
DAI'S STRATEGY IN MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES: EFFORTS TO BUILD A CROSS-FAITH DIALOGUE FOR HARMONIC LIFE

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Abstract

This paper will specifically examine da'wah strategies in multicultural societies and explore the ways in which preachers make concerted efforts to oversee the social changes occurring within society. This paper is reviewed using library research methods, which involve the research of various types of literature and documents that are pertinent to the subject matter under discussion. Effective da'wah strategies aimed at maintaining and developing a harmonious life include recitation strategies, tazkiyah strategies, and taklim strategies. The recitation strategy involves conveying the universal truths of Islam to make them accessible and acceptable to individuals of all religious backgrounds. The Tazkiyah strategy is a component of the effort to motivate religious individuals to internalize religious teachings, while the Taklim strategy involves teaching and educating religious individuals to ensure the practical implementation of their religious teachings.

Key words: Da'wah strategy, preachers, community, multicultural

INTRODUCTION

The role of da'is in the activities of dakwah, up to this point, remains quite dominant. This is closely related to the trend of religious behavior among the community, which tends to prefer oral forms of dakwah such as sermons (*mau'idhatul hasanah*), *religious talks*, and *morning lectures*. The activities of commemorating significant Islamic events (PHBI) organized by various government agencies, companies, religious social organizations, and community groups cannot exclude religious lecture activities. Although various other activities that are increasingly diverse and innovative continue to develop, such as *Quranic recitation events*, art and sports competitions, social service activities, and charity bazaars, the dominant form of the dai's role in society is not limited to face-to-face preaching alone. Religious outreach events on several radio stations and television channels, as well as on various social media platforms, especially during Ramadan programs, still rely heavily on *bil-lisan* preaching. In addition, routine activities organized by religious research groups (*majlis taklim*) also continue to rely on *bil-lisan*.

Such forms of da'wah activities result in a closer relationship between the dai and the jam'ah (the audience). This closeness is one of the reasons for the success of da'wah efforts carried out by the dai. Throughout history, the success of dai in introducing and

instilling Islamic values is evident in how these preachers become integral parts of the communities they are reaching out to. Prophet Muhammad himself, in his da'wah efforts, was highly contextual, adapting to the social conditions of his audience (Arif, 2001). Because in reality, when preachers engage in preaching, they are not only conveying factual, logical, and open information about Islam. They must also strive to motivate, encourage, and guide their audience to practice the teachings of Islam (Rakhmat, 1997). This carries the consequence that preachers are required to continuously enhance their quality, enabling them to effect transformation from a state of negativity to positivity and from a state of positivity to greater positivity. This is because preaching fundamentally involves not only changing but also advancing the audience in line with the established focus and objectives.

As moral crusaders, preachers must serve as moral guides and sources of knowledge for their communities. Therefore, Syekh Ali Mahfudz (1961), in his book *Hidayatul Mursyidin*, emphasizes the necessity of acquiring both religious knowledge (*diniyah*) and social knowledge (*wadhiyyah*) for this purpose. Mulkhan (1995) elaborates in detail on the factors that need to be considered to enhance the quality of muballighs, including several aspects such as: (1) knowledge of the fundamental sources of Islamic teachings; (2) *the ability of muballighs to understand the social, cultural, economic, and political conditions of the community*; (3) muballighs' knowledge of the developments in science and technology; (4) societal developments and humanitarian issues, both within the framework of national life and in the broader international context; (5) the *muballighs'* capability in managing learning resources and the potential of the community (Mulkhan, 1995).

All the capabilities of *muballighs* are almost insignificant if they are still occupied every day by how they meet their basic needs and those of their families. Therefore, the effort to improve the economic quality of *muballighs* cannot be separated from the effort to enhance the quality of their professional skills and the development of the management and content of their preaching activities. The economic quality of *muballighs* through various economic efforts must continue to receive attention so as to have social credibility. In addition, equally important is the provision of reading materials; newspapers, magazines, and relevant books are part of improving the quality of *muballighs*. In a more structured manner, improving the quality of knowledge and skills of the *muballigh* profession can be achieved, among other things, by: (1) involving *muballighs* in various formal educational activities; (2) increasing the frequency of *muballigh* professional training.

