ENHANCING COMMUNITY RELIGIOSITY THROUGH EFFECTIVE RELIGIOUS OUTREACH

Optimizing Da'wah Strategies of Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) in Sintang

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the collaboration between the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) of Sintang Regency and Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) of Sintang in maintaining da'wah activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The scope of the investigation includes understanding the strategies employed by MUI to adapt da'wah practices in response to pandemic restrictions, particularly in remote areas with limited internet access. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method, utilizing literature review, in-depth interviews with key figures from MUI and RRI, and participatory observation of da'wah programs broadcasted by RRI. The results indicate that the collaboration was effective in ensuring that religious messages continued to reach the broader community, including those in remote areas. The use of radio as a medium was particularly impactful in overcoming the challenges posed by limited internet access. The study concludes that this collaboration can serve as a model for future da'wah strategies, especially in crisis situations, highlighting the importance of adaptive and innovative approaches in religious outreach.

Keywords: Da'wah Collaboration, Da'wah Strategy, Da'wah in Remote Areas, MUI, RRI.



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A. Introduction

Sintang Regency, located in West Kalimantan Province, is known as an area with religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Although the majority of the population is Muslim, the people of Sintang Regency uphold the value of tolerance in religious life.¹ This tolerance is reflected in daily practice, where Muslims implement the principle of amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar, which means inviting goodness and preventing evil. The people of Sintang Regency show that diversity is not an obstacle to living in harmony. Research shows that positive social interactions between different religious groups can create an atmosphere of strong tolerance. For example, in the context of a multicultural society, good social interaction contributes to harmony and mutual respect between religious communities.² In addition, education and socialization of religious tolerance values among the younger generation are also the key to maintaining harmony in the future.³

Based on research conducted in various regions, including Sintang Regency, it was found that diverse communities can live in harmony through interfaith dialogue and tolerance education. For example, in Tanah Bumbu Regency, religious moderation among youth is important to build harmony.⁴ In addition, research in Cianjur shows that Muslim and Christian communities can coexist with mutual respect, which is also true in Sintang.⁵ Other research shows that the values of

¹ Dian Dian, 'Transformasi Penanaman Nilai Toleransi Pada Anak Usia Dini', *Jurnal Obsesi Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* 7, no. 6 (2023): 7484–92, https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v7i6.5781.

² Alif A. Syahrin, 'Kerukunan Masyarakat Multikultural Pasca Kontestasi Politik Identitas Saat Pilkada Gubernur Kalimantan Barat Tahun 2018', *Harmoni* 22, no. 1 (2023): 117–42, https://doi.org/10.32488/harmoni.v1i22.676.

³ Indah P. Sari and M.Si D. Y. Tanjung, 'Metode Penyuluh Agama Islam Dalam Menanamkan Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama Di Kelurahan Tanjung Langkat Kecamatan Salapian', *Reslaj Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal* 5, no. 6 (2023): 3582–99, https://doi.org/10.47467/reslaj.v5i6.2910.

⁴ Azmi Irfala, 'Peran Pemuda Sebagai Pelopor Moderasi Beragama Mewujudkan Kabupaten Tanah Bumbu Menuju Serambi Madinah Dalam Perspektif Islam', *Comserva Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengabdian Masyarakat* 2, no. 09 (2023): 1685–93, https://doi.org/10.59141/comserva.v2i09.570.

