

The Exploration of Innovation Forms and Suitable Topics for Da'wah Application through Teaching Innovation

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Abstract

Teaching innovation is commonly associated with memory and comprehension improvement as well as improvement of examination results. However, some studies connect innovation with the purpose of da'wah. However, no studies were found to directly link teaching and da'wah innovation. Therefore, this study was conducted to explore the appropriate topics of da'wah and the forms of da'wah innovation to students. The study was conducted qualitatively using a case study design. Eight study participants were selected based on the purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using in-depth and semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The findings showed that the study participants agreed that all topics in Islamic Education were suitable to be innovated for the purpose of da'wah. However, the most appropriate topic is prayer. Additionally, voice-based innovation is the most suitable form of innovation for da'wah. The findings of this study provide input to teachers to produce teaching innovations for the purpose of da'wah.

Keywords: Islamic Education, Teaching Innovation, Innovation Form, Da'wah, D'wah in Teaching.

Introduction

Da'wah has various meanings such as conveying Islam to people, teaching people Islam, and applying it accordingly in their lives as well as inviting people to goodness and preventing evil (Barghout, 2001). Da'wah is a common duty of all Muslims. This is based on many *dalil* (evidence), including "religion is advice" (Muslim, n.d.), "whoever sees iniquity, then change it..." (Muslim, n.d.), and "You are the best Ummah ever raised for mankind. You bid the Fair and forbid the Unfair, and you believe in Allah...." (Imran, 3:110).

However, da'wah is a mandatory task for educators. This is in line with the idea of *ta'dib* founded by al-Attas who emphasizes the application of manners and morals as the ultimate goal of education (Halstead, 2004). However, it is much more for the Islamic Education teacher (IET). This is because IET is a *da'ie* (someone who engages in da'wah) (Ahmad & Mansor, 2013; Muhamad & Jaafar, 2021). The responsibility of the GPI as a *da'ie* is a

continuation of the efforts of the prophets and messengers who taught Islam to their people (Salleh, 2018). Therefore, IETs need to translate their actions in the context of da'wah without limiting it to teaching and learning but also include co-curricular activities, both inside and outside the classroom (Surip, 2020). Therefore, IET as a *da'ie* needs to set a good example to the students (Ramlie, 2017) by practicing inner goodness (in the heart) and outer goodness (manifested through action) (Abas, Shafie, Majid, & Bakar, 2016). IET as a *da'ie* cannot simply convey the teachings of Islam but should lead students towards gaining the pleasure of Allah (Ayub, 2021). Allah's pleasure will be achieved when students have values and morals based on the framework of Islamic teachings (Al-Misri, 2014). The study also found that the task as a *da'ie* is a factor for the IET to constantly deepen the pedagogical content knowledge in preparation for teaching (Hussin & Tamuri, 2017).

Among the *da'ie* qualities that teachers need to have is gentleness because those qualities will affect the human soul, but Islam still does not prohibit punishment from being given to students who commit offenses (Salleh, 2018). IETs as *da'ie* also need to be motivated and responsible for all the tasks and trusts they carry and try to fulfill those tasks and responsibilities to the best of their ability (Surip, 2020). This is because the responsibilities are not only towards the students and other colleagues but also include the relationship with Allah s.w.t. (Surip, 2020). IETs as *da'ie* also need to get to know their students closely (Kasmin et al., 2019) because they are the *mad'u* who need to be understood in terms of contexts, issues, and problems they are experiencing before they can be invited back to the truth. In addition, it is a great advantage for teachers who master more than one language as they can expand their da'wah beyond races and ethnicities and reach even non-Muslim students (Jasmi & Pisol, 2015).

Several studies examine the methodology of da'wah used by IETs in schools. For example, a study assessing students' perceptions of the nature of IET da'ie at MRSM in Melaka showed that IET has a high da'ie character (mean: 4.00) (Jasmi & Pisol, 2015). This study was conducted using methodological frameworks of *mujadalah bil ahsan*, *hikmah*, and *al-mauizah al-hasanah methodologies* (an-Nahl, 16:125). *Dakwah bil hikmah* should be practiced by IET as *daie* in school (Surip, 2020). In addition, IET was also found to use seven da'wah strategies to stimulate students' higher-order thinking, namely; praise, tazkirah, encouragement, questioning techniques, discussion, writing, and innovation (Jamil et al., 2019). In the context of innovation, there are study participants who produced innovation in the topic of jawi and prayer. Some IETs produce innovations based on *zikr* therapy as a form of dakwah for weak students who are more interested in informal activities in the classroom (Hussin et al., 2013). In addition, the Ulul Albab empowerment through the STEM Module was made by adding the core value of the Quran and Sunnah to the existing STEM module (Rahim et al., 2014). There are six themes in the module namely; Ana Khalifah, Daily Worship, Physical and Spiritual Construction, Tadabbur of Nature, Maslahah Ummah Technology, and Islamic Scholarship. The da'wah value is applied in the sixth theme, which is Islamic scholarship by exposing students to public speaking skills, note-taking skills, and Islamic writing skills.