In this framework, da'wah activities constitute an effort to create strategies for community development that are aligned with the spirit and message of Islam, as well as in line with the humanitarian challenges within their society. Such da'wah is based on the fundamental belief that change and development are the primary characteristics of community life. The concept of da'wah revolves around the actions of members

of a congregation, whether it be in mosques, research groups, or religious gatherings. The implementation of this concept heavily relies on the abilities and willingness of each individual within the congregation. It is in this context that the da'i, as a da'wah practitioner, holds a strategic position. The da'i acts not only as a planner but also as an evaluator of da'wah activities.

Currently, whether realized or not, society is undergoing a transformation, moving from a plural society towards a multicultural society. All of the Indonesian people, categorized by anthropologists as *plural societies*, are part of this change. This term was initially introduced by Furnivall in the mid-19th century. According to his perspective, a plural society is one that consists of two or more elements living separately, without blending into each other within a political entity (Furnivall, 1967). A similar definition, as proposed by Geertz (1963), is a society divided into sub-subsystems that more or less stand on their own, where each subsystem is bound together by primordial bonds. In a more concise manner, Berghe (1969) outlines the characteristics of a pluralistic society as follows: (1) *the occurrence of segmentation into groups, often with differing subcultures*; (2) *the presence of a socially divided structure with non-complementary institutions*; (3) *a lack of consensus among its members regarding fundamental values*; (4) *relatively frequent conflicts between various groups*; (5) *social integration to a relative extent is built upon coercion and interdependence in the economic sphere*; and (6) *the existence of political domination by one group over other groups* (Berghe, 1969).

According to Suparlan (2001), a prominent characteristic of Indonesia's societal diversity is the emphasis on the significance of ethnicity, which manifests in the form of ethnic communities, and the use of this as the primary reference for one's identity. Based on the physical traits or characteristics possessed by an individual, bodily movements accompanied by the language spoken and the accent used, as well as various symbols employed, that person will be identified as belonging to a particular ethnic group from a specific region by someone else.

The model of a multicultural society, which has successfully mitigated the potential for racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts, appears to be an alternative for future societies. Shifting from the concept of a plural society to a multicultural society as a cultural-political policy at both the national and local levels would enable the application of democratic principles. The foundation of these democratic principles lies in the equality of individuals or citizens, as well as the emergence and strengthening of community cultural rights in balance with state or societal power. In such a multicultural society, democracy can thrive. Conversely, democracy can foster a multicultural society. This is due to the application of the principles of difference and mutual respect for differences, where conflicts or competition are based on fair and civilized laws or rules that cannot be compromised by individuals in positions of high authority or significant power. In this context of change, da'is are required to understand the inclinations of the community (*mad'u*) as an integral part of realizing *khairu ummah*.

Furthermore, da'is are also expected to play a role in disseminating these new concepts, enabling them to inform, motivate, and accompany the mad'u to minimize the negative consequences of any changes that occur.

