Problems and Dynamics of Thought of Da'wah Institutions: Between Islamization and Secularization

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Article Info	Abstract
	This study is important in understanding how these institutions respond to the ideological tension between two major currents: Islamization and secularization, both of which significantly influence policy direction and da'wah strategies. The main objective of this research is to explore the evolving thought dynamics within contemporary da'wah institutions and their impact on institutional management and social outreach. Using a library research method, the study examines classical and contemporary literature on secularization, Islamization, and institutional da'wah management. The findings reveal that Islamization-oriented institutions emphasize religious identity and the formal application of sharia, whereas institutions leaning towards functional secularization prioritize universal values, inclusive language, and context-sensitive strategies for multicultural societies. The novelty of this study lies in its comparative analysis that highlights how different ideological orientations shape organizational design, leadership models, and public communication strategies. The implications suggest that integrating Islamic values with inclusive and adaptive modern management principles is essential for policy development in contemporary da'wah institutions. *Penelitian ini penting untuk memahami bagaimana lembaga dakwah merespons tarik-menarik antara dua arus pemikiran besar: Islamisasi dan sekularisasi, yang memengaruhi arah kebijakan dan strategi dakwah. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi dinamika pemikiran yang berkembang dalam lembaga dakwah kontemporer serta dampaknya terhadap manajemen kelembagaan dan jangkauan sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode library research, dengan menelaah literatur klasik dan kontemporer mengenai konsep sekularisasi, Islamisasi, dan manajemen dakwah. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan Islamisasi cenderung menekankan identitas religius dan formalisasi syariat, sedangkan pendekatan sekularisasi fungsional mengedepankan nilai-nilai universal dan adaptasi kontekstual terhadap masyarakat multikultural. Kebaruan dari penelitian ini terletak pada analisis perbandingan yang menyoroti dampak orientasi pemikiran terhadap desain organisasi, pola kepemimpinan, dan strategi komunikasi publik lembaga dakwah. Implikasi temuan ini merekomendasikan pentingnya integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dengan prinsip manajemen modern yang inklusif dan adaptif sebagai dasar perumusan kebijakan kelembagaan dakwah di era kontemporer.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Amid rapid social change and the complexity of modern life, Islamic missionary institutions, as agents for spreading Islamic values, face increasingly diverse challenges. Society is no longer homogeneous in terms of religious understanding, but rather highly pluralistic in terms of culture, education, and ideological orientation (Dute, 2021). In this context, there is a tug-of-war between two major schools of thought that shape the direction and strategy of da'wah: Islamization and secularization (Nurkhalis, 2024). Both issues are not merely theological debates, but have a real impact on how da'wah institutions formulate policies, design programs, and reach out to the wider community. These debates are important because they concern the future sustainability of the role of da'wah in an ever-changing modern society (Amrillah, 2022).

The urgency of this discussion is even stronger when we look at the reality of the past decade. Based on data from various national surveys and independent research, such as the Social Piety Index Report by Dompet Dhuafa (2022) and the Religious Literacy Index Report by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (2021), there has been a decline in urban communities' participation in conventional religious activities, while digital and social media-based da'wah activities have been on the rise (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2023). However, many da'wah institutions lack a unified vision and adaptive strategies to respond to these dynamics. Some institutions remain exclusive and normative, advocating a strict formalization of sharia law, but fail to consider the increasingly diverse and dynamic societal context. On the other hand, some institutions are trying a functional secularization approach by emphasizing universal values and rational language, but this risks causing a religious identity crisis (Sutrisno, 2019). This gap reflects a dichotomy between ideological and contextual approaches within contemporary da'wah institutions.

The main causes of this problem are: (1) a lack of integration between Islamic values and modern management strategies; (2) weak market research on da'wah, resulting in programs that are not contextual; and (3) a crisis of leadership and regeneration of da'wah cadres who are adaptive to changing times. The limitations of this study focus on the examination of the institutional thoughts and strategies employed by da'wah institutions in responding to the tension between the currents of Islamization and secularization, without delving deeply into fiqh or legal aspects.

