

From Combating Religious Blasphemy to Promoting Peace: Reflections on the Role of Islamic *Da'wah* and Law in Indonesia's Pluralistic Society

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Received: 2021-October-15 (10-Calibri Light)

Rev. Req: 2022-January-09

Accepted: 2024-August-14



10.59683/ijls.v3i2.95

How to cite this paper: Haq, T. & Mat Isa, N.A.N. (2024). From Combating Religious Blasphemy to Promoting Peace: Reflections on the Role of Islamic *Da'wah* and Law in Indonesia's Pluralistic Society. *International Journal of Law and Society (IJLS)*, 3(2), 90-109. <https://doi.org/10.59683/ijls.v3i2.95>

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ABSTRACT: *This study examines Da'wah's role in addressing the blasphemy issue in Indonesia and promoting peace in a pluralistic society. As a form of spreading Islamic teachings, Da'wah has a significant historical role in dealing with religious conflicts. This study aims to understand how Muslim leaders and communities use Da'wah to address blasphemy, reduce conflict, and build social harmony. With a qualitative approach, this study uses a descriptive-analytical method through analysis of historical documents, in-depth interviews with religious figures, and literature studies related to blasphemy cases. Data analysis techniques involve data reduction, data presentation, and inductive drawing of conclusions. The validity of the data is guaranteed through triangulation of data sources, namely comparing the results of interviews, documents, and relevant literature. The study results show that Da'wah is used through three main strategies: education to strengthen religious understanding, interfaith dialogue to build cross-faith communication, and a legal approach to handle blasphemy allegations formally. This strategy not only protects Islamic teachings but also strengthens social harmony. Da'wah also plays a vital role in enhancing the values of tolerance, mediating conflict, and promoting peaceful life in a pluralistic Indonesian society. Da'wah is a tool for affirming Islamic identity and an effective instrument of social mediation. This finding contributes to the understanding of religious dynamics in Indonesia and its relevance in overcoming the challenges of interfaith relations in the era of globalization.*

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran *Da'wah* dalam menanggulangi isu penistaan agama di Indonesia dan mendorong perdamaian dalam masyarakat pluralistik. *Da'wah*, sebagai bentuk penyebaran ajaran Islam, memiliki peran historis yang signifikan dalam menghadapi konflik agama. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana para pemimpin dan komunitas Muslim memanfaatkan *Da'wah* sebagai sarana mengatasi penistaan agama, meredakan

konflik, dan membangun harmoni sosial. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif, penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis melalui analisis dokumen sejarah, wawancara mendalam dengan tokoh agama, dan studi literatur terkait kasus penistaan agama. Teknik analisis data melibatkan reduksi, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan secara induktif. Keabsahan data dijamin melalui triangulasi sumber data, yaitu membandingkan hasil wawancara, dokumen, dan literatur yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Da'wah* digunakan melalui tiga strategi utama: pendidikan untuk memperkuat pemahaman keagamaan, dialog antaragama untuk membangun komunikasi lintas kepercayaan, dan pendekatan hukum untuk menangani tuduhan penistaan agama secara formal. Strategi ini tidak hanya melindungi ajaran Islam tetapi juga memperkuat harmoni sosial. *Da'wah* juga berperan sebagai mekanisme penting dalam mengokohkan nilai-nilai toleransi, memediasi konflik, dan mendorong kehidupan damai di masyarakat Indonesia yang majemuk. *Da'wah* tidak hanya menjadi alat penegakan identitas Islam tetapi juga instrumen mediasi sosial yang efektif. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap pemahaman tentang dinamika keagamaan di Indonesia serta relevansinya dalam mengatasi tantangan hubungan antaragama di era globalisasi.

Keywords: *Blasphemy, Interfaith Peace, Islamic Law, Pluralistic Society.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Da'wah (Islamic proselytization) is commonly encountered in various forms in Muslim-majority countries around the world. *Da'wah* is important in spreading Islam's message and fostering positive societal changes. The term encompasses the act of inviting individuals, groups, or communities to embrace Islamic teachings, values, and practices. *Da'wah* is not limited to verbal communication but extends to embodying Islamic principles in one's actions and interactions with others (El Ishaq, 2022).

In line with the previous statement, in the context of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) as institutions of education and *Da'wah* have innovated remarkably. They deliver religious lectures and engage in more practical domains such as community service and environmental concerns, all grounded in religious interpretations (Ridwan, 2020). This demonstrates that the development of *Da'wah* is becoming increasingly contextual.