The discourse on how to address the fact of diversity within the nation in terms of religion, ethnicity, race, and among various groups has garnered the attention of academics. In an article titled "Fostering Religious Harmony with the Pluralistic Values of Gus Dur," Fathur Rohman and Ahmad Ali Munir offer a solution by drawing upon the concepts of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur). To realize pluralism within a diverse society, it requires concerted efforts from all adherents of religions to acknowledge and manage their differences, transforming them into a strength for building a civilized society. Gus Dur, who never wavered in his defense of pluralism during his lifetime, taught us that tolerance, limited to mutual respect among religious communities, is not enough. If we want to build a diverse Indonesia, dialogue and cooperation among religious communities are non-negotiable (Rohman, 2023). In a different article authored by Rosidi, Gus Dur also offers the same substantive proposition: Islamic da'wah should emulate the example set by early Islamic missionaries in the Indonesian archipelago. The process of Islamization in the archipelago was carried out peacefully and persuasively by the early missionaries, without the use of violence. As a result, Islam gradually became the majority religion among the initially Hindu, Buddhist, and traditional belief-following populations of the archipelago. Recognition, the incorporation of art, customs, and local cultural traditions played a pivotal role in the success of da'wah efforts, rather than violence and military strength. Rosidi endeavors to unravel the approach, methods, thoughts, and multicultural da'wah movement of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur), who advocates for Islam in a friendly, peaceful manner that respects differences and advocates for the cultural rights of every citizen as an embodiment of *Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin* (Rosidi, 2023). Agusti Alfi Nurul Insani, based on her research outcomes, concludes that the multicultural da'wah of Nyai Ageng Maloka Lasem, Sunan Bonang Lasem, and Mbah Sambu Lasem all employ a combination of structural and cultural da'wah approaches (Insani, 2021).

All of these papers have not specifically addressed the appropriate da'wah strategy for multicultural communities with the aim of fostering harmonious coexistence through interfaith dialogue. This paper will delve deeper into this da'wah strategy, hoping that it can be applied to multicultural communities that share similarities in their social geographical aspects.

A. FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF DA'WAH STRATEGY

1. The Definition of Da'wah Strategy

The term "strategy" is often equated with "tactics, stratagems, or maneuvers" employed to achieve objectives. Linguistically, strategy can be defined as "*concerning the movement of organisms in response to external stimuli*" (Adams, 1965). Conceptually, strategy can be understood as a broad outline or direction in action to

achieve specified goals. Strategy can also be comprehended as a step to determine how to maneuver or approach specific situations and conditions in order to attain objectives. The concept of da'wah strategy according to Thomas W. Arnold, as cited by Samsul Munir (Amin, 2019), is the method, tactics, or maneuvers utilized in da'wah activities. According to Abu Zahra, as quoted by Acep Aripudin (2019), Islamic da'wah strategy involves rational planning and the execution of activities aimed at achieving Islamic goals that encompass all dimensions of humanity. Based on these two definitions, it can be concluded that the essence of da'wah strategy encompasses two crucial and interconnected elements: strategic planning and the desired objectives.

According to Wina Sanjaya, as cited by Ali Azis (2015), dawah strategy is a planning process that comprises a series of activities designed to achieve specific dawah objectives. There are two aspects that need to be considered in this regard, namely:

- a) A strategy is a plan of action (a series of propagation activities), including the utilization of methods and the harnessing of various resources or strengths. Therefore, a strategy is the process of developing a work plan before reaching the implementation phase.
- b) Strategies are formulated to achieve specific goals. This means that the direction of all strategic planning decisions is geared towards the attainment of these objectives. Therefore, before determining a strategy, it is necessary to formulate clear and measurable objectives.

This formulates the understanding that efforts in propagation activities must be carried out seriously, systematically, and academically. In other words, when viewed from the perspective of the doer or the preacher, they are a responsible individual who engages with a synergistic network of nerves, such that their every action is driven by a sense of consciousness. This consciousness is inspired by a certain understanding. Therefore, the activity of propagation involves several crucial elements: what, who, to whom, when, where, what tools are used, and how it is done. In this context, the process of propagation activities that are systematic, academic, professional, and proportional will involve elements of management functions, namely planning, handling or organization, implementation, and evaluation. This is directed towards achieving a quality of life and an ideal existence, namely the fulfillment of balanced basic human needs, both mental and spiritual, as well as social needs.

Before embarking on their mission of propagation, every preacher creates a well-structured plan that encompasses everything necessary for the success of their dawah efforts. This includes the methods to be employed, selecting the appropriate propagation media, assessing the social conditions of the target audience, as well as identifying the facilities and resources that can support the propagation activities. Preachers also set specific objectives for their dawah missions. These objectives can be outlined over various timeframes, including short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals. Dawah objectives can also be organized based on priority considerations, such as

the primary goal of propagation and departmental dawah objectives.