Ideally, da'wah institutions should be able to become dynamic, contextual institutions that remain grounded in the fundamental values of Islam. Da'wah should not be trapped in an exclusive approach that closes itself off to change, nor should it completely dissolve into the tide of secularization that weakens the authority of transcendental values (Kahfi, 2025). Ideally, da'wah should be inclusive yet principled, open to dialogue between civilizations without losing its sharia foundation (Prasetawati, 2018). To that end, reflective and systemic thinking is needed in addressing the direction of da'wah movements and institutional designs that are capable of responding to the challenges of the times in a visionary and strategic manner.

This phenomenon shows that the issue of da'wah today cannot be separated from the dynamics of institutional thinking and policy (Rahmawati, 2016). The choice between Islamization or secularization is not only a matter of ideology, but also reflects how institutions understand their social role in a diverse society. Da'wah institutions are required to take a position that is not only normatively firm, but also adaptable in an operational context (Aziz, 2024). This concerns how they develop programs, choose communication strategies, recruit human resources, and establish partnerships with other social actors. Furthermore, these dynamics also influence the managerial and governance aspects of da'wah institutions. Institutions that tend toward Islamization generally emphasize ideology- and sharia-based cadre development, while those that lean toward functional secularization are more flexible in building cross-sector cooperation (Isnanto, 2018). These differences in approach create differences in leadership styles, organizational structures, reporting systems, and program evaluation mechanisms. Therefore, it is important to examine in depth how these dynamics are implemented at the policy and institutional program levels.

Not only that, the tension between Islamization and secularization also reflects the search for the identity of contemporary Islamic da'wah (Readi, 2024). In the context of globalization of values and the digital age, Muslims no longer need only normative da'wah, but also substantive, contextual, and communicative da'wah (Mahmud, 2024). Dawah institutions are required to convey religious messages using approaches that can be understood by urban communities, young people, interfaith communities, and even groups that are skeptical of religious institutions (Aripin, 2023). The orientation of thought within dawah institutions serves as the primary

foundation for determining strategies, program design, and the direction of religious movements that are more inclusive and impactful (bashori, 2020).

A number of previous studies have highlighted related issues. Hadi (2019) examined contemporary da'wah management strategies and emphasized the importance of professionalizing da'wah, but did not highlight the conflict between Islamization and secularization. Damanik et al. (2023) discussed the modernization and secularization of Islamic thought in Indonesia, but did not examine its impact on institutional management. Meanwhile, Baiti and Razzaq (2014) examined the channels of Islamization in Indonesian history, but did not touch on the dynamics of thought in contemporary dakwah institutions. This study differs by specifically highlighting the dynamics of thought between the currents of Islamization and secularization in the context of dakwah institutions and their impact on policy, managerial strategies, and social outreach. The novelty of this research lies in its comparative and contextual analysis of the institutional response of da'wah in the contemporary era. Therefore, the objective of this research is to analyze the forms of thought that have developed within contemporary da'wah institutions and to examine their implications for policy direction, institutional strategy, and the effectiveness of da'wah in a modern, pluralistic, and dynamic society.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative descriptive design that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of thought in contemporary da'wah institutions, particularly in the context of the tension between Islamization and secularization. The approach used is a qualitative approach based on library research, as the focus of this study is on tracing and analyzing the thinking and institutional strategies reflected in various academic literature and institutional documents.

The research method used is qualitative analysis of secondary data sources, including books, journal articles, research reports, institutional documents, and indirect interview results from open sources such as online media or da'wah institution publications. The main instrument in this research is the researcher himself as the key instrument (human instrument), who collects, selects, and interprets data based on a predetermined theoretical framework.

Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation and literature review, namely by identifying and reviewing written sources relevant to

the issues of Islamization, secularization, and management of da'wah institutions. Data analysis techniques were carried out using a content analysis model, which includes the stages of data reduction, theme categorization, meaning interpretation, and inductive conclusion drawing. To test the credibility of the data, the researcher used source triangulation techniques, namely by comparing and verifying information from various different literature sources, both classical and contemporary. In addition, peer discussions and peer reviews were also conducted to maintain the objectivity of the interpretation and strengthen the validity of the analysis results. The entire research process was carried out systematically and based on the principles of academic transparency and scientific integrity.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Historical Roots of Islamization and Secularization: The Epistemic Basis for Differences in Contemporary Approaches to Da'wah

To understand the dynamics of thought in contemporary da'wah institutions, it is important to first trace the historical roots of the two major currents that form their ideological foundation, namely Islamization and secularization. Islamization in Indonesia is not merely a contemporary phenomenon, but has been ongoing since the beginning of the Hijri calendar (Sudarto, 2020). According to Hasan Muarif Ambary, the process of Islamization in the archipelago took place in three phases, beginning with the arrival of Muslim traders in the 1st to 4th centuries Hijri (Azizah et al., 2025). The spread of Islam did not occur in a single wave but through various social and cultural channels such as trade, marriage, Sufism, education, art, and politics.

