

The Role of the Muhammadiyah Preachers Corps in the Development of Islamic Da'wah Education in the Blimbing Branch

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to obtain data or information related to the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps Blimbing Branch. The purpose of this research is to find out the development of Islamic da'wah education in the Blimbing Branch with the existence of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps and to find out the supporting and inhibiting factors of Islamic da'wah in the area. This type of research is qualitative descriptive research. The data sources obtained for this study consisted of two categories, the first was primary data sources derived from observations and interview results, the second was secondary data sources derived from manuscripts, documents, and information related to the Muhammadiyah Blimbing Missionary Corps. The results of this study are: The Blimbing Branch of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps has a very significant role in the process of deepening, practicing and appreciating Islamic da'wah in the Blimbing Branch area and its surroundings. The supporting factors for the running of KMM da'wah are: solid leadership, adequate facilities, crowded missionaries in the Blimbing Branch, and financial support from the Muhammadiyah Tabligh Council.

KEYWORDS

Corps; Muhammadiyah; Da'wah



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INTRODUCTION

Islam is a religion of *rahmatan lil alamin* that emphasizes the importance of *da'wah*, the act of inviting others to the path of righteousness (Rahman, 2018; Al-Khalifa, 2020). The Prophet Muhammad PBUH was sent as a messenger to carry out *da'wah*, transforming the Jahiliyah Arab society into a more civilized and morally guided community (Khan, 2019; Esposito, 2021). This mission was rooted in the Qur'anic command to call humankind toward truth and goodness with wisdom and good counsel (Qur'an 16:125) (Nasr, 2015). Historical accounts show that the Prophet's *da'wah* approach combined spiritual guidance with social reform, addressing both personal piety and community justice (Hassan, 2020). His message was not merely an invitation but also an encouragement and urging for people to embrace the ethical and moral framework of Islam (Abdullah, 2017; Kamali, 2022). Thus, *da'wah* remains a core element in Islamic teachings, serving as a means to spread mercy, guidance, and universal values across societies.

Allah created humankind with a mission: for humans to worship and submit to His laws in carrying out life on this earth, whether in matters concerning relations with Allah or with fellow human beings (Q.S. Al-Dzariyat [51:56]: "*And I did not create the jinn and mankind except that they should serve Me*"). Allah creates everything with a purpose or function — and this includes humans. Human beings were created by Allah as the most perfect of creatures on earth, and thus, they are appointed as leaders (*caliphs*) who will later be held accountable. If humans can carry out their function as *caliphs*, then the harmony between mankind and the universe can be well preserved (Kadir et al., 2023).

Islam is the last heavenly religion revealed by Allah SWT to His final Messenger, Prophet Muhammad SAW. As the last Messenger, there will be no Messenger after him; and just as no Messenger will be sent after him, no new religion will be revealed after Islam. The end of the prophetic mission does not signify the end of the delivery of divine teachings. *Da'wah* continues beyond the lifetime of the Messenger through the role of the *ulama* as *warasat al-anbiyaa* (Sari, 2023). The scholars are responsible for continuing part of the Prophet's mission according to their level of knowledge and capability.

Furthermore, as stated in one of the hadiths of the Prophet, which means: "*Convey from me, even if it is only one verse*" (H.R. Bukhari and Muslim), the obligation of *da'wah* lies upon all Muslims, regardless of their educational, social, economic, or political status. Each is obliged to engage in *da'wah* according to their knowledge and ability.

Da'wah is the process of shaping a Muslim's behavior to practice Islam as a religion of *rahmatan lil alamin*, which must be conveyed to all humanity. This process involves elements of *da'i* (preacher), *maddah* (material), *thariqah* (method), *washilah* (media), and *mad'u* (audience) to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter. *Da'wah* also means a call from Allah SWT and the Prophet PBUH for humanity to believe in the teachings of Islam and to implement those teachings in every aspect of life.