Although there are several studies linking da'wah with innovation, there have been no specific studies conducted focusing on the two topics directly. Therefore, this study was conducted to explore the appropriate innovation topics for da'wah's purpose and forms of innovation for da'wah to students.

Research Methodology

This was a qualitative study with a case study design. Eight study participants were involved in this study. The study participants were selected through purposive sampling technique. The use of the purposive sampling technique should begin with the criteria set for study participants (Merriam, 2009). Four criteria were set, namely; 1) Islamic education teachers, 2) produce teaching innovations, 3) win innovation awards at least at the state level, and 4) approachable and ready to collaborate. The demographic details of the study participants are as follows:

Table 1

The demographics of study participants

Participants	Post	Education level	Innovation produced	Award won
Ustaz Uwais (U1)	EIET	MA	Pintar Haji, Kembara Tanah Suci, Global Zakat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Innovative Teacher Icon
	DG5		Game, Cakna Solat, Eksplorasi Jom Solat, The Battle of Tajweed, i5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Innovative Teacher
	2			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Innovative Teacher
Ustaz Zakkir (U2)	EIET	MA	Jawi Abqori, Jari Jawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Innovative Teacher
	DG4			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold Medalist in National Innovation Competition
Ustazah Huda (U3)	EIET	BA	Roda Audit Solat, Klinik Tawata, Trademark, Borang BFFT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Innovative Teacher
	DG5			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silver Medalist in National Innovation Competition
Ustazah Aleeya (U4)	IET	BA	Hajj Pop Up Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Innovative Teacher
	DG4			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Innovative Teacher • Gold Medalist in International Innovation Competition
Ustazah Ainur (U5)	IET	BA	iSolat, iSMARTBOX, Solatku Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold Medalist in International Innovation Competition
	DG4			
Ustaz Imdad (U6)	EIET	MA	Kit Solat Awesome, Kit MaBaSol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Innovative Teacher
	DG4			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold Medalist in International Innovation Competition
Ustazah Aisyah (U7)	IET	MA	Permainan Digital Kembara Haji, Waze Sirah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Innovative Teacher
	DG4			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold Medalist in International Innovation Competition
Ustazah Arisya (U8)	IET	BA	Dam Haji LRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Innovative Teacher
	DG4			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEO Best Islamic Education Teacher
	4			

Data were collected from interviews and document analysis. In-depth and semi-structured interviews were conducted. Each interview session took between 45 minutes to an hour and a half. Interviews were conducted in Malay. The interview process was recorded using an audio recording application on a mobile phone. Each recording was transcribed with the help of transcribers. The transcriptions produced by the transcribers were reviewed by the researcher, as recommended by (Merriam, 2009). Document analysis was done on innovation materials and documentation related to the innovation such as reports and working papers.

Researchers tried to use network sampling, which is by asking the unit that manages Islamic Education teachers at the state and national levels, as well as the unit that manages MOE innovation competitions and the unit that manages SPLKPM data, but they could not supply any data on innovative teachers. This situation has caused the researcher to use snowball techniques to gather the eight study participants. The snowball technique is suitable to be used when researchers try to track study participants who can be likened to a hidden population (Noy, 2008). Snowball techniques can also be accepted if it is done according to the objective (Yin, 2011), which is subject to predetermined criteria (Merriam, 2009). Researchers began contacting three original study participants from three different states. Rapport with the three participants of this study has been built for a long time. It is named by Noy (2008) as a power relation. From the three participants of this original study, the following stemmata were built:

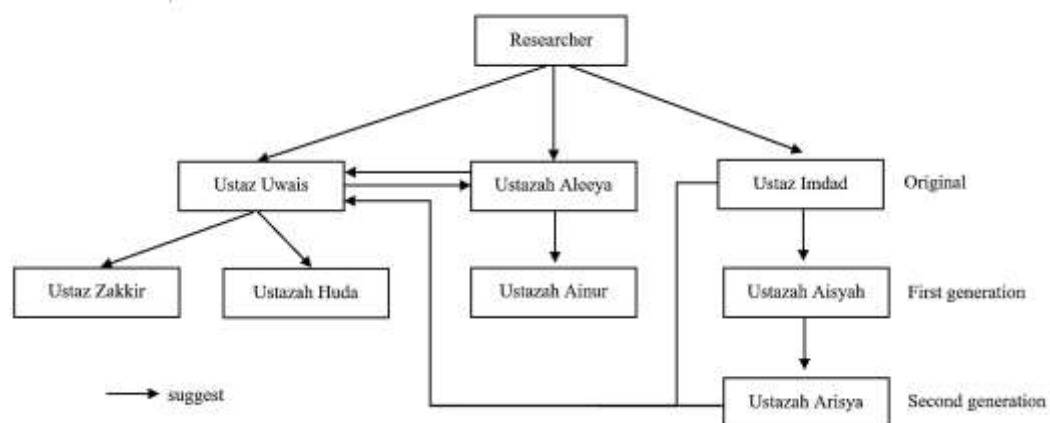


Figure 1: Stemmata snowball in search of study participants

Data were analyzed using NVivo Plus 12. The analysis process included the process of selection, reduction, and giving meaning to the data obtained (Patton, 2002). The continuous comparison method was also applied, allowing comparisons between data sets from one study participant at different times and different locations to be performed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Findings

The study participants agreed that da'wah should be applied through innovation. This is because, if the students have good manners, they will easily understand the knowledge they are learning. On the other hand, if the students had bad manners, then it would be difficult for them to appreciate anything they learned. Therefore, in producing innovation, character buildings should be emphasized among the important objectives. Ustazah Huda explained:

When a pupil's morals are built, for example, he keeps up prayers, obeys his parents, respects his teacher, then automatically what he learns, in that thick textbook, he can get. But why is it hard for pupils to study, today? They don't even want to come to school. They slept, did not pray. They go against their parents. If they go against the mother who gave birth to them, we teachers will look small in their eyes. That's why my methods, I think, my innovation is more towards something that can really help the pupil's inner self (S3U3TB1).

Thus, when producing innovation, study participants remembered the original goal of education which is to be closer to God. Ustaz Imdad described, *"Our foundation is value. Either based on God or based on results. Not based on that, it's important, but I don't prioritize that. I prioritize this"* (S6U6TB1). However, the study participants agreed that all types of Islamic educational innovations have an element of da'wah. For example, on the topic of Hajj, Ustazah Arisya said, *"(Everything has an element of) da'wah, let's go for Hajj. Connect it to everything we teach, we remind pupils that whatever we do is worship. Because every job is an act of worship"* (S8U8TB1). Therefore, even if the innovation is produced for purposes such as saving teaching time (S6U6TB2; S7U7TB2), helps memorization (S1U1TB1; S2U2TB2; S4U4TB2; S5U5TB2; S6U6TB1; S7U7TB2; S8U8TB1) and improve understanding (S1U1TB1; S2U2TB2; S4U4TB2; S5U5TB1; S6U6TB2; S7U7TB1; S8U8TB1), it still has the value of da'wah. Thus, various forms of innovation were produced by the study participants, such as; 1) gamification such as the Battle of Tajweed (S1U1AD1), Jawi Abqori (S2U2AD1) and Solat Awesome Kit (S6U6AD1), 2) ICT through the use of QR codes (S1U1AD1; S6U6AD1), AR (S1U1AD1; S4U4AD1) and VR (S4U4AD1), as well as 3) replicas such as Pop-up Hajj Tour (S4U4AD1) and Masbuq Muwafiq Card (S5U5AD1).

However, more da'wah focus is given to the topics that can have a direct impact on character building. For example, the topic of prayer. Ustaz Imdad explained, *"If our intention is based on helping the ummah, right, in shaa Allah sheikh (will be fruitful)... I prefer the prayer topic... Because we want to evaluate the result of that prayer... It's used to build value, for the character, and that's what I really want "* (S6U6TB1). The emphasis on the topic of the prayer is made because of the belief in the Divine decree that the prayer will prevent abominable and evil things. Although students can pray, the quality and appreciation of students during prayer are problematic. This is further explained by Ustaz Imdad:

Believed that "Innas salata tanha 'anil fahshai wal munkar", the prayer prevents evil deeds. And in fact, the prayer itself is a guide to fortify us from doing the wrong thing. That's when I do the prayer topic, that's my effort to be close to the pupils or my children, to prevent them from falling into sin. So, we did a study on prayer. The pupils apparently can pray. They pray, do the prayer, but when you checked again, apparently there is a problem with the prayer. That's why we made the prayer puzzle, about the meaning of the recitation in the prayer. We put the foundation on prayer. That's my effort to help the children, our Muslim children (S6U6TB1).

Having the same views as Ustaz Imdad, Ustaz Uwais also focused on the production of prayer innovations. He intended to produce students who are strong in faith and became a guide when they work later. When there is faith, then students will be trustworthy with their work.