Philosophically and theologically, *Da'wah* should promote harmony, peace, and prosperity by encouraging adherence to Islamic norms and laws (Ikhwan & Burhanuddin, 2024). Thus, the fundamental principle of *Da'wah* is peace. Every Muslim must participate in *Da'wah* activities to communicate Islamic values to others (Hopkins et al., 2007). I believe *Da'wah* can be conducted through speech and actions or simply by setting a living example that aligns with religious values, which can also be categorized as *Da'wah* activities (Hariyatoni & Saputra, 2018). A proactive approach to *Da'wah* allows for the dissemination of religious values across various societal layers (Gunawan & Muhid, 2022).

Leadership plays a crucial role in the propagation of Islamic teachings through *Da'wah*. Leaders are seen as instrumental in spreading the message of Islam and establishing a just and compassionate society (H. Muhammad & Sari, 2021). In the Indonesian context, the prominence of an ulama (Islamic scholar) holds a special place within specific communities, such as Gus Baha from Nahdlatul Ulama and Ustad Adi Hidayat from Muhammadiyah. These figures represent the thoughts of Indonesia's two oldest Islamic organizations and exemplify the *Da'wah* methods in NU and Muhammadiyah.

In the current era, using digital media and technology has transformed the approaches to *Da'wah*. The emergence of platforms like social media and the internet has opened up new channels for spreading Islamic messages on a large scale (Aziz et al., 2022). Islamic preachers and educators can use these digital tools to connect with a broader audience and effectively impact people's awareness and behavior (Octaviani, 2022). The widespread use of digital media enables *Da'wah* messages to reach the general public quickly. Progress in communication technology can speed up the transmission of a religious leader's perspectives to their followers, addressing modern social and spiritual concerns.

An issue that consistently attracts attention in digital media is religious blasphemy. Within the Indonesian context, religious blasphemy has been a controversial topic with significant consequences for the nation's social, legal, and political landscape. The concept of blasphemy, especially in Indonesia, has been closely linked to efforts to preserve religious harmony, prevent social turmoil, and uphold the sanctity of religious beliefs (Tyson, 2020).

One remarkable example demonstrating the effects of blasphemy laws in Indonesia is the case of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, also known as Ahok, the former governor of Jakarta, who was convicted in 2017. Ahok's two-year prison sentence for blasphemy marked a significant turning point in Indonesia's approach to such cases (Tyson, 2020). I have delved into this particular case's linguistic and legal analysis (Haq & Isa, 2023). In this article, I will delve into an anthropological perspective on *Da'wah*'s activities in Indonesia to tackle issues related to religious blasphemy.

Da'wah has evolved into a strategy to counter discussions on social matters intertwined with religion (specifically those deemed harmful to Islam). Throughout *Da'wah* history in Indonesia, we have witnessed how *Da'wah* messages combat the spread of certain ideologies like communism and promote unity among various societal groups, including nationalists and religious factions (Hasani & Halili, 2022). The legal system has been employed to address situations where individuals are accused of insulting or disrespecting religious beliefs, often resulting in legal actions and, at times, imprisonment (Abdullah, 2023).

The implementation of blasphemy regulations in Indonesia has not been free from controversy. Instances of alleged blasphemy, especially during political occasions like presidential and gubernatorial elections, have incited public anger and protests, emphasizing the delicate nature of religious matters in the nation (Putra et al., 2021). The utilization of blasphemy allegations for political purposes has worsened tensions and deepened social rifts (Fenton, 2016). Additionally, the discussion on religious blasphemy

in Indonesia intersects with broader societal dynamics, encompassing public devotion, social structure, and advancing religious principles (Epafras et al., 2019). In comparison to other nations, the legal framework overseeing blasphemy in Indonesia mirrors an intricate interplay between legal assurance, constitutional aspects, and historical viewpoints (Lintang et al., 2021). The endurance of blasphemy statutes and their enforcement in democratic Indonesia highlights the difficulties in upholding freedom of speech, religious liberties, and social concord (A'Yun, 2021). Religious multiplicity and the legal consequences of blasphemy have been topics of academic investigation, illuminating the normative proposals, theological configurations, and social needs of diverse religious factions in Indonesia (Huda, 2019; Husni et al., 2022).

