madirsan is also reflected in the selection of the right time and momentum for preaching. Religious instructors do not force da'wah at times when the community is busy or tired, but rather take advantage of appropriate moments such as after Maghrib prayer when the congregation is still gathered and not too tired, or on holidays when the community has more free time. The selection of the right time is part of hikmah (wisdom), because a good da'wah message if delivered at the wrong time will not be effective and can even be counterproductive.

Mau'izah Hasanah Method

Religious instructors in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village consistently apply the *mau'izah hasanah* method, namely providing good advice that touches the heart. *Man'izah hasanah* differs from ordinary advice because it has '*hasanah*' characteristics (good and beautiful), not only in terms of content but also delivery method, language, intonation, and attitude reflecting sincerity and compassion.¹⁷

This method is applied through four main activities. First, weekly ta'lim assemblies held regularly with varied materials covering faith, worship, morals, transactions, and contemporary issues. Combined lecture, question-and-answer, and group discussion formats allow active congregation interaction. Second, lectures after Maghrib with 10-15 minute duration focusing on one theme so it is easily absorbed. Strategic time when congregation is still gathered at the mosque makes this method very effective. Third, Friday sermons delivered in language easily understood by all levels with contextualization of verses and hadith. Themes are adapted to actual community conditions such as political ethics during elections, virtues of fasting during Ramadan, or current social issues. Fourth, Ramadan tausiah with increased study intensity almost every night, utilizing high spiritual momentum.

Mujadalah Billati Hiya Ahsan Method

Islamic religious instructors in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village also implement the mujadalah billati hiya ahsan method or dialogue in the best way, applied in the context of dealing with community segments that have differing views, diverse religious understandings, or even doubts and critical questions in understanding the importance of consistently practicing Islamic teachings. Mujadalah in the da'wah context does not mean fruitless debate aimed at winning arguments or

¹⁷ Bastomi.

defeating opponents, but is constructive dialogue aimed at reaching truth and mutual understanding while maintaining the honor and dignity of dialogue partners.

This dialogical approach is manifested in various activity forms that facilitate two-way communication between instructors and communities. First, democratic open discussions where each participant has equal opportunity to express opinions, ask questions, or even convey criticism of certain views. In these discussions, religious instructors act as facilitators who direct discussions to remain constructive and not deviate from the topic. Second, interactive question-and-answer forums usually held after lectures or studies, where congregation is given opportunity to ask questions related to delivered materials or religious problems they face. Third, religious dialogue with communities conducted in conducive, relaxed, and non-confrontational atmospheres, especially in discussing khilafiyah issues or differences of opinion in Islamic jurisprudence branches (*furu'iyah*) that indeed allow *ijtihad* differences among scholars.

As a concrete example, when there are differences of opinion in the community about the issue of *qunut* in Fajr prayer (some argue it is obligatory, some argue it is *sunnah*, some argue it is not prescribed), religious instructors do not immediately judge one group as correct and the other as wrong, but rather explain that this is a *khilafiyah* matter in which there are indeed differences of opinion among scholars, with each having their own evidence and arguments. The instructor then explains these various opinions along with their respective evidence, then provides practical guidance that in matters like this, the community may choose whichever opinion they believe has stronger evidence or follow the opinion of scholars they trust, and most importantly, they must not disparage each other or consider other groups [as wrong].

Landasan normatif dari metode *mujadalah* ini adalah firman Allah dalam QS. An-Nahl ayat 125:

أُدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided.

This verse provides very clear methodological guidance that in facing differences of opinion or religious debates, a preacher must use a better approach (*ahsan*), not just good (*hasanah*). The use of the word *ahsan* (superlative form of *hasanah*) indicates that the standard required in *mujadalah* is higher than in *mau'izah*, namely it must demonstrate superiority in character, stronger and more

rational argumentation, as well as a more courteous attitude and greater respect for the dialogue partner compared to the dialogue partner.

Munir (2021) in *Da'wah Management* affirms that the *mujadalah* method applied with the *ahsan* principle can reduce conflicts in religious understanding in society and increase tolerance and mutual understanding among various groups with different religious understandings. Munir explains that the characteristics of *mujadalah billati hiya ahsan* include: (1) respect, namely an attitude of respecting dialogue partners despite differing opinions; (2) objectivity, namely focusing on the substance of the discussion and the evidence used, not on attacking the dialogue partner personally; (3) openness, namely an attitude of being open to accepting truth from dialogue partners if indeed supported by stronger evidence; (4) courtesy, namely the use of polite language, not harsh, not sarcastic, and not demeaning; and (5) truth orientation, namely that the purpose of *mujadalah* is to reach truth, not to win debates.