To support the achievement of the chosen propagation strategy, according to Asmuni Syukir, there are several principles that should be considered, including (Syukir, 1983):

a) The philosophical principle.

This principle examines various issues closely related to the goals intended to be achieved in the process or activities of propagation.

b) The principle of the capabilities and expertise of the preacher (*achievement* and professionalism).

This principle is related to the capabilities of the preacher who will engage with the community. It means that the preacher who will interact with the community should possess the necessary skills corresponding to the required values. The preacher should not force themselves to choose a particular propagation strategy if they do not have the sufficient capability for it. This condition will affect the success of the chosen propagation strategy, ensuring that they do not miss the mark in fulfilling their noble duties.

c) The sociological principle.

This principle addresses issues related to the condition and social aspects of the target audience of propagation. For example, it considers the political situation in the region where the propagation is taking place, the majority religion of the area, the socio-cultural characteristics of the community, and so on. The sociological principle is related to the social condition of the audience and the challenges they face. Each type of community has different characteristics, varying from one community to another. For instance, rural communities share certain similarities with urban communities in some aspects, but in other fundamental aspects, they exhibit significant differences. Rural communities tend to have static lives, while urban communities lead dynamic lives.

d) The psychological principle

This principle addresses issues closely related to the human psyche. A preacher is a human being, and likewise, the recipients of the propagation have unique characters (psychological aspects) that differ from one another. Similarly, religious beliefs are an integral part of human ideology and faith, which are not exempt from psychological issues, serving as a fundamental principle in propagation. The psychological principle pertains to the psychological condition of the audience. *Mad'u*, both as an individual and as a part of social life (a social being), exhibits a set of behaviors that are continuously performed and upheld. These behaviors are influenced by specific and unique considerations. In this context, *mad'u* may be hesitant to abandon certain actions and may also refrain from engaging in behaviors that are not deemed acceptable by their social environment. For example, the

"mitoni" tradition is a ritual that must be performed by every member of a Javanese ethnic family who is seven months pregnant. If this tradition is not carried out, the individual may experience guilt feelings, possibly bearing a heavy psychological burden related to the fate of the fetus they are carrying. Socially, the family may receive negative judgment or social stigma that is not easily eradicated by the perception of the surrounding community.

e) The principles of effectiveness and efficiency

These principles emphasize the balance in the propagation process. In the activities of propagation, one must strive to strike a balance between the costs, time, and effort expended with the achievement of maximum results. In other words, the equilibrium between costs, time, and effort can be exchanged in proportion to the expected results or, at the very least, be balanced between the two. The principles of effectiveness and efficiency are related to the strategic calculation of a propagation activity with the precise utilization of all social resources that a preacher will use and the allocation of the required time to execute a "dawah program."

Reflecting on the principles of propagation strategies mentioned above, it can be concluded that a preacher (whether individually or collectively) must possess or be equipped with knowledge and information closely related to these principles. This is crucial because in order to achieve success, preachers must continually adapt to the changing times. Dawah is no longer limited to conventional locations such as mosques, Islamic schools, and research gatherings. Dawah today has even extended its reach to hotels, radio, hospitals, television, and even through online media (social media). Globalization challenges dawah practitioners to provide pathways and alternative solutions to the increasingly complex issues faced by the community. This phenomenon represents both development and a challenge for dawah practitioners to remain dynamic by continually enhancing the clarity of their vision, understanding, and adopting more professional approaches. Hedonism, which perpetually tempts the community, and the rapidly evolving array of issues cannot be effectively addressed with conservative dawah methods that progress slowly. This is where adjustments are made to ensure that the messages conveyed are well-received by diverse groups with varying social, religious, educational, and cultural backgrounds.