As mentioned earlier, this paper will concentrate on an anthropological reflection on *Da'wah* messages in addressing issues of religious blasphemy. It is essential to delve into a historical survey dating to around 1900 to comprehend the evolution of responses to blasphemy. Researchers can track the progress of legal frameworks, social norms, and cultural perceptions regarding blasphemy by analyzing historical data, trends, and societal attitudes over time. While not all instances of religious blasphemy in Indonesia have been recorded in academic literature, I will endeavor to detect patterns in *Da'wah* messages about religious blasphemy. I aim to establish a historical framework by exploring the intersection between *Da'wah* and anti-blasphemy and assess its significance in present-day Indonesia.

To address this, the paper will systematically examine the context of religious life in Indonesia from around 1900 to the 2000s. The subsequent section will explore *Da'wah*'s movements and their focal points during these periods. Subsequently, I will delve into how *Da'wah* has been employed to combat religious blasphemy and the development of *Da'wah* in the contemporary period.

II. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method to explore *Da'wah*'s role in addressing blasphemy and promoting peace in Indonesia. As a qualitative study, this study focuses on an in-depth understanding of socio-religious phenomena related to *Da'wah* strategies applied in a pluralistic society. With a descriptive design, this study aims to describe the role of *Da'wah* in detail in managing religious conflicts from a legal, social, and cultural perspective, covering historical periods from the colonial period to the modern era (Creswell, 2019).

The research approach combines sociological and normative perspectives. The sociological approach is used to analyze *Da'wah* as a social phenomenon that influences the dynamics of interfaith relations. Meanwhile, the normative approach views *Da'wah* as a religious activity based on Islamic law principles. Combining these two approaches allows the study to understand the role of *Da'wah* both as a conflict mediation mechanism and as a means of strengthening religious identity.

The research data were obtained from primary and secondary sources. Primary data include in-depth interviews with religious figures, *Da'wah* practitioners, and academics

who have insight into the issue of blasphemy. Secondary data include legal documents, media reports, and related academic literature. Data was collected through three main techniques: in-depth interviews to explore informants' perspectives and experiences, document studies to understand existing regulations and practices, and literature reviews to obtain theoretical and historical overviews supporting the analysis (Murray & De Sanctis, 2015).

Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion (Miles et al., 2014). The data obtained were summarized to identify information relevant to the focus of the research and then arranged in the form of a thematic narrative to describe patterns of the role of *Da'wah* in easing religious conflict. Conclusions were drawn inductively by identifying thematic relationships that emerged from the data. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, namely comparing data from interviews, documents, and literature to ensure consistency of findings and verifying results with key informants to reduce potential interpretation bias (Emzir, 2014).

This comprehensive approach is designed to provide a thorough understanding of how *Da'wah* functions as an essential mechanism in building social harmony amid diverse Indonesian society and its relevance in the context of contemporary law and social dynamics.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Historical Context Religious Life in Indonesia (c.1900 Onwards)

From 1900 to 1945, Indonesia was known as the Netherlands East Indies. The country was a melting pot of diverse cultures and traditions during this period. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and indigenous belief systems coexisted within the nation's fabric. A complex interplay of colonial policies and indigenous religious practices shaped the spiritual landscape of Indonesia during the Dutch colonial period. The Dutch colonial government implemented a dualistic education model that separated secular public schools from religious teachings, making Islamic Schooling the opposition to European schooling (Ridwan, 2016). The Dutch authorities restricted the jurisdiction of religious courts except in areas concerning family law, such as marriage and inheritance (Azzahra & Shuaib, 2022). This restriction reflected the Dutch opposition to the formal imposition of Islamic law beyond specific domains.

Scholars have emphasized the historical origins of secular-religious debates and their influence on the Indonesian national education system during the Dutch colonial period (Suradi, 2022). The dichotomy between science and religion, institutionalized during this era, was a vestige of Dutch colonial politics (Iqbal, 2019). The Dutch colonial period also impacted the advancement of medical education in Indonesia, marked by the initiation of medical training for native youth in Jakarta in 1849 (Mustika et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the Dutch colonial legacy extended to inheritance laws, where customary and Islamic inheritance laws coexisted alongside Dutch practices (Adeline & Rahayu, 2023). The Dutch colonial government conducted ecological mapping for the establishment of salt production centers in Indonesia, reflecting their administrative and

economic interests during that time (Mahasin et al., 2021). Additionally, representations of nature and landscape in the Dutch East Indies (colonial Indonesia) were influenced by gender, race, and European ideologies (Protschky, 2008).