Contemporary Da'wah Methods: Adaptation to Technological Developments

Digital Transformation Context in Da'wah

Pimay and Savitri in their study on 'Dynamics of Islamic Da'wah in the Modern Era' published in *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* affirm that da'wah methods in the modern era must be contextual and dynamic, not stagnant and rigid. Da'wah must be able to adapt to social, technological, and cultural changes occurring in society, without losing the essence and fundamental principles of Islam. One form of adaptation that is very important in this digital era is utilization of media (*bi al-tadwin*), especially digital media and social media that have become an integral part of modern society life.¹⁸

Qadaruddin in *Introduction to Da'wah Science* adds that using social media for da'wah is not just following trends or modernization for the sake of modernization but is a strategic strategy and even a necessity in the context of already digitalized society.¹⁹ Social media has several advantages compared to conventional media: very wide reach transcending geographical boundaries, relatively low or even free costs, ease in content production and distribution, high viral potential, ability to interact two-way with audiences, and can be accessed anytime and anywhere according to audience convenience.

Bil Kitabah Method Based on Social Media

In the contemporary context, religious instructors in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village apply this *bil kitabah* method in more modern ways and according to technological developments, namely by

¹⁸ Pimay and Savitri, "Dinamika Dakwah Islam di Era Modern."

¹⁹ Qadaruddin, *Pengantar Ilmu Dakwah*.

spreading religious information through social media platforms that have developed very rapidly and become dominant communication media in the all-modern and digital era. Distribution of da'wah content is done through various popular digital platforms in Indonesia such as Facebook which has a very large user base across all age groups, Instagram which is more popular among young people with attractive visual formats, and WhatsApp which is effective for sharing messages in closed groups.²⁰

Da'wah content spread through social media is very diverse in form, from simple text writings in the form of Qur'anic verses or hadith with translations and brief explanations, articles or essays on certain religious topics, motivational quotes or wisdom with attractive graphic designs, infographics presenting religious information visually and easily understood, lecture or tausiah videos distributed through YouTube or Facebook, to interactive content such as quizzes or religious question-and-answers involving active participation from followers.²¹

This da'wah method through social media is adapted to the demographic, psychographic, and digital behavioral characteristics of the Gang Madirsan community in Bangun Sari Village, which has undergone digital transformation over the past two decades. Observational data show that most of the productive-age population (20-50 years) have been using smartphones and have accounts on at least one social media platform that they access routinely every day. Even among the younger generation (15-30 years), social media use has become part of their lifestyle where they spend several hours each day scrolling through social media, whether for entertainment, communicating with friends, seeking information, or online shopping.

However, the use of social media for da'wah also has several challenges that need to be anticipated and addressed. The first challenge is related to content quality, where social media is filled with various content competing for audience attention, so da'wah content must be packaged attractively both visually and substantively so as not to be drowned out among other content.²² The second challenge is related to information verification, where social media also becomes a place for spreading inaccurate, misleading, or even extremist religious information, so religious instructors must have good digital literacy to ensure that the content disseminated is accurate, based on valid

²⁰ Ridwan Ridwan and Ramsiah Tasruddin, "Optimalisasi Media Sosial untuk Dakwah Islam: Tantangan dan Strategi," *AL-QIBLAH: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Bahasa Arab* 4, no. 1 (2025): 32–44, <https://doi.org/10.36701/qiblah.v4i1.1969>.

²¹ D Septyawan, F D Saputra, and A Herdiansyah, "Strategi Komunikasi Dakwah Digital di Kalangan Santri," *Triwikrama: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial* 6, no. 7 (2025): 111–20, <https://doi.org/10.6578/triwikrama.v6i7.9756>.

²² Ridwan Ridwan and Ramsiah Tasruddin, "Optimalisasi Media Sosial untuk Dakwah Islam: Tantangan dan Strategi," *AL-QIBLAH: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Bahasa Arab* 4, no. 1 (2025): 32–44, <https://doi.org/10.36701/qiblah.v4i1.1969>.

evidence, and consistent with moderate Islamic understanding.²³ The third challenge is related to interaction with audiences, where comments or questions from followers on social media must be responded to quickly and appropriately, which requires time and energy commitment from religious instructors.

Second, Personal Consultation Method: Individual Guidance for Deep Transformation

This consultation method involves intensive personal interaction between religious instructors as counselors and the community as clients who need guidance. The process begins when community members voluntarily come to religious instructors to convey problems, anxieties, dilemmas, or spiritual and psychological needs they face honestly and openly, then the religious instructor listens with full attention and empathy, asks clarifying questions to understand the problem more deeply, and finally provides comprehensive, holistic, and applicable solutions based on Islamic teachings sourced from the Qur'an, Hadith, and scholars' ijtihad.

