

The Approaches of Da'wah in Helping the Social Problems Among the Adolescents and Its Applications by the Da'wah Organization in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Drastic social changes challenge the life of adolescents. An adolescent who are incapable of accommodating themselves, ends up in emotional stress and could cause them to involve in various social problems. Examples of social problems in Malaysia are drugs, gangsters, under age sexual activities, dropping out of schools and other negative behaviours. These problems eventually have been identified as social problems within the global community among the adolescent. The Muslim adolescent in the Islamic country is no exception too in facing these social problems. The social problems that's grows within the adolescents need to be given serious attention and help to overcome it. If not, in the long run it will produce a society that practice and hold a negative values which is against the Islamic teaching. The purpose of this article is to discuss the factors of social problems among the adolescent and identify the da'wah approaches from the perspectives of Islam in handling it. The other important part of this article is giving the recognitions to the da'wah organization in Malaysia who applied these da'wah approaches in their programmed toward the Islamic adolescents. As a concept, this article has identified that there are three basic da'wah approaches that can be used which has been stated in surah Al- Nahl: 125. In this surah the three approaches are dakwah bi al-hikmah, dakwah *bi al-mau'izah al hasanah* and dakwah *bi al- mujadalah al-husna*. These three basic dakwah approaches can be used and applied to the adolescent Muslims or any Islamic society as Islamic teaching itself is a universal and relevant. This approaches eventually being applied by the da'wah organization in Malaysia in their programs with the Muslim adolescent. The da'wah organizations that have been identified are The Da'wah Units of Religious State Department, Counseling Units in

Schools, Welfare Department in Malaysia, JIM (Islah Group of Malaysia), ABIM (Islam Youth Movement of Malaysia). These programs that are being conducted by these organizations have been producing positive results in helping to overcome the social problems among the Muslim adolescents. It is the hope that, the da'wah approaches in the perspective of Islam and the experience by the da'wah organization in Malaysia could be an example, used and applied by other organization to all other Muslim adolescent in the world. In future as these approaches grows and being recognize, one country could built the network within themselves, integrating the programmed and sharing the experience. In the end, these organization, programmed and approaches will help and overcome the social problem that being faced by the Muslim adolescent.

INTRODUCTION

It is strongly observed that a drastic social change today has given tremendous challenge to the life of adolescents. Adolescents who are incapable in accommodating themselves in the changes would end up in emotional stress and finally led them to involve in various social problems. These problems eventually have been identified as social problems within the global community among the adolescent. The Muslim adolescent in the other Islamic society is no exception in facing these social problems. The social problems that are growing within the adolescents need to be given serious attention and help to overcome it. Otherwise, in the long run it would produce a society that practice and hold a negative value that is against the teaching of Islam. The purpose of this article is to discuss the social problems among the adolescent and identify the da'wah approaches from the perspectives of Islam in handling it. The other important part or this article is giving the recognitions to the da'wah organization in Malaysia who applied their certain particular da'wah approaches toward adolescents. The programs that are being conducted by this organization has been producing positive results in helping to overcome the social problems among the Muslim adolescents. It is the hope that, the da'wah approaches in the perspective of Islam and the experience by the da'wah organization in Malaysia could be an example, used and applied by other organization to all other Muslim adolescent in the world. In future as these approaches grows and being recognize, one country could built the network within themselves, integrating the programmed and sharing the experience. In the end, these organization, programmed and approaches

will help and overcome the social problem that being faced by the Muslim adolescent.

In order to discuss the topic more clearly, the article can be divided into four sub topics. First topic about social problems among adolescents in Malaysia, second topic about the basic approaches of da'wah in Islam, third topic about da'wah Programs by da'wah Organization in Malaysia, who applied this approaches and fourth topic about the relevant of the da'wah approaches in Malaysia to others.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN MALAYSIA

Adolescence is a process rather than a period, a process of achieving the attitudes and beliefs needed for effective participation in society. In this period, the physical, biological, mentality and emotional can be change and develop. Along the process of development and transition, sometimes adolescents have problems and conflict. Refer to *Mu'jam 'Ilm al-Nafs*, adolescence is a *murahaqah*. That means start from puberty (baligh) and ended when they reached the early age of adulthood¹ (Fakhir Akil, 1985: 14).

According to *Dictionary of Developmental Psychology* adolescence in the period of transition between childhood and early adulthood. Commentators differ in setting the parameters of this period, but the period between 12 and 18 years of age is not uncommonly cited² (Hamilton, 1996:3).