The history of the spread of Islam in Indonesia shows that it developed through *ulama* from various countries such as India, Yemen, and Persia, yet always within the framework of Islamic thought. The consistency of these teachings gradually transformed the worldview of the Malay-Indonesian people toward an Islamic perspective. This was achieved in an orderly and gradual way, one of which was by introducing key Islamic terms consistently and *istiqamah* (Al-Attas, 1972: 24 in Azani, 2022).

Muhammadiyah is an Islamic *da'wah* movement based on the principle of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, and founded upon the Qur'an and Hadith. Its purpose is to uphold and implement Islam so that a truly Islamic society can be realized. Achieving this goal requires strong dedication and effort from its members and leaders in carrying out *da'wah*. Since *da'wah* lies at the very core of the Muhammadiyah movement, its implementation is crucial to the organization's development.

The Muhammadiyah Blimbing Branch Executive is one of twelve Muhammadiyah Branch Executives under the Muhammadiyah Sukoharjo Regional Executive, and it is the largest branch in Sukoharjo Regency. *Blimbing* is the name of a hamlet in Wonorejo Village, which serves as the name of the Muhammadiyah Branch in Polokarto District (Karlina, 2014). The Muhammadiyah Blimbing Branch Executive oversees eleven Assemblies, including: the Cadre and Human Resources Development Council, Community Empowerment Council, Environment Council, Tabligh Council, Business and Tourism Economic Council, Library and Information Council, Elementary and Secondary Education and Non-Formal Education Council, Public Health Development Council, Social Welfare Council, Tarjih and *Tajdid* Council, and Waqf Empowerment Council. Each Assembly plays a key role in the organization's growth.

The Muhammadiyah Tabligh Council is specifically tasked with *da'wah* activities. As the bearer of the mandate of *tabligh*, which is the core of Muhammadiyah's *da'wah* movement, it requires fresh ideas coupled with concrete actions. Since the success of *da'wah* depends on having competent preachers, both in *sharia*, social, and practical sciences, the Muhammadiyah

Blimbing Tabligh Council established the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps. This corps is expected to address the increasingly complex challenges of modern *da'wah*.

In building relationships between missionaries (*da'i*) and the community (*mad'u*), there are two key influential factors. First, missionaries must strive to produce tangible improvements within the congregation over a certain period. Second, the personal character of the missionary must indirectly influence the congregation to willingly adopt Islamic values without direct orders or prohibitions (Mahmud, 1995 in Irham et al., 2024).

According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, a *korps* is a group or organization that functions as a unified body. Linguistically, “missionary” comes from the Arabic word *ballagha*, meaning “to convey.” The Missionary Corps, therefore, is an association of community preachers with a vision and mission to spread *da'wah* and guide society toward an Islamic way of life (Mahmud Yunus, 1990 in Oddri, 2023). The Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps Blimbing Branch operates under the Muhammadiyah Tabligh Council, carrying out *da'wah* to promote a correct understanding of Islam within the community, particularly in the Blimbing Branch.

The *da'wah* activities are conducted through regular religious studies in mosques across Muhammadiyah branches in Blimbing, aiming to enhance the prosperity of both the branches and the mosques. Additionally, the Corps serves as a platform for training new preachers, ensuring the continuity of Muhammadiyah's mission.

As an Islamic movement and *da'wah* effort of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* and *tajdid*, Muhammadiyah must constantly develop its cadre of competent leaders to fulfill its vision (Fihri, 2022). Forming such cadres requires not only desire and dedication but also effective program management, capable educators, and sufficient funding and facilities.

Islam, as a religion of *rahmatan lil alamin*, emphasizes the importance of *da'wah* as a mission to guide humanity toward righteousness. Previous studies, such as Irham et al. (2024), examined the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps' community-centered *da'wah* in Kuok District, while Oddri (2023) explored its role in enhancing religious understanding through non-formal education. However, these works largely focus on regional impacts without exploring the organizational dynamics and challenges of specific branches such as Blimbing — leaving a gap in understanding localized *da'wah* strategies and their effectiveness.

