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## Analysis of the Relationship Between Preacher Leadership Style and Da'wah Rejection among Muslim Youth

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**Abstract:** *This study examines the relationship between preacher leadership style and rejection of da'wah among Muslim youth. Using a quantitative approach, a questionnaire survey administered to 397 respondents revealed a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between preacher leadership style and da'wah rejection ( $r = .278, p < .01$ ). These findings indicate that leadership style alone is insufficient to reduce da'wah rejection effectively. Instead, da'wah approaches must be holistic, encompassing noble character (akhlaq), effective time management, communication competencies, and adaptive methodologies tailored to youth needs and cognitive frameworks. This study recommends enhancing inclusive leadership styles grounded in Islamic values to address contemporary challenges in youth da'wah.*

**Keywords:** *Leadership Style, Da'wah Rejection, Muslim Youth, Preacher Ethics, Da'wah Communication.*

## INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of da'wah is contingent upon the leadership style practiced by preachers (*du'at*). Among Muslim youth, various challenges and social influences have contributed to shifts in attitudes toward da'wah. This study was conducted to understand the role of preacher leadership style in influencing either acceptance or rejection of da'wah. Da'wah constitutes the cornerstone of Muslim spiritual development, rooted in the prophetic tradition of Rasulullah (SAW) since the inception of his prophetic mission. It encompasses Allah's command to convey the Islamic message to humanity comprehensively. In this context, effective leadership becomes a primary factor in the success of da'wah and management, emphasizing motivation, inspiration, and voluntary participation. Islamic perspectives assert that leadership is an amanah (trust) requiring integrity, competence, justice, and transparent appointment based on character and qualifications, ensuring responsibilities are discharged effectively and ethically.

Consequently, as preachers, it is imperative to ensure the presence of requisite leadership characteristics within every da'i. According to Zaini Jamaludin (2013), leadership style studies encompass behavioral analysis of leaders who significantly impact leadership processes. Success does not depend solely on physical strength or directive approaches, but rather on the capacity to inspire, foster cooperation, and establish a shared vision. Leadership style alone may be insufficient to address da'wah rejection issues among Muslim youth. This aligns with Strong's (1925) AIDA Theory, which emphasizes the importance of multi-dimensional approaches. While attention and interest elements in a preacher's leadership style may generate initial attraction, they may prove inadequate to overcome barriers that lead to da'wah rejection.

Secondly, these findings support Zainudin Yusof's (2015) research, which emphasizes the need to integrate beneficial elements into da'wah activities. The weak relationship between leadership style and da'wah rejection may indicate that contemporary Muslim youth require more than merely charismatic leadership; they need practical solutions to their life challenges. According to several scholars, including Mustafa (2007), Abdullah Nasih 'Ulwan (1988), and Burhanuddin et al. (2018), a preacher must possess exemplary behavioral conduct. They should serve as role models in terms of personality and character to the public. Additionally, preachers must possess high competence and be able to elucidate Islamic teachings to society in readily comprehensible terms.

According to Ab. According to Aziz (2001), preachers must convey messages clearly and transparently so that the audience becomes conscious and responds positively. Preachers must clarify issues and demonstrate the authenticity of conveyed messages, beginning with themselves as exemplars. Zulkefli Aini et al. (2018) state that this approach indirectly strengthens relationships between preachers and their audience while enhancing trust in the preacher. Thirdly, based on Bass's (1985) Model, although intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation are important, findings suggest that other factors may more significantly influence youth decisions to reject da'wah. This opens avenues for further research on potentially more dominant factors influencing da'wah rejection. Irregular time management by preachers may also constitute a contributing factor to da'wah failure and rejection among youth. Several researchers, including Muhammad Harith Othman et al. (2020), Richelle V Adams and Erik Blair (2019), Linnataqiyyah (2018), Azura Hamdan et al. (2015), and Wan Ali et al. (2008), have investigated relationships between time management and success. All these studies found that individuals skilled in time management are more likely to succeed in any field.

Mizan Adiliah et al. (2004) measure preacher leadership from three primary perspectives: leading oneself, family, and society. Suhid (2014) found that students consider

ideal lecturers to possess leadership qualities, such as effective classroom management. Preachers must also demonstrate fairness to all audience members and excel in message delivery. Every preacher must possess leadership qualities because strong leadership instills public confidence in following instructions or messages conveyed. Without leadership qualities, society will neither be attracted to listen nor respect the preacher. A credible preacher can gain trust from target da'wah audiences, particularly non-Muslims. According to Abd Hadi et al. (2017), this occurs because such preachers thoroughly understand da'wah methodologies and the backgrounds of their intended audiences. Research by Zulkefli Aini et al. (2017) found that some preachers are not careful with their speech and delivery. This causes confusion and misunderstanding among the Orang Asli communities. This demonstrates the critical importance of preachers speaking the truth in their words and actions. Adawiyah et al. (2014) also found that da'wah failure occurs due to inappropriate approaches by preachers to mad'u and inadequate self-presentation.

Therefore, as a preacher, it is essential to possess leadership styles characterized by noble character and wisdom to influence youth. Weaknesses such as failing to attract youth interest, insensitivity to congregational needs, or the use of hasty approaches contradict da'wah principles. Preachers must prioritize empathetic, respectful approaches relevant to mad'u needs, particularly youth. Furthermore, as preachers, it becomes an obligation to serve as exemplary role models.

