Da'wah Hybrid: Management and Response of Surau Congregation to the Blended Da'wah Program

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ABSTRACT

This research explores how the urban Muslim community, particularly the administrators of the Surau Al-Mukhlisin [a place of worship for Muslim usually smaller than a mosque] in Kubu Raya, has adapted to the latest technological advances. The administrators have integrated digital technology into their functions, including adopting a blended approach to da'wah. While conventional, in-person da'wah at the Surau continues, preserving its traditional role, they also conduct da'wah sessions through online platforms. This reflects the dual identity of urban Muslims at Surau Al-Mukhlisin: they maintain religious symbols in public spaces while embracing modern technology in their daily lives.

The study aims to investigate three main areas: first, how the Surau manages and how the congregation responds to the Blended Da'wah Program; second, the obstacles encountered during its implementation; and third, the solutions adopted to overcome these obstacles. A qualitative approach was used, employing in-depth interviews and participatory observation. The informants included the administrators and active congregation members of Surau Al-Mukhlisin. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques.

The findings reveal that the congregation responded positively to the Blended Da'wah Program, appreciating the accessibility to religious knowledge despite their busy schedules and time constraints. They continue to value traditional, face-to-face da'wah but also seek to stay current with technological advancements. The online program includes a fiqh study every Tuesday evening, while the offline and streaming program features the *Shubuh Meraih Berkah* study and a monthly breakfast event.

However, some obstacles include limited access to technology for some members, difficulties in adapting to new technologies, and a preference for face-to-face interactions without intermediaries. Solutions to these challenges include guiding members on how to access and navigate online meeting platforms, explaining the process of downloading and using applications like Zoom, and providing hands-on practice for those unfamiliar with online applications.

Keywords: Hybrid Da'wah, Management, Response, Surau Congregation

A. Introduction

Based on the word of Allah SWT in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Imran verse 104, believers have the obligation to encourage others to do good and avoid wrongdoing. However, finding an audience (*mad'u*) is not the only challenge in today's da'wah. The way the message is packaged and delivered through media is also crucial. As Efendi et al. (2023, p. 148) note, the model of da'wah is evolving rapidly in this century due to technological advances. Digital media has become a popular trend in the millennial era, making information easier and faster to access.

We understand that technology can provide society with essential knowledge and information (Putri et al., 2021, p. 9232). More specifically, technological progress is focused on a variety of portable gadgets as well as ubiquitous technology. Multifunctional gadgets have increasingly replaced televisions, making them less popular because they are more convenient to carry and use. (Asmawati, 2021, p. 84).

The media used for da'wah, which was previously limited to offline or face-to-face interactions, has now been transformed with various digital platforms. According to Irawan et al. (2024, p. 80), the development of communication technology has enabled da'wah to become a digital activity, with messages sent and received via the internet, commonly referred to as cyberspace. The need for da'wah in society drives this change, encouraging innovative thinking to align with technological advancements and the needs of

da'wah.

Based on data from the Ministry of Communication and Informatics in 2017, 66.3% of Indonesians have mobile phones (Juditha, 2020, p. 132). This percentage increases every year. Entering the current era of globalization, which is characterized by the daily activities of Indonesians becoming increasingly mechanical and digital (Ambarwati & Sobari, 2020, p. 140), this trend further strengthens the closeness of our society to technology, especially gadgets.

Based on preliminary research information obtained by the author, religious activities at Surau Al-Mukhlisin are still face-to-face or offline meetings since the establishment of the surau. Even until the time of Covid-19 or after, there has been no change in the pattern of Islamic Holiday activities. Although in the midst of our society there are many transformations of activities, both synchronous-asynchronous, Hybrid, Blended and similar terms. However, activities at the Surau have not undergone adaptation.

Based on the author's search results, studies on the management of Surau as a center for da'wah in the digital era are relatively few. There have been several studies on surau that focus on, first, the Influence of Surau as a Center for Da'wah (Belubus et al., n.d.; Marlon, 2017; Rahima & Salam, 2023). Surau which is used as a cultural da'wah is part of the process of education (Belubus et al., n.d., p. 78). Second, Islamic education (Afdayeni, 2017; Alfurqan et al., 2019; Masyhur et al., 2023). Surau is part of an Islamic educational institution

that was born from Islamization in Minangkabau (Alfurqan et al., 2019, p. 140).

However, studies on smaller mosques that utilize technology for blended da'wah activities are still limited. Therefore, the author is interested in conducting this study. The aims of this study are threefold: first, to explore the governance and response of surau congregations to the blended da'wah program; second, to identify the obstacles faced in implementing the blended da'wah program; and third, to propose solutions to overcome these obstacles.

B. Research Method

This study employs qualitative research using the phenomenology method. According to Nuryana et al. (2019, p. 21), subjective experience is the main emphasis of the phenomenological method, which is influenced by individuals' views and their understanding of various situations they face. The research includes in-depth interviews and participatory observations. The informants for this study consist of the administrators of Surau Al-Mukhlisin and congregants who actively participate in da'wah activities at Surau Al-Mukhlisin. The collected data are analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a technique for examining data that identifies themes or patterns in the information collected by researchers (Rozali, 2022, p. 71). Among the five core administrators, three were selected as informants, along with three active da'wah congregants.

C. Discussion

1. Hybrid Da'wah: Management and Response of Surau Congregation to

the Blended Da'wah Program

Based on interview data, the following is an overview of the management of Surau Al-Mukhlisin, located on Jalan Adisucipto Gang H. Syawal, Sungai Raya Sub-District, Kubu Raya Regency, on the banks of the Kapuas River in West Kalimantan. The management structure of Surau Al-Mukhlisin is illustrated in Table 1.