2. The Foundation of Implementing Propagation Strategies

The basis for determining the propagation strategy can be grounded in Surah al-Baqarah verses 129 and 151, Ali Imran verse 164, and al-Jumu'ah verse 2. These three messages share a common theme, which is the mission of the messengers and can also be understood as propagation strategies. From these verses, according to Moh. Ali Azis (2015), three propagation strategies are implied: recitation strategy, purification strategy, and teaching strategy.

a) The Recitation Strategy (reciting the verses of Allah).

The recitation strategy places greater emphasis on the cognitive domain (thinking) of humans, wherein its transformation occurs through the faculties of hearing (*al-sam'*) and sight (*al-abshar*), complemented by sound reasoning (*al-af'idah*). With this strategy, humans (the audience) are given guidance to listen to the explanations of the propagator or read the messages written by the propagator themselves. This means there is a process of transferring the message of propagation through both oral and written means. We can also gain an understanding of the Quran, hadiths, and the jurisprudence of the school of thought imams from writings that have been published. Several factors influence the effectiveness of writings, including language, font type, format, media, and, of course, the writer and the content. Published writings take various forms, including scholarly articles, short pieces, stickers, banners, literary works, translations, stories, and news articles. Each of these forms has its own strengths and weaknesses associated with its use. In academic journals, the articles that are suitable for publication are scholarly articles. For teenagers who are up-to-date with current trends, we can present shorter articles using the messages that are currently trending or updated. We may need to adapt to their style, for example, using a humorous tone, non-formal fonts, addressing lighter topics while not compromising the message of propagation. Meanwhile, the unspoken verses refer to the universe with all its contents and events within it. We can introduce and acquaint people with Allah SWT through the wonders of His creation. Demonstrating these marvels is not limited to oral and written communication but also through visual representations such as images and paintings.

b) The Tazkiyah strategy (purifying the soul)

If the recitation strategy operates through the senses of hearing and sight, then the *purification* strategy operates through the spiritual aspect. One of the missions of propagation is to purify the human soul. Impurities in the soul can lead to various individual or social problems and even give rise to various physical or spiritual ailments. The target of this strategy is not a pure soul but a tainted one. Signs of a tainted soul can be observed through symptoms such as emotional instability, wavering faith, and other reprehensible character traits like greed, pride, miserliness, and so forth.

c) The Ta'lim strategy (teaching the Quran)

This strategy is almost similar to the recitation strategy, as both involve the transformation of the message of propagation. However, the teaching strategy is more profound, conducted formally and systematically. This means that this strategy can be applied to a consistent audience, with a pre-designed curriculum, implemented gradually, and with predefined targets. Prophet Muhammad SAW taught the Quran

using this strategy, resulting in many companions memorizing the Quran and understanding its content. To enable the audience to master knowledge in jurisprudence, exegesis, hadith, and so on, propagators need to create stages of learning, reference sources, targets and objectives to be achieved, and so forth.

Every strategy requires careful planning. In institutionalized propagation, strategic planning should include at least a SWOT analysis, which comprises *strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats* that the propagation organization possesses or faces. Strengths and weaknesses are more internal in nature and are related to the chosen strategy's existence. When this strategy is connected to both propagators and recipients (external factors), it will reveal threats or opportunities. The rational strategy proposed by al-Bayanuni is not exempt from its strengths and weaknesses. What is relevant to rational Islamic teachings is among its advantages, while its drawback is that it does not encompass matters beyond reason. This is because there are Islamic teachings that cannot be rationally explained. Such teachings must be accepted dogmatically based solely on faith. The threat may lie in propagators who do not believe in rational thought or cannot think philosophically. However, the presence of educated recipients can be categorized as an opportunity.

Dawah strategies require appropriate adjustments, specifically by minimizing weaknesses and threats while maximizing strengths and opportunities. This pattern of adaptation is referred to by M. Natsir as "*dakwah bi al-hikmah*" (wise or prudent propagation), including:

- Wisely discerning different groups.
- Wisely choosing the right time to speak and when to remain silent.
- Wisely initiating intellectual exchanges and seeking common ground as a starting point for systematic progress.
- Wisely avoiding ambiguities.
- Wisely selecting and arranging appropriate words.
- Wisely handling partings.
- Being wise in the sense of setting a good example (*uswah hasanah* and *lisan al-hal*).