⁵ Paelani Setia, 'Membangun Masyarakat Toleran Di Daerah Plural: Pengalaman Masyarakat Muslim Dan Kristen Di Cianjur, Jawa Barat', *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualitas* 3, no. 3 (2023): 465–74, https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v3i3.30390.

religious tolerance can be instilled through education in schools, which teaches the importance of respecting differences.⁶ Religious tolerance that is upheld by the community, especially by Muslims, shows that the principle of amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar can be implemented in daily life.⁷ Therefore, it is important to continue to support education and socialization of the values of tolerance among the younger generation to ensure the sustainability of inter-religious harmony in the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on various activities, including religious activities. The physical and social restrictions imposed during the pandemic have affected the way religious people carry out their worship. In this context, the Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI) of Sintang Regency plays an important role in fostering and guiding Muslims, and must adjust its approach in da'wah to remain relevant and effective. One of the solutions taken is the collaboration between the MUI of Sintang Regency and Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) Sintang Regency to keep da'wah running, especially in areas that are difficult to reach by internet technology.⁸ Respon masyarakat terhadap pembatasan aktivitas keagamaan selama pandemi menunjukkan bahwa banyak umat beragama yang merasa kehilangan akses terhadap ibadah secara langsung. Penelitian menunjukkan bahwa adaptasi dalam praktik keagamaan, seperti penggunaan media digital untuk dakwah, menjadi penting untuk menjaga keberlangsungan ibadah.⁹ The collaboration between MUI and RRI also reflects efforts to reach people who do not have internet access, so that they can still receive religious information and guidance.¹⁰ This shows that religious institutions need to innovate in conveying da'wah messages in the midst of existing limitations. Based on a study conducted

⁶ Sari and Tanjung, 'Metode Penyuluh Agama Islam Dalam Menanamkan Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama Di Kelurahan Tanjung Langkat Kecamatan Salapian'.

⁷ Anis K. Nafilah, 'Implementation of Religious Moderation-Based Education in Increasing Religious Awareness in MAN 1 Pamekasan', *Journal of Education and Learning* Dimensions 11, no. 1 (2023): 31–43, https://doi.org/10.24269/dpp.v11i1.8005.

⁸ Luqman Hakim, 'Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Pendidikan Islam Perspektif M. Quraish Shihab', *Pjier* 1, no. 1 (2023): 1–20, https://doi.org/10.59001/pjier.v1i1.101.

⁹ Emma Rachmawati et al., 'The Roles of Islamic Faith-Based Organizations on Countermeasures Against the COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia', *Heliyon* 8, no. 2 (2022): e08928, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e08928.

¹⁰ Mohammad Sholeh, 'Towards a Progressive Fatwa: MUI's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic', *Ahkam Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 20, no. 2 (2020), https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v20i2.17391.

by MUI, fatwas issued during the pandemic serve as a guide for Muslims in carrying out worship in the midst of an unusual situation.¹¹

Other research shows that MUI also plays a role in providing education about health protocols that must be followed during the implementation of worship. In addition, collaboration with media such as RRI allows for a wider and more effective dissemination of information, especially in remote areas that are not reached by the internet.¹² This is in line with research showing that religious institutions can adapt to emergency situations to continue serving their communities.¹³

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the Sintang Regency MUI to adapt and innovate in its da'wah approach. Collaboration with RRI is one of the effective solutions to maintain the sustainability of da'wah in the midst of social restrictions. As such, it is important for religious institutions to continue to innovate and adjust their strategies to remain relevant and able to reach all levels of society, especially in challenging situations such as the pandemic.

Religious tolerance is an important theme in Islamic and social studies. Religious tolerance includes matters of belief related to faith or divinity. emphasizing the importance of the role of da'wah in maintaining diversity and social harmony in a multicultural society. During the COVID-19 pandemic, restrictions on worship activities forced religious institutions to look for alternatives in delivering da'wah, including through electronic media such as radio. In addition, it highlighted the role of the Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI) as the pioneer of the reform movement and the enforcer of amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar, which is important in maintaining the benefit of the people in the midst of a pandemic. The

¹¹ Bangun I. Harsritanto, Satrio Nugroho, and Favian Dewanta, 'Spatial Analysis of Distribution Pattern of Covid-19 Cases in Batang Regency', *E3s Web of Conferences* 317 (2021): 05001, https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202131705001.

¹² Rachmawati et al., 'The Roles of Islamic Faith-Based Organizations on Countermeasures Against the COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia'.