Table. 1 Management Structure

NO.	POSITION
1.	Chair
2.	Secretary
3.	Treasurer
4.	Coordinator for Worship Section
5.	Coordinator for Equipment Section

Table. 2 Programs of Surau Al-Mukhlisin

No.	Program	Implementation Time
1.	Reciting the Qu'ran during Ramadhan	Ramadan
2.	Commemoration of *Nuzul Quran* [revelation of the Qur'an]	Ramadan
3.	Celebrating the Birthday of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h)	The month of Maulid/Rabiul awal

4	Qur'anic recitation for children after Sunset Prayer	Monday – Friday Evenings
5.	Tahsin Qur'an for Adults	Wewdnesday and Saturday aftar Evening Prayer
6.	Fiqh Study	Monday evening after Sunset Prayer
7.	*Shubuh Meraih Berkah* Study and Having Breakfast Together	Every Beginning of the Gregorian Month

Based on Table 2, which outlines the religious activities at Surau, it can be observed that these activities are still predominantly traditional or conducted offline. However, recognizing the advancements in technology and the growing familiarity with gadgets in society, the management is striving to adapt and integrate these changes into the implementation of the da'wah program at Surau Al-Mukhlisin. According to the data, the Blended Da'wah Program has received a positive response from the congregation. This positive feedback is attributed to the program's ability to facilitate access to religious knowledge amidst their busy schedules and limited time. While the congregation continues to prioritize traditional face-to-face da'wah, they also appreciate the opportunity to keep up with contemporary methods of receiving da'wah. This aligns with motivation theory, which defines motivation as the drive to achieve specific goals to satisfy needs,

whether the drive originates internally or externally (Prihartanta, 2015, p. 1). The current enthusiasm among Muslims for learning about religion through various social media platforms reflects this trend.

In line with this, P. M. Sari (2017, p. 2) notes that the advancement of information and communication technology has increasingly facilitated access to the information people need, including through platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. According to the interview results, the surau program adapting to this digital era includes the Tuesday night Fiqh study and the Shubuh Study, which utilize the Blended Da'wah system. As I. K. Sari (2021, p. 2158) explains, the blended system integrates both online and face-to-face learning environments. This means that both direct and virtual da'wah can be effectively conducted.

In the Fiqh Study, the committee or management at Surau facilitates participation for congregants who do not have internet access. Congregants who are at home can join via *Google Meet* and *YouTube* streaming. The link to these sessions is distributed along with invitation flyers created by the management, and is also shared through WhatsApp groups and Facebook. For the early morning study, the committee provides a live streaming link on YouTube for those who are unable to attend the surau in person.

2. *Obstacles encountered in the implementation of Hybrid Da'wah: Management and Response of Surau Congregation to the Blended Da'wah Program*

Based on the interview results, some of the challenges faced include limited access to technology for some congregations, difficulties in adapting to new

technology. Still happy with face-to-face conditions without intermediaries. This challenge is experienced by congregations aged 40 years and over compared to those aged 40 years and under. This is in line with the statement (Hazizah & Rigianti, 2021, p. 1) in modern culture, information and communication technology is developing rapidly. Not all organizations are able to keep up with the rapid progress of technology. This has led to the creation of a new word, technological stuttering and is one of the factors in the digital divide, namely the inability of certain communities to take advantage of information technology because they do not have the access or skills to use it.

Furthermore, Limilia and Prihandini (2018, p. 4) note that information and communication technology is advancing rapidly in today's society. Not all organizations can keep up with the pace of this technological development, which contributes to the digital divide and introduces a new concept: technology failure. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), a U.S. federal government organization, defines technology failure as the inability of certain individuals to benefit from information technology due to a lack of access to the technology or the necessary skills.

3. Solutions taken to deal with obstacles in the blended da'wah program

a. Surau Administrators' Efforts of to Find the Best Solution:

The surau management is working to find effective solutions by explaining how to download and access the Zoom application, particularly to congregants who are unfamiliar with such applications.

Hands-on practice with the app can make it easier for them to understand. In line with this, Yaqin (2023, p. 63) emphasizes that we live in an information society, often referred to as the digital era, where knowledge is abundant and information is crucial for various aspects of civilization, including social, political, economic, cultural, and educational purposes. Therefore, older generations need direct guidance to navigate this blended da'wah media effectively.

b. Communicating the Benefits of the Blended Da'wah Model:

The administrators also highlight the advantages of the blended da'wah model to the congregation. This approach not only offers flexibility in scheduling but also allows for the sessions to be replayed if anyone forgets what the speaker has said.

D. **Conclusion**

Based on the research findings, the conclusions of this study are as follows:

1. The congregation of Surau Al-Mukhlisin responded positively to the Blended Da'wah Program. They found that the program facilitated access to religious knowledge despite their busy schedules and time constraints. While they still prioritize traditional face-to-face da'wah, they also want to stay updated with modern methods. The program includes an online Fiqh study every Tuesday night, and offline and streaming sessions for the Shubuh Meraih Berkah study and monthly breakfast gatherings.

2. The obstacles encountered in managing the Blended Da'wah Program include limited access to technology for some congregants and difficulties in adapting to new technology. Many still prefer face-to-face interactions without technological intermediaries.

3. To address these obstacles, the management provides guidance on accessing and entering the meeting room or streaming platform. For those unfamiliar with online applications, they explain how to download and use the Zoom application and offer hands-on practice to ensure understanding.

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