B. ALTERNATIVE PROPAGATION STRATEGIES IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES

The urgency of Islamic propagation strategies essentially lies in providing an understanding to the propagators so that they can grasp the actual and realistic realities of human life, especially in the context of diverse communities. It is in this context that propagators are required to comprehend the constantly evolving situations and conditions of society, both culturally and socio-religiously. Such propagation strategies were introduced by Prophet Muhammad SAW in response to the circumstances and conditions of the Arab society of his time. The strategy of Prophet Muhammad's

propagation referred to includes, among other things, the consolidation of support within close-knit families and influential key figures in society with a broad scope of thought. He migrated to Medina peacefully without resorting to violence to achieve the conquest of Mecca (Rafi'udin, 1985). In a comprehensive understanding, the success of Prophet Muhammad's strategy was manifested in the form of a Medinan society. The Medinan society served as a correction to the ignorant society of Yathrib. This success did not happen overnight but required a series of long struggles, closely linked to efforts to achieve the objectives of propagation by utilizing available resources and manpower.

From the above discussion, we can identify a common thread in the current era of multiculturalism. Therefore, da'wah practitioners must be able to understand the transitional changes from a single cultural pattern of life towards a society that is open, pluralistic, and secular. Consequently, a strategy is not universal but heavily influenced by and dependent on the prevailing liferealities. Therefore, strategies should remain open to all possibilities of societal change that are the focus of da'wah efforts. In relation to the changes in society in the present era, the development of Islamic da'wah strategies is necessary, with the following directions: first, establishing the paradigm of monotheism (tauhid) in da'wah. Fundamentally, da'wah is an effort to convey the message of monotheism, advocating universal human values such as equality, justice, and freedom. According to al-Maraghi, humans were initially created with a commitment to the worship of God. However, over the course of their lives, this commitment undergoes a reduction due to both their lack of devotion and the influence of their social and environmental factors. In this context, religion is presented to reaffirm the commitment to monotheism (tauhid), enabling humans to live their lives in the correct manner, which is through complete submission to God, the Creator. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as an agent for delivering the message of religion, emphasized in his Hadith that his primary mission was none other than to perfect the character of humanity. In the lexical sense, the word "*khulq-akhlaq*" is synonymous with "*al-fitrah*." Islamic da'wah strives to cultivate the inherent nature (*fitrah*) and the innate monotheism (*hanif*) of human beings so that they can comprehend the essence of life originating from Allah and returning to Him. By developing human potential or fitrah and innate qualities, da'wah essentially becomes a socio-cultural transformation process that shapes the ecosystem of life. Therefore, monotheism (*tauhid*) is a paradigmatic strength in the theology of da'wah that enhances da'wah strategies (Puteh, 2000).

Secondly, societal change implies a paradigmatic shift in religious understanding. Da'wah as a social transformation movement often faces challenges related to the entrenched religious orthodoxy, as if it were already the definitive religious standard as ordained by Allah. An overly exoteric understanding of religion in interpreting life's phenomena can impede the resolution of the social issues confronted by the da'wah agents themselves. Therefore, innovative thinking is required to transform the rigidity of religious understanding from a closed interpretation to an open religious comprehension.

Thirdly, an imperative strategy in da'wah is essential. Islamic da'wah is oriented towards the effort of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (enjoining good and forbidding evil). This effort includes making fundamental changes in the thought patterns, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals, transforming them from un-Islamic to more Islamic. This means that da'wah is not narrowly understood as activities synonymous with tabligh or general preaching, giving lectures on a podium. Instead, the essence of da'wah is actually any form of activity that involves the elements of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*.