The urgency of this research lies in the growing complexity of *da'wah* challenges in modern society, where traditional approaches may be insufficient. As noted by Fihri (2022), Muhammadiyah must produce qualified cadres capable of tackling contemporary issues. The Blimbing Branch, being one of the largest and most active, presents a valuable case for examining operational strengths and weaknesses to provide lessons for other branches.

This study is novel in that it examines the interplay between organizational structure, resource allocation, and *da'wah* outcomes in the Blimbing Branch. Whereas Bennu et al. (2023) discussed the role of facilities such as Islamic Centers, this research integrates these aspects with leadership dynamics and financial sustainability, providing a holistic analysis. It also addresses practical challenges faced by preachers, including time constraints and weather-related disruptions, which are often overlooked.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the role of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps in advancing Islamic *da'wah* education within the Blimbing Branch, identifying both supporting and inhibiting factors. By doing so, it contributes to the broader discourse on Islamic

education and offers a localized model that integrates theoretical teachings with practical application.

This research holds both academic and practical value. Academically, it enriches *da'wah* literature through a detailed case study of organizational and operational dynamics. Practically, it provides recommendations for improving *da'wah* programs, particularly in cadre development and financial management. The findings may also guide policymakers and religious leaders in supporting localized *da'wah* initiatives to promote resilience and religious understanding within communities.

The objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to evaluate the role of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps in the Blimbing Branch, (2) to identify the factors supporting and hindering its *da'wah* activities, and (3) to propose strategies for improving its effectiveness. The benefits of this study extend to Muhammadiyah administrators, preachers, and the wider community by offering actionable strategies to enhance *da'wah* education. Ultimately, it emphasizes the need for adaptive and resourceful *da'wah* strategies to preserve and propagate Islamic values in contemporary society.

Based on this background, the author is interested in conducting a study entitled “The Role of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps in the Development of Islamic Da'wah Education in the Blimbing Branch,” with the aim of understanding the changes that have taken place in the Blimbing Branch community as a result of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive study using a phenomenological research approach. The phenomenological approach applied in this qualitative research is intended to clearly and thoroughly identify and describe the role, as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors, in the development of Islamic *da'wah* through the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps in the community of Wonorejo Village, Polokarto District.

The data sources for this study are divided into two categories: primary and secondary. Primary data sources are obtained through observation and interviews, while secondary data sources are gathered from documentation and archives relevant to the research.

The data collection techniques used in this study include observation, interviews, and document analysis. The subjects of this study are the Chairman of the Muhammadiyah Blimbing Branch Executive, the Chairman of the Muhammadiyah Blimbing *Tabligh* Council, and the Chairman of the Muhammadiyah Blimbing Missionary Corps.

To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher employed both source triangulation and technique triangulation. For data analysis, the researcher used Miles and Huberman's framework, which consists of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

The data collected was then analyzed qualitatively using descriptive techniques. The reason the researcher chose this topic is due to a deeper interest and curiosity about the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps, particularly its activities and role within the Blimbing Branch.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The initial purpose of the formation of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps Blimbing Branch was to fulfill the many requests of ustadz or missionaries to fill out studies, sermons, especially in Muhammadiyah mosques in each branch of the Blimbing Branch, besides that the purpose of the formation of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps was as a forum for the cadre of missionaries/missionaries to produce a qualified and quality next generation. The main task of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps is to fill in the recitations in the mosques that are fostered by KMM in the Blimbing Branch,

The Role of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps Blimbing Branch

The Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps currently has a very important role in Islamic da'wah, especially in the Blimbing Branch. Because the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps is one of the spearheads of the da'wah movement in Muhammadiyah. As conveyed by Mr. Andika Rahmawan as the secretary of the Blimbing Branch of the PCM Tabligh Council in an interview:

"If it's my own role, I see it now that it's very playful. Because it is almost evenly distributed in every village in Polokarto sub-district, there must be a mosque that is routinely scheduled by KMM or fostered by the Blimbing Branch KMM, filled with recitation by the Blimbing Branch KMM. That's where the related delivery of Islamic da'wah itself, Muhammadiyah da'wah and other coaches must be very felt. For example, the new election is the regional elections, KMM members participate in educating the public on how to choose a good one, how to vote orderly in voting and so on, it is also a very crucial and very useful topic, meaning in certain conditions of the community, but in general, yes, in that role, I see it very much needed now, because the mosques visited by KMM sometimes have mosques whose areas are very deep or very remote, maybe if they want to hold a recitation event, it is difficult in the sense that bringing in speakers requires a fee while we program from KMM, yes, there is no such calculation so indeed they can access routine branch programs even every week the mosque can be visited without having to spend funds, although in practice there may be some mosques that give gifts or food to speakers, for me personally seeing it means that KMM really needs its role, the small mosque in the small area is limited if they have to fill from their own community there is also no one who can fill it, maybe in Wonorejo Village itself there may be many who can fill it, maybe Bulu Village which is very entered once in terms of filling there also does not exist in terms of the original community if they want to invite from outside their thinking about the cost and so on, it is also limited who is contacted, because the mosque is also small, the congregation is also not too many sometimes, but with the program from the branch, namely KMM, it is very helpful, they can access this program by registering their mosque then it will automatically be visited regularly every week by KMM members, and that is a very vital role, Islamic da'wah, da'wah of Muhammadiyah Blimbing Branch in Polokarto District."

Some of the roles of KMM in Islamic da'wah in the Blimbing Branch are as follows:

- 1) Organizing missionaries: Previously, PRMs in the Blimbing Branch or Muslims in general usually contacted personally if they needed missionaries to fill in the mosques or recitations they managed. Seeing this condition, the Blimbing PCM Tabligh Council then formed the KMM with the aim of organizing missionaries.

- 2) Producing more qualified missionaries: Members of KMM Blimbing Branch also regularly attend weekly debriefings. This is done so that the KMM members are growing more and more day by day. Like KMM members' phones, they also need to be charged once a week, so that the battery is always full. (Early, 2024)
- 3) Provision of da'wah missionaries without any charges: With the establishment of KMM, each branch can access or apply for missionaries to fill in their mosques without being charged.

The Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps is a non-formal institution. The following are the characteristics of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps according to Oddri (2023):

- a) Because it is a non-formal organization, its activities are carried out in unique places, such as mosques, prayer rooms, Islamic centers, or members' houses.
- b) There are no strict institutional rules so they are voluntary.
- c) It aims to study, deepen, and practice the teachings of Islam as well as disseminate it.
- d) There is direct communication between the pilgrims and the ustadz or missionaries.

Supporting Factors for Da'wah KMM Blimbing Branch

1) Solid leadership

One of the supporting factors for the running of KMM Blimbing Branch da'wah is the existence of a solid leadership. Because basically leadership cannot run alone. Leadership arises because of cooperation with others. Without others, there can be no leader, leadership is not the effort of one person alone, but involves teamwork. (Rini, 2006)

2) Adequate facilities or the existence of a coaching and evaluation place.

Muhammadiyah Blimbing Branch has an Islamic Center Building which is the center of all da'wah activities of Muhammadiyah Blimbing Branch and all its autonomous organizations. The Islamic Center is a center for Islamic activities that include worship, muamalah, and da'wah. In addition, the Islamic Center is also used as a place for the development and development of Islam. (Bennu et al, 2023)

3) The crowd of missionary cadres in the Blimbing Branch and in the branches throughout the Blimbing Branch.

Human resources are one of the most important components in an organization. Human resources as one of the supporting elements of the organization, can be interpreted as human beings who work in the organizational environment.