In the era of independence, religious life in Indonesia is still characterized by the diversity of religious identities intertwined with other aspects such as political dynamics and the quality of social life. The country's shift to democracy after the downfall of the authoritarian New Order government in 1998 has led to notable transformations in the religious scenery, impacting the interplay between national and religious identities (Wibisono et al., 2019). The 1998 Reformasi has brought a new atmosphere to democratic life in Indonesia with reforms in the economic, legal, and political realms.

In the post-1998 Reform era, Indonesia experienced a shift towards greater openness in communication. This environment fostered a willingness among communities to express their identities. Individuals with religious fundamentalist beliefs have become more vocal in advocating for ideas that challenge the Indonesian constitution through an Islamic social lens (Wibisono et al., 2019). This development ignited a nationwide dialogue on balancing the freedom to express religious beliefs with the need for national unity.

To confront the surging problems introduced by religious fundamentalist movements, the Indonesian administration is taking steps to enhance religious moderation as a tactic against radicalism. The Ministry of Religious Affairs plays a vital role in this initiative by facilitating peaceful Islamic discourse and integrating the principle of religious moderation into the educational framework (Cholil, 2023). The primary focus of this effort is to strengthen awareness and cooperation among the extensive spectrum of religious groups in Indonesia, comprising Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, alongside numerous traditional beliefs (Nasir & Rijal, 2021). This initiative seeks to manage diversity while fostering harmonious coexistence among different religious groups, reaffirming a commitment to peaceful living and mutual respect.

Despite efforts to advocate for religious moderation, interfaith tensions persist in post-authoritarian Indonesia, influenced by factors such as multiculturalism, political dynamics, and a history of conflict (Regus, 2020). The intricacies of religious pluralism in Indonesia are reflected in the difficulties of managing diversity and addressing internal religious factors that ignite discord. Within the sphere of education, integrating religious tolerance into the national syllabus seeks to encourage principles of acceptance, variety, and harmonious living among school students (Inayatillah et al., 2022).

Integrating moderate Islam in education exemplifies efforts to cultivate a new generation in Indonesia dedicated to fostering interfaith harmony and understanding. Ultimately, Indonesia's religious landscape throughout the 2000s exhibited a delicate balance between religious diversity, political evolution, and social cohesion. The emergence of religious extremism, the advocacy for religious temperance, and continuous initiatives to regulate interreligious tensions underscored the evolving dynamics of religion within Indonesian society and the complexities of negotiating religious affiliations in a diverse nation. After examining the historical context and development of religious life in Indonesia, the following subset discusses the emergence of *Da'wah* movements in

Indonesia from the early 20th century and how they affected the sociopolitical conditions in the archipelago.

The Inception of *Da'wah* Movements in early 20th Century Indonesia

The rise of *Da'wah* activities in Indonesia can be traced back to the early 20th century. The unfavorable conditions for the Indigenous population under Dutch colonial rule, especially since implementing the *cultuurstelsel* system in the 19th century, gradually triggered the emergence of nationalist movements and the *Da'wah* movements without exception.

The increasing resistance against Dutch colonial rule developed the notion of promoting Islamic values and principles in opposition to European values and systems (Ridwan, 2016). The oppression by the colonial government awakened Muslim social movements as a form of resistance. Organizations like *Sarekat Dagang Islam (SDI)*, which evolved into *Sarekat Islam (SI)* in 1906, aimed to address the challenges faced by the Muslim community and advocate for greater autonomy and recognition within the colonial framework (Mustakif & Mulyati, 2019). Such an example provides an argument that the rise of these *Da'wah* movements was not solely a religious matter but a social one grounded in spiritual values.

In the early 20th century, Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah (1912) and Nahdlatul Ulama (1926) were established. It reflects the merger of the social movements of Muslims, [which] emerged as a nationalist movement and endeavored to take over from the Dutch colonial administration. In his view, the tank and its cannon served only as a shapeshifter that morphed into that of the ideology espoused by the various Indigenous movements. These movements provided platforms to propagate Islamic teachings so that Muslims could bond in solidarity with one another while attempting to champion social and economic justice (Rosidin et al., 2022). These thoughts mirrored a more significant awakening among Muslims in Indonesia about reaffirming their religious and cultural identity in response to colonial pressures.

The contextualized *Da'wah*, promoting Islamic values in a social-practical context, is supported by prominent Islamic scholars, activists, and institutions that were critical in promoting Islamic teachings and values during the early 20th century. One of the notable figures in the early *Da'wah* movement was Haji Agus Salim, a respected Muslim leader and diplomat who advocated for Islamic education and social reform.