The trade approach was an effective channel because it involved local elites, while marriages between Muslim merchants and noblewomen accelerated the acceptance of Islamic teachings in the palace environment (Seprina, 2024). The Sufism channel also contributed to the acculturation process, making Islam easier to accept through a local spiritual approach. The arts and politics also played an important role, particularly through figures such as Sunan Kalijaga of the Walisongo. Equally important were Islamic educational institutions such as pesantren, which served as centers for Islamic preaching and the structured transmission of Islamic knowledge (Saifullah, 2017). This model of Islamization emphasizes the integration of Islamic values with the social structure of society, a pattern still inherited by some

contemporary missionary institutions that advocate the formalization of sharia and Islamic identity (Kafid, 2023).

Meanwhile, secularization as a global trend developed from Western European history, particularly since the Enlightenment era of the 17th and 18th centuries (Jatmiko, 2017). Secularization derives from the word saeculum, which refers to the world or era, and originally referred to the process of separating individuals from religious life to secular life (Santiago & Asnawi, 2024). In its subsequent development, secularization became a social process that describes the separation of religious values and institutions from the public sphere, including politics, education, and law (Weber, 2016). Thinkers such as Émile Durkheim and Max Weber explained secularization as part of institutional differentiation in modern society, while Peter Berger and José Casanova later criticized the assumption that modernity always leads to the decline of religion (Weber, 2016).

In the context of Islam, secularization does not occur as a natural process as it does in the West, but is often seen as a product of colonialism and epistemological domination (Mamdani, 2002). Nevertheless, some modernist Muslim thinkers such as Nurcholish Madjid and Fazlur Rahman view functional secularization the technical separation of religious and state affairs as a step toward purifying the role of religion to make it more authentic in society (Bahaf, 2015). In contemporary reality, this approach has been adopted by a number of da'wah institutions that tend to emphasize rationality, inclusivity, and universal values, while distancing themselves from exclusive religious symbolism.

Thus, the history of Islamization and the development of secularization ideas form an important foundation for understanding the ideological configuration of da'wah institutions today. The two are not only different in terms of approach but also in how they position the role of religion in modern social life. This difference is the primary source of intellectual dynamics and tensions among Islamic missionary institutions in Indonesia, while also raising a strategic question: will Islamic missionary institutions affirm their identity through structural Islamization or adapt through more adaptive functional secularization?

2. The views of Islamic scholars and thinkers on secularization

In general, the views of Islamic scholars and thinkers on secularization tend to be critical, although not monolithic (Ismail, 2023). Differences in views arise

depending on the historical context, scientific background, political conditions, and approach to the relationship between religion and worldly life. For some scholars and thinkers, secularization is a threat to the integrity of Islamic teachings, which encompass all aspects of life (Paranrangi, 2010). However, others, especially modernists, see the potential of secularization as an instrument to promote social institutional reform and community governance as long as it does not sacrifice the basic values of Islam.

Many classical and contemporary scholars reject secularization on principle, arguing that Islam does not recognize a dichotomy between the sacred and the profane. Islam is understood as a comprehensive system of life (syumul) that encompasses spiritual, legal, social, economic, and political aspects. The separation of religion from the public sphere, or from the state system, is considered a form of Western imitation that contradicts the principle of tawhid (the unity of divine values and order). Figures such as:

a. Sayyid Qutb (Egypt) viewed secularization as a form of "modern ignorance (Ismail, 2023).

b. Abul A'la Maududi (Pakistan) refers to secularism as the usurpation of God's sovereignty by humans.

c. Prof. Dr. H. Mohammad Rasjidi emphasizes that secularism is never neutral and always has a negative influence on the faith and social structure of Muslims (Adian, 2015).