¹³ Aisyah P. Rahvy, 'How Does Islamic Organizations Respond to COVID-19 in Indonesia? A Case Study', *Public Health and Preventive Medicine Archive* 9, no. 1 (2022), https://doi.org/10.53638/phpma.2021.v9.i1.p02.

COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way religious people carry out worship and interact with each other.

The restrictions implemented have made many religious institutions, including the MUI, have to adapt to the new situation. Research shows that da'wah through electronic media can be an effective solution to reach people who cannot be physically present in worship activities.¹⁴ Selain itu, adaptasi ini menunjukkan bahwa lembaga keagamaan dapat berperan aktif dalam menjaga toleransi dan harmoni sosial di tengah tantangan yang dihadapi.¹⁵ Toleransi beragama tidak hanya penting untuk menjaga kerukunan antarumat beragama, tetapi juga untuk memperkuat ikatan sosial di masyarakat yang beragam.¹⁶

Toleransi beragama dan peran dakwah sangat penting dalam menjaga harmoni sosial, terutama dalam konteks masyarakat multikultural. Pandemi COVID-19 telah memaksa lembaga keagamaan untuk beradaptasi dan mencari cara baru dalam menyampaikan dakwah. Kolaborasi antara MUI dan penggunaan media elektronik menjadi solusi yang efektif untuk menjaga keberlangsungan dakwah dan memperkuat toleransi beragama di masyarakat. Oleh karena itu, penting bagi lembaga keagamaan untuk terus berinovasi dalam pendekatan dakwah mereka agar tetap relevan dan mampu menjangkau seluruh lapisan masyarakat.

This research uses a theoretical framework that focuses on the concept of da'wah in Islam and the role of the media in spreading religious messages. Da'wah, in the Islamic view, is an invitation to goodness and prevention from evil, which includes human relations with God (Hablum Mina Allah), social relations (Hablum Minnaas), and relations with the environment (Hablum Minal Alam). This concept is very relevant in understanding how the Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI) of Sintang Regency adapts to the challenges of the pandemic through collaboration with the media. In addition, the theory of mass communication is also an important

¹⁴ Umi Chotimah et al., 'Pengintegrasian Nilai-Nilai Kearifan Lokal Dalam Pendidikan Multikultural', *Jurnal Civics Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan* 15, no. 1 (2018): 19–25, https://doi.org/10.21831/jc.v15i1.17288.

¹⁵ Muhammad Syarif, 'Dakwah Rasulullah Di Madinah : Piagam Madinah Dan Perubahan Sosial', *Al-Jamahiria* 1, no. 2 (2023): 156, https://doi.org/10.30983/al-jamahiria.v1i2.7585.

¹⁶ Rahvy, 'How Does Islamic Organizations Respond to COVID-19 in Indonesia? A Case Study'.

part of this research, considering the role of Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) as a medium used to deliver da'wah, which allows religious messages to reach a wider audience, including those in remote areas without internet access.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced religious institutions to adapt to new ways of conveying da'wah messages. Research shows that the use of media, especially mass media such as radio, is very important in spreading da'wah in the midst of imposed physical restrictions (Sainuddin 2020). This shows that religious institutions must innovate and utilize technology to remain relevant and effective in conveying religious messages. In addition, the collaboration between MUI and RRI reflects efforts to reach people who do not have internet access, so that da'wah can still be carried out effectively.¹⁷

The transformation of da'wah during the pandemic shows that religious institutions must utilize digital media and mass communication to reach the people. In addition, Budiman emphasized the importance of inclusive da'wah, which can reach isolated and remote communities. The concept of da'wah in Islam and the role of the media are very important in spreading religious messages, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The adaptation carried out by the Sintang Regency MUI through collaboration with RRI shows that religious institutions can innovate and utilize the media to reach a wider audience. Therefore, it is important for religious institutions to continue to develop effective da'wah communication strategies so that religious messages can be conveyed properly, especially in hard-to-reach areas.