In 1912, Ahmad Dahlan made Muhammadiyah a space for *Da'wah* and social activities emphasizing educational and societal changes founded upon Islamic principles. The group sought to improve the status of Muslims through education and social welfare. Muhammadiyah during the Dutch colonial era was crucial in advancing *Da'wah* and social change of their belief that Islam runs not only vis-s-à-vis worship but also through the realization of education, modernization, and social welfare according to Islamic principles (Alexanderson, 2019). It was designed as a counter to Dutch colonial influences by encouraging Islamic values, education, and charitable enterprise among the Indonesian Muslim population.

Hadratusy Shaikh KH established Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Hashim Asy'ari in 1926 had emerged as one of Indonesia's most significant and impactful Islamic organizations. The primary emphasis of NU lies in education, alongside the preservation of community traditions and culture. During Dutch colonization, NU, in conjunction with Muhammadiyah, played a vital role in the *Da'wah* movement (Adawiyah et al., 2023). Both groups have contributed substantially to disseminating Islamic teachings, enhancing social welfare, and promoting educational initiatives across Indonesia.

By advocating for Islamic education, social justice, and civic involvement, NU and Muhammadiyah work to ensure that the awareness of Indonesian Muslims remains intact and untainted by colonization. Their commitment to safeguarding Muslim cultural and religious heritage has successfully upheld Islamic identity and reinforced social cohesion despite the adversities encountered during the Dutch colonial period.

Da'wah in Indonesia evolved through the pre- and post-independence eras, involving several socio-political transitions and reactions to the stances of prominent individuals and organizations. Duplex models were the cornerstones of pre-independence Nationalism movements to mobilize Muslim masses against colonial oppression, calling for social justice and empowerment through some *da'i* on activities. Via organizations such as Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah, they sought ways to spread Islamic teachings and help meet Indonesian Muslims' material needs. Prominent figures such as Haji Agus Salim and Kiai Haji Mas Mansur played essential roles in connecting Islamic principles with nationalist demands, supporting the interests of Muslims, and fostering inter-religious concord. They must be seen as major participants in Indonesia's early development of Islamic activism.

In the post-independence era, *Da'wah* movements would persist in developing and Islamic parties and organizations would look to grant their actualization within the broader social landscape. Islamic parties emphasized Islamic values, endeavored to interact with post-independence socio-cultural conditions, and developed *Da'wah* strategies to respond to contemporary challenges. The figures and Ulama that influenced the post-independence period of Indonesia were crucial in setting the direction of *Da'wah* movements and fulfilling the needs of a new republic for Muslims (Rachmanto, 2023). Similarly, the post-independence period witnessed the establishment of modern *Da'wah*-oriented academic and promotional institutions to rebuild religious symbols, including liberty, justice, and cooperation. This had implications for the Islamic teachings that the schools espoused, as well as efforts to nurture social cohesion among Muslims in Indonesia and empower them through educational and community projects (Anas, 2023). As such, *Da'wah* movements during Indonesia's transition from pre- to post-independence eras were a continuation of efforts to propagate Islamic teachings, strengthen Muslim communal life, and respond to socio-political challenges in the country. Some key figures and organizations took this trajectory of *Da'wah* movements into pertinence and adjusted their strategies according to the social needs of the Indonesian community, hence fostering flourishing debates in the Islamic paradigm within the society.

***Da'wah* and Its Role Against Religious Blasphemy**

The term 'religious blasphemy' is used to refer to actions or expressions, whether written or spoken, that insult or insult and cause a direction of hatred and hatred for abuse towards religion in Indonesia. Religious blasphemy concerns are inherent to the perception of the protection and preservation of religious values, the continuation of social stability, and, in this case, identity. Religious blasphemy in Indonesia is regulated predominantly through criminal law, with the crime of Blasphemy (Law No. 1/PNPS/1965) in force since 1965 punishing acts deemed blasphemous against a small number of officially recognized religions. Designed to protect religious harmony, the law punishes insulting or offensive acts relating to religious beliefs as tools for incitement of religious hatred or violence (Hasani & Halili, 2022).