Some scholars argue that the term secularism itself has no roots in Islamic tradition and should therefore be completely rejected. For example:

"Secularism is the construction of a way of life without a religious foundation. Therefore, secularism is contrary to Islam and is even Islam's most dangerous enemy." Altaf Gauhar (Luqman Hakim, 2022)

Some modernist and reformist Islamic thinkers have attempted to take a pragmatic and contextual approach to secularization. They do not accept secularism as an ideology of separation between religion and state, but recognize the need for social and institutional reform to free Muslims from feudalism, the politicization of religion, and authoritarian conservatism. Figures such as:

a. Muhammad Abduh encouraged the renewal of Islamic thought to align with modern reasoning.

b. Fazlur Rahman emphasized the importance of understanding maqashid al-syari'ah (the objectives of Islamic law) in order to respond to contemporary challenges.

c. Nurcholish Madjid viewed secularization as the purification of religion from its political functions.

"Secularization is not a rejection of religion, but an effort to free religion from non-essential worldly functions. Religion must be positioned authentically, not as a political tool."— Nurcholish Madjid (Abidin, 2022).

However, Islamic modernism still rejects total secularism, and only accepts "functional secularization" in a sociological sense. Some contemporary Muslim philosophers have developed philosophical critiques of secularism from epistemological and ontological perspectives. They argue that secularism is fundamentally incompatible with the Islamic worldview, as it rejects transcendent values and desacralizes life. "Secularism and Islam have no common ground. The essence of Islam is antithetical to secularism." Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (Hakim, 2022).

According to al-Attas, secularism arose from Christian theological history, which experienced conflict between the church and science, whereas Islam did not experience a similar epistemological conflict. Therefore, adopting secularism is ahistorical and destructive in the context of Islam. Other figures such as Yusuf al-Qaradhawi provide fiqhiyah arguments that secularism means rejection of sharia, and thus constitutes a form of rejection of revelatory authority. "Secularism can never be generally accepted in an Islamic society. Accepting secularism means rejecting sharia and divine law." — Yusuf al-Qaradhawi (Qaradhawi., 2018)

3. The Dynamics of Thought: Between Islamization and Secularization

The dynamics of thought between Islamization and secularization is one of the most significant debates in the intellectual discourse of the modern Islamic world (Nata, 2019). This ideological struggle emerged as a response to global changes, modernization, and the dominance of Western epistemology in various areas of life, including education, politics, economics, and culture. Secularization, which in the Western context is understood as the separation of religion from public life and state institutions, has had a major influence on the structure of Muslim societies, especially since the colonial era. On the other hand, Islamization has emerged as an effort to

rebuild a way of life based on Islamic values, as well as a form of resistance against the dominant narrative of secularism, which is seen as eroding the authority of revelation and weakening the role of spirituality in social spaces.

The idea of secularization in the Muslim context is not necessarily accepted in the same way as in the West. Many Muslim thinkers consider the process of secularization in Islam to be unnatural, but rather imposed through colonization and intellectual hegemony (Adian Husaini, 2020). Figures such as Sayyid Qutb, Maududi, and Yusuf al-Qaradhawi firmly reject secularism as an ideology, as it is considered contrary to the principle of tawhid and the integrity of Islamic teachings that encompass all aspects of life. For them, secularism is not only the separation of religion and state, but a value system that reduces the role of religion in shaping social structures, laws, and public morality (Otto Gusti Ndegong, 2017). Secularism in this view is understood as a Western ideological project that denies the existence of God in worldly affairs, and is therefore considered incompatible with Islam.

Conversely, the idea of Islamization arose from a desire to reaffirm the autonomy of Islamic thought amid the hegemony of Western knowledge systems (Prayogi et al., 2023). This movement developed in two major approaches: first, Islamization of the system, which seeks to apply Islamic law in the state, law, and public policy; second, Islamization of knowledge, as formulated by figures such as Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, who seek to integrate Islamic epistemology into modern sciences so that they do not stray from the roots of revelatory values and ethics (Maky, 2021). Islamization in this context is not merely a romanticization of the past, but a constructive effort to shape a modern society that remains grounded in divine principles.

However, the dynamics between Islamization and secularization are not always diametrically opposed. In some regions, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, hybrid or synthetic approaches have emerged, seeking common ground between modern universal values and Islamic teachings. Thinkers such as Nurcholish Madjid and Fazlur Rahman reject secularism as an ideology but accept secularization in a functional and contextual sense, meaning the liberation of social institutions from the symbolic dominance of religion while maintaining Islamic moral-spiritual values as an ethical foundation. In this approach, secularization is not understood as the elimination of religion, but as the purification of religion from the manipulation of

power, and opening space for religion to be present more authentically in public life. (M. Rasyidi, 1972).