This research highlights the uniqueness of the collaboration between the Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI) and Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) in Sintang Regency in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although many studies have discussed the role of the MUI and the importance of da'wah in Islam, few have explored how da'wah is adapted through traditional media such as radio, especially in areas that are difficult to reach by modern technology. This study aims to analyze the role of MUI in maintaining da'wah, examine the effectiveness of cooperation

¹⁷ Dadang Budiman, 'Dakwah Pada Masyarakat Terasing Upaya Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia (DDII) Terhadap Suku Akit SondeRiau', *Anida (Aktualisasi Nuansa Ilmu Dakwah)* 18, no. 2 (2019): 181–94, https://doi.org/10.15575/anida.v18i2.5075.

with RRI, identify challenges and opportunities in the use of radio media, and develop recommendations for da'wah strategies for the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced religious institutions to adapt to new ways of conveying da'wah messages. The collaboration between MUI and RRI shows that traditional media such as radio remain relevant in spreading religious messages, especially in remote areas that do not have internet access.¹⁸ Research shows that the use of mass media can expand the reach of da'wah and ensure that religious messages remain accessible to people in need. This reflects the importance of innovation in da'wah to maintain social harmony in the midst of the challenges faced

MUI plays an important role in providing guidance for Muslims during the pandemic, including in terms of the implementation of worship and the implementation of health protocols. In addition, research by Fauzi, Anas, Baharom, and Yaacob shows that infographics and other alternative media can be used as an effective means of da'wah during a crisis. The collaboration between MUI and RRI in Sintang Regency is a concrete example of how religious institutions can utilize traditional media to convey the message of da'wah in an innovative and inclusive way.¹⁹

The collaboration between MUI and RRI in Sintang Regency is an effective model for da'wah adaptation in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. This research makes a new contribution by showing how da'wah can be adapted through traditional media, as well as the challenges and opportunities that exist in this context. Therefore, it is important for religious institutions to continue to innovate and utilize various media to spread religious messages, both in normal and emergency situations.

¹⁸ Yusuf Hanafi et al., 'Indonesian Ulema Council Fatwa on Religious Activities During the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Investigation of Muslim Attitudes and Practices', *Journal of Religion and Health* 62, no. 1 (2022): 627–49, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-022-01639-w.

¹⁹ Anwar A. Fauzi et al., 'Infographics as an Alternative Da'wah Medium During Covid-19 Crisis', *Islamiyyat* 44, no. 1 (2022): 101–13, https://doi.org/10.17576/islamiyyat-2022-4401-9.

B. Method

The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative method, which aims to describe and analyze the collaboration between the Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI) of Sintang Regency and Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) Sintang Regency in carrying out da'wah during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data collection was carried out through several techniques, including literature studies, in-depth interviews with MUI and RRI figures, as well as participatory observation of the implementation of da'wah programs broadcast through RRI. Literature studies include various references related to religious tolerance, the role of MUI in society, and the use of mass media in da'wah. This research shows the importance of collaboration between religious institutions and the media in conveying da'wah messages, especially in challenging situations such as the pandemic. The structured interviews provide a deeper understanding of the motivations, strategies, and challenges faced by MUI and RRI in this collaboration. Participatory observation allows researchers to collect empirical data on how da'wah programs are implemented and accepted by the community, especially in areas with minimal internet access.