Blasphemy laws in Indonesia regulate the prejudicial treatment and hate speech between religions that surround hateful, defamatory opinions. The acts of blasphemy can be directed towards religious symbols, leaders, scriptures, or practices and are commonly perceived as a violation of the norms and values of religion that exist in Indonesian society (Hasani & Halili, 2022). The use of blasphemy laws in Indonesia has been criticized, with some alleging that they are used to oppress freedom of expression, persecute religious minorities, and restrict religious pluralism. The implementation of blasphemy laws has faced stiff criticism over their infringement on religious liberty, harm to societal cohesion, and defense for minority religious bodies (Tyson, 2020).

In the Indonesian case, religious blasphemy is an explosive issue. It is deeply rooted in broader debates around freedom of religion, tolerance and the rights of individuals to practice their faith while maintaining social harmony. How the interpretation and enforcement of blasphemy laws have been carried out as a reflection of Indonesia's complicated relationship between religion, law, and politics, thus pointing to the difficulty it faces when it comes to accommodating religious diversity while still respecting fundamental human rights within its multi-religious society. Religious blasphemy as a whole is a rich tapestry of different actions and memories rooted in the efforts of Indonesia to protect religious values while also renewing social harmony in a multiplicity in various groups. The interpretation and enforcement of the blasphemy laws in Indonesia are still in process. Still, this phenomenon will impact how religious freedom is addressed in discourse by illustrating the limits between acts permitted when public tolerance is not applicable or even where under what circumstances the protection of identity becomes a right that must be respected.

Da'wah's strategies in Indonesia have experienced development from traditional methods that rely on a peaceful educational approach to an increasingly assertive one that is more compatible with societal changes and technological developments. In the beginning, the issue of *Da'wah* strategies is prioritized for educational activities, peaceful opening presentations and the habit of moderation preaching through media tools and discussions with community leaders (Amin, 2022; Pratama et al., 2022; Rahmah & Aslamiah, 2023).

As societal dynamics changed, *Da'wah* strategies in Indonesia adopted more assertive approaches to meet contemporary challenges. In this conversion, the spread of faith

through preventive action to apostasy thrust some social media in communication and directing measures in the activity favors *Da'wah* (Kusmanto et al., 2021; Yuliasih & Rahyu, 2022). Digital channels and social media have indeed shaped *Da'wah* strategies in the dissemination of religious messages geared towards reaching diverse audiences (Aslan & Pong, 2023; Saputra & Islamiyah, 2019). Contemporary *Da'wah* practices today deployed search engine optimization, multimedia applications and digital communication to ensure the continuity of broader outreach and engagement.

In addition, the development of *Da'wah* strategies that are more assertive can be seen from the use of persuasion techniques, stories and multimedia that are interesting as a form of delivery or socialization of religious messages and the solution to today's problems (Kusmanto et al., 2021). These strategies look to coalition-stakeholder engagement, navigate contemporary social complexity and disseminate religious imperatives in innovative ways. This transformation has been channeled into the forms of *Da'wah* strategy in Indonesia, which are marked by more assertive character beliefs because of several factors, such as the shifts in societal demands, technological advances, and the space for religious communication. There is growing awareness of the benefits of adopting innovative ways and means of carrying out *Da'wah* to transmit the message of Islam, engage diverse groups, and maintain Islamic teachings and values.

The exposure of *Da'wah* against blasphemy cases in Indonesia has contributed to the history of demographic change in terms of religious thoughts and social dynamics. A pertinent example of this is the rejection of non-Muslim leaders, such as in the case of Basuki Tjahya Purnama (better known as Ahok), the former Jakarta Governor who was on trial for blasphemy against the Quran. These arrests were followed by protests and further allegations of blasphemy against Islam, which sparked resistance among Muslim youth (Nasution et al., 2022).

The following case study of the victimization of Ahmadiyyah in Indonesia, again heavily discriminated against with various violence charges (mostly of heresy) against its member. Putra et al. discuss the implementation of these above challenges by referring to how difficult it is for the Ahmadiyyah community to be an interpart in religious pluralism and what kind of tolerance in Indonesia needs further investigation (Putra et al., 2018). On the other hand, the discussion of blasphemy in Indonesia has come under both legal and social examinations. This legal analysis compares blasphemy law in Indonesia with other countries, including Ireland and Canada, to understand the legal framework of criminalizing blasphemy and its impact on freedom of religion or belief and social harmony (Lintang et al., 2021). Also, the use of digital platforms and social media in *Da'wah* activities has been a progressive step towards solving blasphemy problems. These case studies shed light on the intertwined character of *Da'wah* against blasphemy in Indonesia, echoing how religious discourse, legal system, and social context played out in dealing with questions of religious tolerance, freedom of expression and societal harmony.