Allah SWT states:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ۚ ٢١

*"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever hopes in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often." (Surah al-Ahzab: 21)*

Rasulullah (SAW) demonstrated exemplary leadership, consistently approaching society with compassion, patience, and inclusivity. Preachers who exhibit intolerance, political bias, or unfriendliness fail to emulate the uswatun hasanah of Rasulullah (SAW), potentially leading youth to reject da'wah. Furthermore, preachers must distance themselves from excessive behavior in fulfilling their da'wah duties.

Rasulullah (SAW) said:

أَبْغَضَكُمْ إِلَيَّ وَأَبْعَدَكُمْ مِنِّي مَجْلِسًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ: التَّرْتَارُونَ، وَالْمُتَسَدِّقُونَ، وَالْمُتَفَكِّهُونَ

*"Indeed, those most hateful to me and farthest from me in seating on the Day of Resurrection are the talkative, the eloquent, and the pretentious" (Hadith narrated by al-Tirmidhi, no. 2018).*

This hadith reminds preachers to avoid excessive behavior, including demanding high compensation or using da'wah as a platform for personal agendas. Such attitudes may trigger rejection among youth, who value sincerity and moderation in da'wah. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) demonstrated the finest personal example during da'wah. Despite challenges in Taif, he did not become easily angered and continued planning effective methods to spread Islam. According to Fariza et al. (2017), the Prophet represents the best exemplar. He possessed the finest and most praiseworthy personality and conduct. His behavior was Quranic-based and precisely what Allah SWT desired. Additionally, preachers must understand youth cognitive levels and needs while adapting delivery methods to be engaging and relevant. Failure to diversify da'wah methodologies reflects a lack of innovation, leaving youth feeling disconnected or undervalued.

According to Zulkefli Aini & S. Salahudin (2014), preachers must communicate in ways that align with their audience's cognitive levels. Research by Ab Halim Tamuri (2012) and Sarimah Mokhtar (2010) found that Islamic Education teachers require diverse competencies in teaching and learning. Therefore, preachers must be proficient in

communication, psychology, information and communication technology (ICT), writing, and arts as value-added qualities.

However, as demonstrated by weak correlations in research findings, other factors such as social context, external influences, and negative religious perceptions also affect da'wah rejection. Therefore, preachers must adopt more comprehensive approaches by strengthening leadership while understanding the external factors that influence the youth's acceptance of da'wah. Approaches that reflect noble character, innovation, and sincerity, grounded in Islamic principles, can help reduce da'wah rejection and increase youth acceptance of Islamic messages. In conclusion, weaknesses in preacher leadership styles, such as a lack of innovation, non-inclusive attitudes, and the use of da'wah for personal or political interests, contradict the guidelines outlined in the Quran and hadith. Da'wah approaches that are not aligned with the principles of wisdom (hikmah), sincerity, and flexibility are difficult for youth to accept, as they are more selective and critical in choosing spiritual leaders.

## METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative approach, using simple random sampling and questionnaire instruments. A total of 397 Muslim youth respondents were selected via simple random sampling in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Data analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation tests in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Implementation of Sharia Audits

Generally, these research findings derive from correlation analysis of relationship values, conducted to determine the relationship between preacher leadership style and da'wah rejection among Muslim youth.

**Table 1.** Correlation Values and Relationships

Correlation Value (r)	Strength/Relationship
1.00	Perfect
0.70 – 0.99	Very Strong
0.50 – 0.69	Strong
0.30 – 0.49	Moderate
0.10 – 0.29	Weak
0.01 – 0.19	Very Weak

Source: Ghazali & Sufean (2016)

**Table 2.** Correlation Data

		Min Style	Min Acceptance	Min Rejection
<i>Min Style</i>	Pearson Correlation	1	.863**	.278**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	397	397	397
<i>Min Acceptance</i>	Pearson Correlation	.863**	1	.130*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.010
	N	397	397	397
<i>Min Rejection</i>	Pearson Correlation	.278**	.130*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.010	
	N	397	397	397

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 presents Pearson correlation analysis results for three primary research variables: Preacher Leadership Style, Da'wah Acceptance, and Da'wah Rejection. This study involved 397 respondents and used a significance level of  $p < 0.01$  to determine significant relationships between variables.

### **Relationship Between Leadership Style and Da'wah Rejection**

There exists a weak but statistically significant positive relationship ( $r = .278$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This indicates that while leadership style plays a role, other factors also contribute to da'wah rejection. The Pearson correlation value ( $r = 0.278$ ) demonstrates a weak positive relationship between preacher leadership style and da'wah rejection. The significance value ( $p = 0.000$ ) indicates this relationship is significant at the 99% confidence level. Although a significant relationship exists, its strength is weak. This suggests that improvements in preacher leadership style have only a minimal effect on reducing da'wah rejection levels.

In conclusion, weaknesses in preacher leadership styles, such as a lack of innovation, non-inclusive attitudes, and the use of da'wah for personal or political interests, contradict the guidelines outlined in the Quran and hadith. Da'wah approaches that are not aligned with the principles of wisdom, sincerity, and flexibility are difficult for youth to accept, as they are more selective and critical in choosing spiritual leaders.

### **CONCLUSION**

Research findings confirm that a preacher's leadership style significantly affects the acceptance of da'wah. Although relationships exist with da'wah rejection, their strength is low, indicating the necessity for more holistic, empathetic, and youth-oriented da'wah approaches. Preachers must demonstrate praiseworthy character, attractive presentation, effective communication, and understanding of contemporary youth social contexts.

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#### Supplementary Material

Supplemental data for this article can be accessed here

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