To carry out the da'wah mission, KMM needed many missionary cadres, because there were many Muhammadiyah branches in the Blimbing Branch. Therefore, the large number of missionary cadres is one of the supporting factors for the running of KMM's da'wah. The large quantity of missionary cadres is not enough, it must be accompanied by superior and qualified quality.

4) There is financial support from the Muhammadiyah Tabligh Council Blimbing Branch.

Muhammadiyah Blimbing Branch held a Sunday Morning Routine Study which has been running since early April 2017 until now, which was attended by around 1500 people. Every Sunday morning study, the Tabligh Assembly prepares an infaq box. Infaq funds can be used effectively to support da'wah programs and religious activities that provide real benefits to the people and society (Hana, 2024). The Sunday Morning infaq funds are used for the operational

purposes of Sunday Morning and also all activities of Muhammadiyah Blimbing Branch, one of which is to support the running of KMM activities.

Factors Inhibiting Da'wah KMM Blimbing Branch

In addition to supporting factors, there must also be inhibiting factors. The following are the factors that hinder the da'wah of KMM Blimbing Branch:

1) The busyness of the missionaries

These KMM missionaries come from a variety of different work backgrounds such as teachers, laborers, handymen, and self-employed, who of course have different free hours. This causes there to be a time when the missionary is scheduled to fill, but suddenly there is business and cannot fill, so having to find a replacement in a short time, it can lead to a vacancy of the missionary.

2) Weather

Seeing that the majority of missionaries use motorcycles in their mobility, of course the uncertain weather is one of the factors that can hinder. Even though the missionaries have been equipped with mantol, because often the da'wah schedule at night and heavy rain also hinder the preaching of these KMM missionaries. Especially for elder missionaries, who are more prone to getting sick.

3) Long distances

The da'wah schedule made by the KMM management takes turns, so that every missionary every week fills in a different mosque. Therefore, sometimes missionaries from the north can get a schedule to fill out studies in the southern part of the mosque which is quite far away, especially since the KMM da'wah schedule is often at night.

4) Lack of funding support

The main source of funds used to support KMM's da'wah comes from the Sunday Morning Study infaq. When Covid-19, and the Sunday Morning Study was canceled, KMM da'wah no longer had supporting funds. So that the debriefing of missionaries and other activities was stopped.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this research, the author concludes that the Blimbing Branch *KMM (Korps Muballigh Muhammadiyah)* plays a very significant role in Islamic *da'wah*. Some of its primary roles include: organizing missionaries, producing more qualified missionaries, and providing missionary services free of charge. The supporting factors for the implementation of *da'wah* by the Blimbing Branch *KMM* include: solid leadership, adequate facilities (including venues for coaching and evaluation), a large number of missionary cadres in the Blimbing Branch, and financial support from the *Tabligh* Council. Alongside these supporting factors, there are also inhibiting factors. The key obstacles to the *da'wah* efforts of the Blimbing Branch *KMM* are: the busyness and varied professional commitments of the missionaries, unpredictable weather conditions, considerable distances to target locations, and insufficient financial resources. From this study, it can be concluded that the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps holds a highly significant role in deepening, practicing, and fostering appreciation for Islamic teachings within the Blimbing Branch and its surrounding areas.

Future research could expand upon this study by adopting a comparative approach to analyze the effectiveness of the Muhammadiyah Missionary Corps across different branches or regions, taking into account variables such as socio-cultural contexts, leadership styles, and resource availability. Additionally, quantitative methods could be applied to measure the long-term impact of *da'wah* programs on community religious practices and social cohesion. Exploring the integration of digital platforms into *da'wah* activities—particularly to engage younger audiences—would also be valuable. Furthermore, investigating the role of women in missionary work, an area often underrepresented in current literature, could provide important insights. Finally, future studies may examine the financial sustainability models of *da'wah* organizations to ensure their resilience in fluctuating economic conditions.

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