This dynamic also has a major impact on education, the media, and institutional management of the Muslim community (Yahya, 2017). Secularization demands rationalization and neutrality in institutional management, while Islamization emphasizes the importance of integrating divine values into governance. This tension has given rise to various institutional models: from modern Islamic educational institutions, Islamic universities based on the integration of knowledge, to da'wah organizations that adopt professional managerial structures while remaining grounded in Islamic values. In an ever-changing world, the greatest challenge is not merely choosing between Islamization or secularization, but how to reconfigure the framework of values and social structures that can address the complexities of the times without losing religious and human identity.

Some da'wah institutions in the modern era have explicitly chosen the path of Islamization as the primary approach in responding to the challenges of the times. This approach aims to re-instill Islamic values in all aspects of social, political, economic, and cultural life. Islamic-oriented da'wah institutions typically do not merely convey da'wah through verbal or ritualistic means but are actively involved in establishing Islamic education systems, designing sharia-based social policies, and advocating for the implementation of Islamic law at both local and national levels. They tend to promote da'wah as a social-transformational movement that seeks to realize an Islamic society structurally, not merely as individual morality.

The advantage of this approach lies in its comprehensive and transformative vision. Da'wah institutions that promote Islamization have a clear long-term orientation in shaping a comprehensive Islamic way of life. They usually have a systematic dakwah curriculum, a strong cadre network, and structured community development programs. This approach also provides a strong direction and identity for Muslims amid the globalization of secular values. In this context, Islamization serves as an effort to strengthen the independence of the community, maintain the integrity of sharia, and reaffirm the role of religion in the public sphere and state policy.

However, the Islamization approach is not without criticism. One of the main criticisms is that in practice, some da'wah institutions that promote Islamization tend to be exclusive, confrontational towards pluralistic values, or even political. When

da'wah is too focused on the Islamization of formal systems—for example, by emphasizing the application of Islamic legal symbols—then spiritual, ethical, and cultural aspects of da'wah are sometimes neglected. Additionally, an overly structural approach is often seen as insensitive to the realities of a diverse and dynamic society. In some cases, Islamization is implemented without critical evaluation of social conditions, resulting in an idealistic movement that is difficult to apply in an inclusive and contextual manner.

The following are some examples of da'wah institutions or Islamic organizations that tend to take a functional approach to secularization, i.e., they do not reject religion but separate or reduce explicit religious symbolism in institutional practices to be more adaptive to a diverse and modern society.

a. Yayasan Paramadina (Indonesia)

Founded by Nurcholish Madjid, an Indonesian Muslim intellectual who promoted the concept of secularization in a positive and functional sense. Paramadina is known as an institution that provides higher education and Islamic discussions with an inclusive, rational, and contextual approach (Ali-Fauzi, Ihsan, 2017).

1) Secularization characteristics: Focus on universal Islam, moral ethics, and human development; not Sharia symbolism.
2) Motives and strategies: Promote rationality, tolerance, and pluralism without losing the spirit of Islam.

The Paramadina Foundation is a concrete example of a modern Islamic outreach institution that has taken the path of functional and intellectual secularization, not to distance Islam from life, but rather to enable Islam to be present in an ethical, rational, and down-to-earth manner in modern society. They prioritize education, dialogue, and strengthening values, rather than symbolism or political authority. Although this approach is not without challenges, Paramadina has made an important contribution to building a friendly, intellectual image of Islam that is adaptive to the globalization of values.

b. Institut Studi Islam Fahmina (ISIF – Cirebon)

This institution was founded by KH. Husein Muhammad and is known as a promoter of da'wah with a perspective on human rights, gender equality, and social justice (Kartika, 2020).

a. Characteristics of secularization: Promoting Islamic values in a social context without emphasizing normative dogma.

b. Motive: Eliminating the impression of Islam's exclusivity and bridging interfaith and ideological dialogue.