C. Results and Discussion

Da'wah philosophy is a study that delves into the concept of da'wah in Islam, which comes from the Greece word "philosophia," which means love of wisdom. This philosophy includes systematic thinking about the invitation to goodness and the prevention of evil. In the history of thought, several philosophers such as Thales, Anaximenes, and Democritus put forward their views on the basis of everything in the universe. Thales, for example, argued that water is a fundamental element that supports life, while Anaximenes focuses on air as the main element. The importance of the philosophy of da'wah lies in its ability to provide a clear framework for da'is in carrying out their duties. By understanding the philosophy of da'wah, da'is can be more effective in conveying religious messages and interacting with the community. This is in line with the view that da'wah is not just about conveying information, but also involves a deep understanding of the social and cultural context in which da'wah is conducted.²⁰

In this context, an effective da'wah strategy must consider various elements, including da'i, mad'u (da'wah targets), materials, methods, and da'wah media. Research shows that successful da'wah communication involves a good understanding of the audience and the use of appropriate methods. In addition, a systematic approach to da'wah can help overcome the challenges faced in conveying religious messages, especially in diverse societies.²¹ From the above analysis, it can be concluded that the philosophy of da'wah provides a strong foundation for da'is in carrying out their duties. By understanding the principles of da'wah philosophy, da'is can develop more effective and relevant strategies in conveying religious messages. Therefore, it is important for da'wah institutions to continue to develop an understanding of the philosophy of da'wah and apply it in daily practice.

The da'wah method is listed in the Qur'an Surah An-Nahl:125

It means: "Call (people) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good lessons and refute them in a good way..." (Q.S An-Nahl:125)

Bi Al-Hikmah Method

Wisdom means Wise. Hikmah can also be interpreted as "Adlu", which is putting something in its place. What is meant by da'wah with the da'wah method is with the Qur'an, preaching in accordance with what Allah has revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. So that the message preached by a da'i is directly based on the Qur'an and As-Sunnah. Because the Qur'an is qath'i

²⁰ Wawaysadhya Agastya, 'Death According to Louis Leahy', *Kenosis Journal of Theological Studies* 5, no. 2 (2020): 128–43, https://doi.org/10.37196/kenosis.v5i2.78.

²¹ Budiman, 'Dakwah Pada Masyarakat Terasing Upaya Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia (DDII) Terhadap Suku Akit SondeRiau'.

(fixed) which can convince mad'u. Unless the mad'u is not sincere and his heart is not at peace in responding to the da'i's message, then the mad'u cannot understand what is explained by a da'i.

Al-Mujlà Bi Al-lati Hiya Ahsan

Mujlà means lesson. A da'i certainly gives a lesson to mad'u about the goodness of the hereafter. It is impossible for a da'i to invite mad'u to commit immoral acts.

Mauizhoh Al-Hasanah

Mauizhoh Al-Hasanah means refute or give advice with good words. Which with good words can touch the heart and intellect that is given advice can change his mind, heart and behavior to stay away from Allah's prohibitions and carry out Allah's commands.

The message conveyed by the da'i must adjust to the circumstances of the mad'u, in accordance with the environment, the social environment of the mad'u. The message certainly contains elements of inviting goodness, and da'i is committed to keeping the word so that what is conveyed does not offend mad'u from any side, and any party, most importantly, does not degrade the religion of the cultural tribe. There is a lot of history of the history of da'wah of the prophets listed in the Qur'an that can be used as a role model for Muslims.

The development of information technology in Indonesia which has created various sophisticated electronics and even has an internet network that can connect people around the world. However, it depends on the use of the electronics. If used properly, such as studying, looking for the latest information, the latest news, reciting and so on, it will be very beneficial for yourself. If used for bad things, it will result in internet users falling into the era of globalization, being carried away by western cultures, losing a sense of sympathy, empathy, tolerance and so on.

The sophistication of electronics can be used to preach. Making it easier for da'i to preach, mad'u also only searches for themes that they want to hear or read. Starting from electronic radio, television, mobile phones, and internet access. Many applications are equipped with elements of da'wah. This increasingly millennial era makes almost all elements of society focus on mobile phones because they consider mobile phones to be practical objects to carry anywhere. However, not all choose mobile phones to listen to the lectures of the da'is, because of gaptek (technological stuttering) and constrained by signals.