Contemporary Perspectives of *Da'wah* in Indonesia

Social media and the internet have revolutionized *Da'wah* movements across Indonesia, transforming the flow of religious messages and audience interaction. Islamic outreach is

undoubtedly more easily obtained globally in the digital age. Taking example from Bandung of West Java, social media has initiated the formation of digital Islamic social networks, which are marked by the presence of Muslim intellectuals who are influential in establishing *Da'wah* activities at universities (Lengauer, 2018). Similarly, the convergent digital media era has also had its impacts on *Da'wah* by manifesting cyber *Da'wah* activism as a manifestation of political and ideological motives in online religious messages (F. Muhammad & Irwan, 2023). This practice of utilizing social media and live streaming has been especially important for *Da'wah* during the pandemic period, giving students an opportunity to engage with wider audiences and carry on their work despite limitations (Fajar, 2021). Specifically, digital media role as a *Da'wah* tool is very much visible and essential as it acts spreading messages of religion to the public at large with thematically interactive and remotely engaging (Aziz et al., 2022). By way of example, the *Tastafi Da'wah* movement during the pandemic shows how social media and live streaming enabled practitioners to scale up and respond at speed (Fikar, 2022). This is an advancement in *Da'wah* strategies in the country by embracing social media and internet to improve communication, involve the audience and increase influence.

Da'wah practices in Indonesia are also partially defined by state regulations and laws on blasphemy. Respecting religious freedom, appreciating differences and focusing on positive goals in *Da'wah* efforts could be a good way to create tolerance, harmony and peace among religious communities (Rahmah & Aslamiah, 2023). Such informing depicts one of the key techniques to advance comprehension and concordance as Indonesia traverses its differing strict scene: teaching Muslim minority gatherings, excepting insights with feelings of dread for security or hawks promoting moderate convention (Amin, 2022). The integration between religion and state by fostering the values of anti-radicalism, religious moderation, nationalism, tolerance and encouragement for local cultures to reduce conflicts in with other beliefs (Husaini & Islamy, 2022).

The state regulations and laws of blasphemy affect the *Da'wah* by encouraging religious tolerance and education in terms of faith and as well moderation. The dynamics of legal systems, social norms, and spiritual doctrines guide *Da'wah* practitioners in managing the narrative of religion and maintaining its balance within Indonesian society.

Promoting Peace through *Da'wah*

Da'wah, which translates to the act of inviting individuals to understand and embrace Islam, in Indonesia has taken a new turn specifically about the question of blasphemy. Some approaches and strategies have changed over the years in *Da'wah's* efforts and remained unchanged for some. In Indonesia, however, *Da'wah* has been one of the most effective ways to deal with social problems and at the same time maintain peace in a plural society (Rahmah & Aslamiah, 2023). It has been stressed the urgency of *Da'wah* in creating harmony and understanding among different people in a plural society where it would play its role to create a cohabiting peacefully and harmoniously. Moreover, *Da'wah* has been an instrument of social justice, educating people about social ills and striving for a better society but viewing it through the lens of religion (Karimullah, 2023).

Highlighting that the use of digital media for *Da'wah* communication is not only relevant but even more desired for communicating religious messages (Aziz et al., 2022). In

addition to that, *Da'wah* has penetrated the entertainment and education spheres. Music has become one of *Da'wah's* integrations into pop culture, for example, through the music of Maher Zain, which blends Islamic activism and engagement.

On the other hand, *Da'wah* institutions on campus have contributed to the formation of ideological movements at public universities (Muhdi, 2023). Many of these processes have undergone substantial transformation. However, the principles of *Da'wah* continue to tie in with traditional practices. To conclude, the evolution of *Da'wah* in Indonesia demonstrates a fusion between traditional and modern methods to square with day-and-day challenges. The theory and medium of *Da'wah* have changed with the times, but the ultimate goal of presenting Islamic values is still seen as an essential agenda in Indonesia.

The effectiveness of *Da'wah* in Indonesia in maintaining religious harmony without leading to the potential escalation of conflict is a complex matter that is conditioned on several variables. The whole enterprise of *Da'wah*, that is to say, the delivery of Islamic teachings to others (and vice versa) through whatever mechanism, has major accounts in feeding into the nature of inter-religious relations in any country. Several studies have recognized the importance of *Da'wah* to enhance mutual understanding, empathy and coexistence among communities with different religions to strengthen religious harmony (Irwandi et al., 2023; Pajariato et al., 2022).