Secular-leaning missionary institutions are not secular in the ideological sense, i.e., completely separating religion from the public sphere, but rather apply functional secularization. They remain grounded in Islamic values, but in their da'wah practices, they use a universal language that is acceptable to the broader society, including non-religious or interfaith communities. Their approach does not explicitly emphasize religious symbolism but instead focuses on universal values such as humanity, social justice, education, and community empowerment. In the context of a modern, pluralistic, and dynamic society, this strategy makes da'wah more flexible, adaptive, and inclusive, allowing Islamic messages to be conveyed contextually without provoking cultural or ideological resistance from other groups.

The dynamics of thought between the Islamization and secularization currents directly influence the direction of policies and work programs of da'wah institutions in the modern era. These differing ideological orientations create diversity in the approaches taken to formulate visions, missions, and the types of programs implemented. Institutions rooted in Islamization tend to establish policies focused on the formalization of Sharia law, the structural formation of an Islamic society, and the strengthening of religious identity through legal da'wah, ideological training, and public morality campaigns. Their programs typically emphasize strengthening Islamic ideology, educating da'wah cadres, and advocating Sharia-based policies, including in the education, economic, and legal sectors.

In contrast, institutions that are more functionally secular will direct their policies towards a more inclusive, universal and social-humanistic approach to da'wah. They focus more on strengthening the values of justice, welfare, tolerance, and humanity without overemphasizing religious symbols. Their program policies can be in the form of interfaith community empowerment, universal character education, strengthening literacy, and advocating for contemporary issues such as

gender equality, the environment, and democracy. This model allows da'wah organizations to reach out to urban and multicultural communities in a more relevant and acceptable way.

Other implications can be seen in the organizational structure, public communication patterns, and strategic partners they build. Institutions with an Islamization orientation tend to strengthen internal structures based on ideological regeneration and reference to Islamic texts, while institutions based on a functional approach are more open to partnerships with secular institutions, international NGOs, and even pluralistic state institutions. This difference in orientation ultimately also determines the extent to which da'wah institutions respond to public policy, as well as how broad the social segmentation they can reach. Thus, the dynamics of thought do not only become a discourse debate, but have a real impact on the strategies, priorities, and direction of the sustainability of da'wah institutions in facing the challenges of the times.

4. The Impact of Islamization Thinking on the Policy Direction of Da'wah Institutions

Islamization thinking that develops in contemporary da'wah institutions has had a significant influence on the direction of policies, programs, and institutional structures. Islamization in this context is not only interpreted as a normative effort to return people's lives to the values of Islamic law, but also as an ideological strategy to shape people's identity, strengthen religious authority, and uphold a social system based on divine values. This orientation is reflected in various aspects of structural, symbolic, and normative da'wah institutional policies (Abdillah, 2018).

First, in the aspect of institutional vision and mission, da'wah institutions that carry Islamization thinking tend to emphasize the goal of forming a kaffah Islamic society (M. S. Ummah, 2019). This is manifested through grand narratives such as "sharia enforcement," "revitalization of people's faith," or "revival of Islamic civilization." The narrative is then translated into the formulation of da'wah programs that focus on strengthening aqidah, morals, and da'wah amar ma'ruf nahi munkar which is corrective to social life that is considered deviant from Islamic values.

Second, the Islamization approach influences the selection of issues and themes of da'wah (Efendi, 2021). The issues that are often raised revolve around the

obligation to uphold Islamic law, the dangers of liberalism and secularism, the need for sharia in public policy, and the rejection of Western culture which is considered to be damaging to the morals of the people. Dawah institutions with this approach generally prioritize text-based da'wah (nash) and fiqhiyah nuances, with a strong emphasis on literal adherence to Islamic laws.

Third, at the structural and institutional level, Islamization thinking gave birth to a hierarchical and ideological model of da'wah organization (Muhammadin, 2016). Leadership is positioned as the center of religious authority and the main decision-maker, with strict regeneration based on loyalty to the ideological vision of the institution (Al Kahfi, 2025; A. L. Kahfi & Mahmud, 2024). The institutional structure is designed in such a way as to support the long-term agenda of establishing an Islamic society, including through the establishment of Islamic schools, strengthening regeneration institutions, and fostering sharia-based communities.

Fourth, the external policies and social relations of da'wah institutions are oriented towards the formation of exclusive communities that are solid in identity. Da'wah institutions based on Islamization are generally cautious in cooperating with secular or interfaith institutions, because they are considered to obscure their commitment to the shari'i mission. The da'wah approach emphasizes internal development of the ummah rather than cross-identity dialogue or collaboration, although in some cases this approach can create strong internal solidity.