According to Ridla, in the book entitled "Introduction to Da'wah Science", there are characteristics of da'wah, including:

Da'wah is carried out by believers;

The da'wah delivered is theoretically insightful, because it is realized in an orderly system, meaning that there are micro theories and macro theories;

The goal of da'wah activities is not only about individuals, but also must be sociocultural or cultural;

Da'wah activities or da'wah processes must be in a certain methodology or way.

The Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI) strongly considers the elements of da'wah in preaching through radio media, namely Radio Pebuplik Indonesia (RRI). Chairman of the Sintang Ulema Council, Drs. H. Ulwan said "The cooperation through RRI is expected to be heard by all elements of the people of Sintang Regency, Province and Indonesia" (interview).

Before the coronavirus case, MUI broadcast its da'wah on RRI 3 times a week. Due to this pandemic that cannot preach from mosque to mosque, from village to village, it is optimized to be every day at dawn at 5.00-5.30 WIB, the activity at this time is called "Morning Religion". On the 2nd and 4th week of Thursday at after dawn at 5.00-6.00 WIB, and this was broadcast live where there was a question and answer session. In the month of Ramadan, it is carried out for 30 days at dawn and before breaking the fast.

The speaker or da'i is determined entirely by the MUI secretariat. The selected speakers were religious leaders in Sintang Regency, scholars, umara, and Muslim scholars of Sintang Regency. The selected da'i certainly have expertise in the field of da'wah which means having enough knowledge, knowledge, which of course is applied in the daily life of the da'i. Presenters are selected alternately within a period of 2-3 months. The presenter broadcasts according to a predetermined schedule and can be done live every day or recorded every Monday

Friday. If the presenter is unable to attend, he or she can confirm it no later than
 D-1 to the Sintang Regency MUI secretariat.

The theme that was broadcast was not determined by the Sintang Regency MUI secretariat, but returned to what kind of theme the da'i wanted to convey. Generally, the theme is conveyed based on the social conditions of the community, the commemoration of major days in the Hijri and Christian calendars, or outside the scope of the theme but still delivered based on the Qur'an and Hadith. For example, in Sintang Regency, there are natural disasters such as floods, fires, forest fires and so on, so da'i conveys the causes, wisdom, and interpretations of Q.S Ar-Ruum:41. In the month of Ramadan'i, it is possible to convey about fasting based on surah Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 183. And things mentioned in the Qur'an such as "Types of Children in the Qur'an", "Women's Practice in Mentruation" or telling the life stories of the prophets explained in the Qur'an which can be taken as wisdom and *ibroh* (examples) as learning in today's life. The theme of the theme conveyed is expected to be accepted, understood by mad'u, so that it can be practiced in daily life.

Atsar in da'wah is interpreted as an effect or called *feedback* (reciprocity) by mad'u related to what has been conveyed by da'I when da'wah takes place. To measure the level of atsar in the da'wah of the Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI) of Sintang Regency through Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) Sintang Regency, it can be measured during a question and answer session, although not every da'wah delivered is not broadcast live. However, the MUI of Sintang Regency continues to carry out evaluations on the success of da'wah through the MUI. It can also be done by distributing questionnaires to the local community regarding the level of satisfaction of mad'u with what is conveyed by pa da'i. Although it cannot be ascertained individually from the mad'u, it is hoped that with a clear delivery by the da'i can understand the message of da'wah, be practiced in daily life and can change the person for the better.

D. CONCLUSION

In this study, it can be concluded that the da'wah practice carried out by the Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI) of Sintang Regency through the media of Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) shows significant effectiveness in conveying moral messages and Islamic teachings to the community. Through a systematic approach and the use of appropriate communication technology, MUI has managed to reach various levels of society, including those in remote areas. The results of this study emphasize the importance of adapting da'wah methods to existing technological developments and social contexts, as well as the need for continuous evaluation to improve the quality and impact of da'wah. Thus, da'wah strategies based on a deep understanding of the audience and the use of relevant media can be an effective model in spreading Islamic values in today's digital era.

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