Problems consulted with religious instructors are very diverse, including: (1) personal problems such as spiritual crisis (feeling far from Allah), moral dilemmas (facing morally ambiguous situations), internal conflicts (contradictions between desires and obligations), worship problems (difficulty maintaining consistency in worship), to psychological problems such as anxiety, sadness, or feelings of guilt; (2) family problems such as husband-wife conflicts (quarrels, disharmony, even threats of divorce), child-rearing patterns (how to educate children according to Islamic teachings in the modern era), relationships with extended family (conflicts with in-laws, with siblings-in-law, or with other relatives), to family economic problems that impact relationships among family members; and (3) social problems such as conflicts with neighbors, workplace problems (ethical dilemmas, relationships with superiors or coworkers), business dilemmas (between profit and ethics), to community problems such as inter-group or organizational conflicts.

In providing solutions, religious instructors use an approach based on Islamic sharia principles while still considering psychological aspects, social aspects, and the complex context of modern life. This means that the solutions provided are not only normative (what should be done according to Islam) but also realistic and applicable (how to implement these teachings in the context of real life with all its limitations and complexities). Religious instructors also do not provide "one size fits all" solutions

²³ D Septyawan, F D Saputra, and A Herdiansyah, "Strategi Komunikasi Dakwah Digital di Kalangan Santri," *Triwikrama: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial* 6, no. 7 (2025): 111–20, <https://doi.org/10.6578/triwikrama.v6i7.9756>.

(one solution for all similar problems), but rather provide solutions tailored to the specific conditions of each individual consulting.²⁴

This religious consultation method has a strong foundation in Islamic tradition, where the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself practiced a counseling approach in guiding companions who faced various life problems. In many hadiths, we find that the Prophet not only provided answers or solutions directly and instantly when companions asked or consulted, but he first listened with full attention and empathy, understood the context of the problem comprehensively, asked reflective questions to help companions understand the root of their own problems, and then provided guidance appropriate to the conditions, capacity, and specific situation of each companion. This counseling approach of the Prophet shows that da'wah does not always have to be mass-oriented and general with a one-way communication format, but there also needs to be a more intensive, personal, and dialogical individual approach (two-way communication) for certain cases that require special handling and cannot be resolved through general lectures.²⁵

Effectiveness and Challenges in Implementing Da'wah Methods

Effectiveness Indicators: Increased Participation and Behavioral Change

From the results of participatory observation conducted intensively in Bangun Sari Village during the research period, the religious awareness condition of the Gang Madirsan community currently shows significant improvement although not yet evenly distributed across all community layers. This improvement can be seen from several quantitative and qualitative indicators showing positive impacts from implementing varied and contextual da'wah methods.

The clearest quantitative indicator is the increase in the number of congregations performing congregational prayers at mosques, where based on data collected through direct observation and interviews with mosque administrators, the number of male congregations performing congregational prayers at mosques, which originally only ranged from 15-20% of the total adult male population, increased to about 25-30% after implementing varied da'wah methods for approximately one year. Although the increase from 15-20% to 25-30% in percentage terms appears not very large (only about 5-10 percentage points), in absolute terms this is a quite significant increase, because if calculated from the total adult male population numbering thousands of people, then a 5-10%

²⁴ Wawan Sopiyan et al., "Strategi Dakwah Penyuluh Agama Islam Dalam Peningkatan Pemahaman Praktik Ibadah Kemasyarakatan:(Studi Pada Penyuluh Agama Islam Di Kelurahan Lubuk Llinggau Ulu Kecamatan Lubuk Llinggau Barat 2 Kota Lubuk Llinggau)," *Jurnal Khabar: Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam* 6, no. 1 (2024): 17–26.

²⁵ N Yunita et al., "Application of Da'wah Bil Hikmah: Efforts to Overcome Radicalism," *Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 8, no. 2 (2023): 241–52, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jdk.v8i2.8728>.

increase means there are hundreds of additional people now actively praying in congregation at mosques.