While the Islamization approach has advantages in terms of strengthening the identity and militancy of da'wah cadres, it also faces serious challenges. One of them is the difficulty in reaching culturally and ideologically heterogeneous communities, especially urbanites, secular youth, or multicultural communities that require a more inclusive and communicative approach to da'wah. If not accompanied by a message contextualization strategy, an Islamization approach that is too rigid has the potential to cause resistance and even social polarization. It can be concluded that Islamization thinking provides a firm and ideological direction to the policies of da'wah institutions, but its effectiveness is highly dependent on the institution's ability to balance between Islamic normative principles and a da'wah approach that is adaptive to social reality.

5. Impact of Functional Secularization Approach on Inclusive Da'wah Strategy

The functional secularization approach in contemporary da'wah institutions is a response to the reality of modern society that is increasingly plural, rational, and ideologically fragmented (Hasan, 2015). In contrast to ideological secularism that rejects the role of religion in the public sphere, functional secularization is more strategic and adaptive, which separates religious symbolism from operational approaches so that da'wah messages can be widely accepted across social, cultural, and religious background. s. This approach has a major impact on the transformation of da'wah strategies to be more inclusive, contextual, and humanist (A. Kahfi, 2025).

First, this approach encourages da'wah institutions to shift the focus of da'wah from symbols to substance, from legalistic aspects to ethical and universal approaches. Islamic values such as justice, compassion, humanity, equality, and togetherness are put forward in the da'wah narrative. Instead of using sharia terms or rigid theological jargon, da'wah institutions with this approach choose to use neutral and communicative language to be more easily accepted by urban communities, young professionals, or interfaith communities.

Second, the functional secularization approach affects the design of da'wah programs that are more participatory, multidisciplinary, and based on contemporary social needs. Dawah programs are not only in the form of religious lectures, but also include social advocacy, life skills training, mental health campaigns, environmental issues, and women's empowerment. In this way, da'wah does not only teach Islamic teachings, but becomes a means of actualizing Islamic values in a broader and more relevant social life.

Third, institutionally, this approach directs the structure of the da'wah organization to be more open, flexible and professional. Dawah cadres do not only come from among scholars, but also involve academics, activists, psychologists, artists, and social activists. Public communication strategies are developed through digital media, inclusive platforms, and collaboration with secular institutions and international NGOs Institutions such as the Paramadina Foundation and Fahmina Institute are concrete examples of the adoption of this approach in the Indonesian context.

Fourth, the functional secularization approach encourages the formation of bridges of dialogue between groups. Dawah organizations that use this approach tend to be active in building interfaith networks, attending diversity forums, and

developing the narrative of Islam as rahmatan lil alamin in social practice. This strengthens the position of Islam as a religion that is able to be present in the midst of global challenges without being exclusive or defensive.

However, this approach is also not free from criticism. Some consider that functional secularization risks blurring the boundaries of transcendental values and reducing the ideological power of Islamic preaching. Concerns arise when emphasized inclusiveness leads to value compromise or loss of Islamic identity in the long run. Therefore, a functional secularization-based da'wah strategy still requires a strong aqidah foundation, so as not to be uprooted from the spirit of da'wah itself. Overall, the functional secularization approach has made a major contribution in opening a new space for da'wah that is inclusive, contextual, and relevant to modern society. This approach allows Islamic da'wah to be present in a form that is communicative, humanist, and accepted cross-culturally, without losing the spirit of fundamental Islamic values.

6. Da'wah Institutions in the Modern Era: Development and Management Problems

Da'wah institutions have experienced significant evolution in Islamic history, from traditional forms such as Islamic boarding schools, majelis taklim, and mosques, to more structured and professional da'wah organizations in the modern era (Lubis, 2019). Social changes, scientific advances, and the increasingly complex needs of the people encourage the transformation of the form and approach of da'wah institutions. If previously da'wah was carried out personally and locally, it has now developed into formal institutions such as Islamic mass organizations, socio-religious institutions, to national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This transformation reflects adaptation to modern management systems that demand effectiveness, transparency and accountability in carrying out religious missions.