It all starts with prayer. That's how he produces Cakna Solat. Ustaz Uwais clarified, *"We have to provide a strong foundation for the pupils, which when they finish school, even after this, they become mechanics, mechanics with strong Faith. A cleaner with strong Faith. The one with integrity. How? We make sure the fundamental is strong. They are religious literate, do their pray"* (S1U1TB1).

In terms of form, Ustazah Aisyah wants to educate her students to use good language. Thus, she produced Army Yell. The goal is to replace *"their language... It's not the swear word, no. But... They didn't seem to fit in with the Islamic Education class"* (S7U7TB1) with *"So it's used like this, when they are grateful, have fun, they say, "Allahuakbar!", Right? "Alhamdulillah!"* (S7U7TB1). Through Army Yell, students are educated not to *"be 'stingy' with knowledge... It's like, for example, someone got new knowledge, he doesn't want to share it with friends. But when we applied that concept, he wants to share (the knowledge) because I told them, we learn, and when we teach a friend, it's considered a charity, right. I explained to them that it is a form of jihad. So, there seems to be a little bit (of improvement). Alhamdulillah"* (S7U7TB1).

Ustazah Huda stated that by using Trademark, a voice-based innovation, students' hearts will be touched. As a result, any advice or reprimand given by her will be heard by the students. She explained, *"How do you want to touch pupils' hearts? That's my aim this year, I want to do, that voice. When you have a steady voice, with a voice you can change the pupils, a sleeping one can wake up"* (S3U3TB1). Ustazah Arisya uses innovation in the form of formulas. Although the formula helps students remember the lesson content, it also serves as a reminder for students to learn from that. Ustazah Arisya explained:

For me, these formulas have an element of da'wah. For example, the atomic formula that I made, the destruction of the previous races reminds us of how the Luth races were destroyed. So, when they hear that, oh, it causes this if they do that. So, these pupils (think), they know that homosexual relationship is a great sin, will be punished by God. They learned from what happened to Luth's people (S8U8TB1).

In addition, the use of singing innovation explaining the struggle of the hero figure, can evoke appreciation and inspire the students. Ustazah Arisya said, *"If the song is about the struggle that the figure faced, it is jihad. If we do not fight, are lazy, we will not succeed. It is a da'wah to study hard"* (S8U8TB1).

Discussion

IETs should cultivate a moral code in the pursuit of healthy work culture and congruous working atmosphere (Surip, Razak, Tamuri and Fatah (2019). The findings of this study showed that IETs emphasized disciplines in their teaching, apply the elements of da'wah as well as inculcated manners and values while producing innovation. This study confirms the findings of Tamuri et al (2006); Tamuri et al (2010); Muhamad (2015); Abdullah et al (2021) that the domain of *muaddib* is more dominant among the IETs than the domain of *murabbi*, *muallim*, *mursyid* and *mudarris*. The emphasis of the study participants on the topic of prayer is an effort of da'wah in innovation and to educate students, in line with the word of God, "... establish regular Prayer: for Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds..." (al-Ankabut,

29:45). The appreciation of prayer needs to be inculcated among student to produce an inner spiritual strength and a guard against evil deeds (Suratman et al., 2008). Therefore, repeated reminders of the importance of prayer must be emphasized so that it becomes a continuous education to students (Ibn Khaldun, 2001). Surely the reminder benefits the believers (az-Zariyat, 51:55).

In terms of form, the use of voice-based innovation is in line with the method of *dakwah bil lisan* (preaching through oral) of Rasulullah s.a.w., in which he speaks clearly and fluently, the audible volume of voice, acceptable and understandable speed, words that are simple and easy to understand, incorporating words of advice, making parables and using elements of humor (Jaafar, 2014). Singing is an innovation accepted as one of the best methods of Islamic Education T&L Ayub (2021) as it can stimulate active student engagement and enjoyable Yusoff (2019) as well as create a relaxed but controlled atmosphere during the T&L (Salleh & Zulkifli, 2020). IETs should cultivate a moral code in the pursuit of healthy work culture and congruous working atmosphere.

Conclusion

The findings of the study showed that the study participants believed that all the topics in Islamic Education were suited for da'wah. However, the topic that is central to da'wah is prayer. As such, the topic of prayer is prioritized by the study participants in producing their innovations. In terms of innovation forms, voice-based innovation is recognized as a form of innovation that is often used for da'wah purposes. Ustazah Aisyah with Army Yell, Ustazah Huda with Trademark and Ustazah Arisya with singing innovation. It is according to the *da'wah bil lisan*. By using voice intonation, sentence structure, tone, and rhythm students can be attracted to the application of manners and morals topic, in addition to the content memorization. These findings have implications for IETs in designing innovations for da'wah as well as manipulating their creativity in the voice art to produce forms of innovation that are capable of giving a great da'wah that could impact the formation of student identity.

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