In addition to quantitative increases, there has also been an increase in the quality of participation, where there are still community segments that consistently and steadfastly follow religious activities such as weekly regular recitations, monthly ta'lim assemblies, and Islamic studies with stable attendance levels that even tend to increase over time. What is interesting is that some of those who are now active are people who previously never participated in religious activities at all, which shows that the applied da'wah methods successfully reached and mobilized community segments that were previously apathetic or uninterested in religious activities.²⁶

Dialectics of Findings with Religious Awareness Theory

This research finding strengthens and confirms the religious awareness theory proposed by Al-Nouri (2024). Al-Nouri explains that religious awareness includes three fundamental aspects that are interrelated and mutually influence each other. First, the cognitive aspect related to knowledge, understanding, and beliefs about religious teachings, including knowledge about faith (aqidah), worship (ibadah), morals (akhlaq), and transactions (muamalah). Second, the affective aspect related to feelings, appreciation, and emotional attitudes toward religion, including feelings of love for Allah, fear of His punishment, hope for His mercy, and other spiritual feelings. Third, the motor or behavioral aspect related to behavior and religious practices structured in someone's mental personality system, including ritual worship performance, moral practices in daily life, and implementation of Islamic values in various aspects of life.²⁷

These three aspects interact in forming whole and comprehensive religious awareness. The cognitive aspect provides the foundation of knowledge and understanding that becomes the basis for the emergence of affective and motor aspects. However, knowledge alone is not sufficient to move behavior; the affective dimension is also needed, namely appreciation and spiritual feelings that drive motivation to practice. Finally, the affective aspect needs to be realized in the motor aspect, namely real behavior, because faith that is not practiced is imperfect faith.²⁸

In the context of the Gang Madirsan community, it can be identified that the gap in religious awareness that occurs is not solely due to a lack of cognitive aspect (religious knowledge), because

²⁶ Bastomi, "Dakwah bi al-Hikmah sebagai Pola Pengembangan Sosial Keagamaan Masyarakat."

²⁷ Al-Nouri, Al-Homayan, and Aljaman, "Religion and Spiritual Well-Being: A Qualitative Exploration of Perspectives of Higher Education Faculty in Qatar and Its Challenge to Western Well-Being Paradigms."

²⁸ Al-Nouri, Al-Homayan, and Aljaman, "Religion and Spiritual Well-Being: A Qualitative Exploration of Perspectives of Higher Education Faculty in Qatar and Its Challenge to Western Well-Being Paradigms."

some community members who are not active in religious activities actually have quite good religious knowledge from both formal and informal education they received. The problem lies more in the affective aspect (lack of spiritual appreciation) and motor aspect (difficulty implementing knowledge into consistent behavior). This indicates that da'wah is not sufficient to focus only on knowledge transfer, but must also focus on spiritual transformation and habit formation.²⁹

Ideal religious awareness according to Ahyadi's theory is when these three aspects develop in a balanced and integrated manner, where a person not only has broad and deep religious knowledge (cognitive aspect), not only has feelings of love and fear of Allah (affective aspect), but also practices that knowledge and feelings in consistent real behavior in daily life (motor aspect). In the context of the Gang Madirsan community, it can be said that some community members have achieved ideal religious awareness (evident from those who are active and steadfast), some are still in the process toward ideal awareness (evident from those whose participation fluctuates), and some have not yet achieved adequate awareness (evident from those who do not participate at all).³⁰

Furthermore, Ramayulis (2019) in *Psychology of Religion* affirms that religious awareness does not grow instantly or automatically like magic, but rather through a gradual, systematic, and continuous awareness process that is consistently instilled by religious socialization agents such as religious instructors, educators, parents, community leaders, and media. This awareness process must use appropriate methods according to the psychological conditions, cognitive development level, and socio-cultural background of the mad'u (audience), so that religious messages can be well received, correctly understood, deeply appreciated, and internalized in their personality structure, which is ultimately manifested in consistent religious behavior.³¹

Conclusion

This research concludes that Islamic Religious Instructors in Gang Madirsan, Bangun Sari Village apply varied and comprehensive da'wah methods that align with Qur'anic principles in Surah An-Nahl verse 125, namely bil hikmah (wisdom approach), mau'izah hasanah (good advice), and mujadalah billati hiya ahsan (dialogue in the best way). In the modern context, these methods are adapted with contemporary approaches such as bil kitabah through social media and personal consultation, showing da'wah flexibility in responding to technological developments and changing community needs.

²⁹ Bastomi.

³⁰ Ramayulis, *Psikologi Agama*.

³¹ Ramayulis, *Psikologi Agama*.

Community religious awareness condition shows significant improvement as indicated by increased participation in congregational prayers and religious activities, although challenges still exist in the form of work busyness, personal laziness, and fluctuating participation. Supporting factors for da'wah success include active ustaz, continuous religious programs, and government support, while inhibiting factors include low community participation and limited instructor time.

This research recommends the need to improve da'wah activity quality through instructor training in digital literacy and intercultural communication, develop flexible da'wah programs according to community time, and strengthen synergy between instructors, community leaders, and local government in fostering sustainable community religious awareness

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