The purpose of contemporary da'wah institutions is no longer limited to conveying religious teachings alone, but has expanded to fostering people, empowering communities, character education, and social advocacy (Hadi, 2019) The function of da'wah has also developed into a strategy to strengthen Islamic identity in the face of cultural globalization, safeguarding public morals, and contributing to national development through a spiritual approach. In this case, modern da'wah

institutions act as agents of social change that embed Islamic values into various aspects of life, including education, economics, and public policy (N. H. Ummah, 2023).

In its management structure, today's da'wah institutions involve various important actors such as professional preachers, organizational managers, information technology teams, public relations departments, and da'wah volunteers. They operate within an organized work system, with a clear division of tasks and the use of managerial tools such as strategic planning, activity reporting, and performance evaluation. In addition, the role of the sharia council or religious advisor is vital to ensure that all programs and policies of the institution remain on the path of sharia. The combination of professionalism and spiritual integrity characterizes the success of adaptive and competitive da'wah institutions (N. F. Al Kahfi, 2024).

However, da'wah institutions in the modern era are also faced with various managerial problems that are not simple. One of the main ones is the dilemma between spiritual values and the demands of professionalism. On the one hand, da'wah is based on sincerity and ukhrawi goals; while on the other hand, the dynamics of the times demand efficient, rational, and target-based performance management. This tension often leads to internal conflicts between the idealism of the religious spirit and the reality of organizational management. For this reason, a leadership vision is needed that is able to maintain a balance between spiritual values and the effectiveness of the managerial system.

Another crucial problem is the leadership crisis and cadre regeneration. Many da'wah institutions still depend on charismatic figures or central figures, but are weak in a planned regeneration system. When the central figure resigns or dies, it is not uncommon for stagnation or conflict in the direction of the movement to occur. Therefore, leadership in da'wah organizations must be built not only on charisma, but also on managerial capacity, cross-generational communication, and structured regeneration planning through cadre training and mentoring (Al Kahfi, 2025).

Another challenge is dependence on donors, both individuals and institutions. This dependence can affect the independence of the da'wah movement, especially if the da'wah agenda begins to be adjusted to the interests of funding. In certain cases, this can even lead to the institution's submission to political or business influences that weaken the objectivity of da'wah. Therefore, the development of financial independence through models such as productive waqf, sharia business units, or

ethical and transparent crowdfunding systems is an urgent need to maintain the integrity and direction of the da'wah struggle.

Finally, a classic problem in the management of da'wah institutions is the weakness of organizational governance, especially in the aspects of transparency, accountability, and program effectiveness. Many institutions do not have an accountable financial reporting system, and lack data-based program evaluation mechanisms and community participation. This risks reducing public trust and the effectiveness of da'wah. Therefore, strengthening a healthy organizational culture, digitizing information management, and applying Islamic and professional governance principles are key steps in the reform of da'wah institutions. Thus, da'wah not only runs with enthusiasm, but is also measured, directed, and has a real impact on the lives of the people.

D. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the dynamics of thought between the currents of Islamization and functional secularization in contemporary da'wah institutions are not merely theological debates, but reflect institutional strategies that greatly influence the direction of policies, forms of programs, management structures, and the way institutions respond to the increasingly plural and dynamic social realities of modern society. The Islamization approach encourages da'wah institutions to focus on strengthening Islamic identity, formalizing sharia, and ideological development through regeneration networks and nash-based programs. Meanwhile, the functional secularization approach emphasizes inclusivity, universal values, adaptation of da'wah language, and involvement in contemporary social-humanitarian issues with an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach.

The implication of this finding for institutional da'wah policy is the importance of adjusting the approach model to the conditions of the target community. Dawah institutions need to consider the need to build a balance between normative-transcendental orientation with strategic and contextual approaches, so that dawah remains authentic in value but still effectively reaches the wider community. Da'wah policies that are too rigid to one approach will risk stagnation or social resistance, while approaches that are too loose can also lose the spirit of value and ideological direction.

As for suggestions for future research, researchers recommend a more in-depth field study or case study of certain da'wah institutions, both those oriented towards Islamization and functional secularization, to see how this orientation of thought is implemented in real institutional practice. Future research can also examine community perceptions of the effectiveness of the da'wah approach used, as well as develop hybrid da'wah models that are able to integrate Islamic values with modern management strategies that are adaptive, professional, and humanist.

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