From a historical perspective, da'wah represents a prophetic duty that has endured for a very long time, passed down through an uninterrupted lineage from one generation to the next. This prophetic duty, in each stage of its history, inevitably faces its own challenges and obstacles. For instance, when Islam arrived in the archipelago as a new religion, it had to confront various communities with differences in religion, culture, ethnicity, and more. Sunan Kalijogo, as a da'i (Islamic preacher) at that time, creatively employed various da'wah methods by incorporating elements of local culture. Sunan Kudus, for example, prohibited his followers from slaughtering cows out of respect for the Hindu community, which venerates this animal, and this tradition persists to this day.

There is a difference in the historical context of the spread of Islam (da'wah) in the Middle East compared to Islam in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia. Since the time when the Prophet declared war against Mecca until the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Islam has never been devoid of warfare. Consequently, the perspective has been that this world is a battleground where Muslims strive to conquer non-believers. However, in Southeast Asia, *Islamization (da'wah) is not achieved through military conquest but rather through cultural exchange, which is assimilative in nature*. Hence, the challenge of diversity and multiculturalism in Indonesia has existed for a long time. However, the moment of the downfall of the New Order regime, followed by the spread of conflicts based on ethnicity, religion, race, and inter-group (SARA), seemed to make the Indonesian nation (including the Muslim community) more cautious in managing diversity and multiculturalism. The da'wah strategy in the effort to nurture and develop multiculturalism, which is similar to the pluralism advocated by Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur), is not sufficient merely for peaceful coexistence among religious communities. Beyond that, there must be efforts towards dialogue and cooperation. This will foster mutual understanding and comprehension among followers or religious communities, leading to behaviors of mutual giving and receiving, as well as collaboration in their social lives (Asmara, 2017). According to Nurcholis Madjid (Cak Nur), as quoted by Kunawi Basyir, multiculturalism should be understood as a genuine connection of diversity within the bonds of civilization and the principles of human well-being. The bonds of civilization referred to are the universal values that every religious community should strive for in order to find common ground to form a cultured society. A cultured society is built upon the principles of openness, mutual assistance, tolerance,

and cooperation in the pursuit of justice together (Basyir, 2017).

The fundamental principles formulated by Gus Dur and Cak Nur serve as the sociological foundation for the dai in applying da'wah strategies to address the challenges of multicultural societies in the present day. The strategies that remain relevant include the tilawah strategy, the tazkiyah strategy, and the ta'lim strategy. The implementation of these three strategies should be directed towards the effort to build a harmonious religious community life. Dai must recognize that their da'wah partners are not only Muslims but also members of other religious communities. According to Muhammad Sulthon, the tilawah strategy is not executed by reciting Quranic verses verbally. However, the dai conveys Islamic messages (*tabligh*) in the form of universal truths of Islamic teachings, which can also be regarded as truths shared by all religions. The strategy of *tazkiyah* is applied in the sense of *takwin*, which is the process of understanding and interpreting Islamic knowledge and practice directly, holding subjective significance for the individual concerned. If the da'wah partner accepts it as part of their knowledge, appreciation, and belief, it is referred to as positive *takwin*. However, if the da'wah partner rejects it, then the *takwin* moment becomes negative. Meanwhile, the strategy of *ta'lim* is applied in the sense of *tanfiz*, which is the process of educating, teaching, and guiding individuals with Islamic teachings to attain obedience to Islamic doctrines (Sulthon, 2015).

CONCLUSION

In the endeavor to nurture and develop a harmonious way of life in a multicultural society, da'wah strategies should not be limited to peaceful coexistence among religious communities alone. Beyond that, there must be efforts to engage in interfaith dialogue and cooperation. This will foster mutual understanding and comprehension among followers or religious communities, leading to behaviors of mutual giving and receiving, as well as collaboration in social affairs.

In the effort to build a harmonious life, the dai ideally continually enhances their abilities, such as intellectual capacity, moral capacity, skillset, and spiritual capacity. The dai also broadens their understanding related to the socio-cultural conditions of the audience as a database to determine the appropriate da'wah (Islamic propagation) strategies in guiding every social change occurring within the community.

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