Promoting religious harmony through *Da'wah* has been highlighted as an effort to counter radicalism and promote religious moderation in the practice of Islamic teachings (Faiqah & Pransiska, 2018). It could lead to a more harmonious and tolerant society if the *Da'wah* calling for tolerance, peaceful interactions and mutual respect (Maryance et al., 2023).

Many factors can also influence the effectiveness of *Da'wah* in fostering religious harmony. People need to take into account the way Islamic preachers (*da'i*) spread Islam in Indonesia, where their communication style may affect the success of *Da'wah* effort both verbally and non-verbally (Qarni et al., 2019). The utilization of Islamic counseling and art performances in *Da'wah* activities also proven effective in raising religious awareness and delivering religious messages as intended (Silvianetri et al., 2022).

Da'wah activities must be closely monitored so as not to inflame hostilities further or, in the extreme, incite violence. A key point in fostering religious harmony is avoiding claiming shared social identity with other believers while at the same time minimizing denigration of different religions (Firdaus et al., 2023). Keeping an equilibrium of *Da'wah* and tolerance will try not to cause division or create conflict. Thus, the *Da'wah* community in Indonesia can work to become a tool that will be very helpful in advancing harmony and comprehension between religious communities that are so diverse. If *Da'wah* emphasizes empathy, tolerance, and peaceful co-existence, it will help build a more transparent, loving society. Yet, it is necessary to carry out *Da'wah* in a way that respects the beliefs of others and cultivates mutual respect so as not to agitate the situation which ultimately results in tensions or conflict.

Education is essential to *Da'wah* in how it molds one's perception of Islam and engages with the progressive multicultural society. Religious education versus fostering a tolerant,

multicultural society: The dilemma between the two ideas is one of Indonesia's most critical issues in educational practice. Some have argued that education plays a key role in fostering tolerance, understanding, and inter-religious harmony between different religious communities (Husna & Thohir, 2020).

In Indonesia, implementing religious education in schools, especially Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is important to build up values of peace, tolerance and multiculturalism among students. PAI teachers guide students to respect diversity, be moderate in understanding religion, and have the importance of living side by side. Other than that, the Islamic curriculum could also serve as one medium to build a tolerant and inclusive society by emphasizing significant issues and sparking critical consciousness.

Universities can contribute to creating a harmonious and inclusive society by establishing an environment conducive to religious diversity and encouraging respectful interactions (Aksa & Hakim, 2023). As important as the above, they certainly contribute a lot to promoting peace and tolerance on the part of the Islamic boarding schools/*Pesantren*. *Pesantren* has helped to encourage a peaceful relationship and understanding between followers of different faiths (Qornain, 2022). *Pesantren* also builds on interfaith cooperation and respect to draw pathways through building community synergy and enhancing peaceful life. It is imperative that the Islamic education curriculum include multicultural values and adhere to them to establish a tolerant and accepting culture. So, by incorporating the values of multicultural Islamic Religious Education, educational institutions can form students expected to have skills and positive attitudes towards a heterogeneous society (Saefudin et al., 2021). By embracing multicultural-based Islamic education, it can return the spirit of togetherness and trust between diverse religious communities. In a nutshell, education is an integral part of the *Da'wah* to learn about the religion and instill values of tolerance, respect, and understanding in a multicultural society. There are many steps educational institutions in Indonesia can take to build a harmonious and inclusive culture where different backgrounds can exist, among other is by bringing religious moderation into the education system, promote interfaith dialogue, and embrace multicultural values.

IV. CONCLUSION

The historical evolution of *Da'wah* in addressing blasphemy in Indonesia demonstrates its adaptability in reinforcing religious principles while fostering social harmony. Through education, interfaith dialogue, and legal measures, *Da'wah* has contributed to conflict resolution and promoted peaceful coexistence among diverse religious communities. This approach highlights the importance of integrating religious teachings with multicultural values and interfaith dialogue to nurture mutual respect and understanding. These findings imply that *Da'wah* should continue evolving to address contemporary challenges by leveraging digital platforms, fostering constructive discussions, and prioritizing empathy and tolerance. Future research should explore innovative *Da'wah* strategies that engage younger, tech-savvy audiences and assess their impact on interreligious relations and social cohesion. By advancing these efforts, *Da'wah* can remain pivotal in building inclusive and peaceful societies.

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