G. Stanley Hall (1904), the first American Psychologist who write about adolescence, characterized the period as one of storm and stress. The biological changes of puberty and the new cultural expectations of the behavior seem to plunge some young people into behavioral oscillations between high activity and lethargy, excitement and depression, selfishness and selflessness, conceit and humanity, tenderness and cruelty. Psychoanalytic theory holds that adolescence is a period of renewed conflicts, a time when current problems and social pressures.

¹ Fakhir 'Akil. 1985. *Mu'jam 'Ilm al-Nafs*. Beirut: Dar El-Ilm Lil Malayin, pg.14.

² Ian Stuart-Hamilton. 1996. *Dictionary of Developmental Psychology*. London: Jessica Kinsley Publisher, pg..3

The drastic social change nowadays, also give challenge the life of adolescents. Adolescence that is incapable of accommodating themselves ends up in emotional stress and could cause them to involve in various problems.

Malaysian adolescents have actually involves themselves with social problems. Through many studies that being made by psychologist, sociologist and religious researcher show that Malaysian adolescent has involves themselves in various social problems. Although, the problems have not reached the stage that uncontrollable, but if these problems are not address the social problems among the Malaysia adolescents could be in a serious stage. Among the few types of social problem among adolescents in Malaysia are:

a) Crime Index

Through the categories crime index from Royal Malaysia Police Department of Malaysia, the crimes index such as killing, stealing, raping, firearm robbery and other juvenile crime. In their statistic, the crime index that involves adolescents from Jan-Jun 2004 is 1,408 people. From this amount it report 1.79% from total of 78,875.

b) Drug Addicts

Malaysian adolescents too are involves in drug problems. From the report, Anti Drug National Agency of Malaysia (Agensi AntiDadah Kebangsaan Malaysia), the first quarter year of 2003 (Jan-April), there are 13,519 adolescents alert are involved in drugs. These groups of people that are involved in drugs are youth that age between 20 to 29 years old.

c) HIV/AIDS

In 2001, Malaysia is facing with the rate of 15 deaths due to HIV/AIDS everyday. On April 2001, the number of HIV/AIDS in Malaysia has reached to 40,049. From these numbers, 40% of them are adolescents that aged between 13 to 29 years old.

d) Discipline Problems

Malaysian adolescents, has also involved in the discipline problems in school. From the research by done Fariza Md Sham (2005), the

identified category of discipline problem in school are not attending school, smoking, gangsterism, schools droup out and breaking the rules³.

e) Other Social Problems

The Malaysian adolescents are also involves in other social problems. These include under age smoking, drinking and hell rider. There are few research about social problems among adolescents; researched by Amaludddin Abd.Rahman (2001), has taken a 504 sample from the Youth Rehabilitation Centre. From the research, 414 youth are involves in smoking problem, 315 runaway from home, 265 drinking problems, 247 in drugs, 210 involved in moral problems and 212 underage sex activities.

There are few research had been done in Malaysia, such as Fariza Md. Sham (2005), Sufean Husin (2004), Mariani Md. Noor (2004), Amaluddin Abd.Rahman (2004) and Rozmi Ismail (2003). Based on these researches, there are few factors that has been identified that cause the adolescent involved in the social problems. These factors are:

a) Personality Factors

A personality factor is a factor that reflects a person attitude. An adolescent who does not have strong personality in eventually does not have strong faith and inner strength. These will lead them to involve in social problem.

b) Family Factors

A family factor is about the environment on the family influence towards the adolescents. Family factors such as divorce, parents remarried arguments and lack of communication in the family. These negative factors will lead the adolescents to social problems.

c) Environmental Factors

³ Fariza Md. Sham. 2005. *Dakwah Kepada Remaja yang Mengalami Tekanan Emosi. Kajian di Kajang Selangor*. Ph.D Thesis. Kuala Lumpur: Akademi Islam, UM, pg.10.

An environmental factor is defined as situation of social life of adolescents or where an adolescent live. City and metropolitan environment will expose an adolescent towards negative influence such as night clubs, pubs or gambling outlets. Individualistic attitude in the city will further cause the society not caring the problems that the adolescent facing. This eventually will lead the adolescents towards more social problem.

As the conclusion, the social problems that being faced by the adolescent in Malaysia has become the same social problems in another country. This is more relevant especially in the other Muslim society. It is important that the da'wah afford is being done to overcome this social problems.

THE BASIC APPROACHES OF DA'WAH IN ISLAM

Refer to *Lisan al-Arab* (1996:408), the word da'wah is a noun derived from the verb *da'a – yad'u* that means *to call* and *to invite*⁴. To call and to invite that means call to God or invite to Islam. Abd. Karim Zaydan, the author of the book *Usul al-Da'wah* gives the meaning of da'wah is call to Allah⁵. In the Qur'an, in surah Yusuf (12):108, Allah the Exalted says:⁶

Say thou: "This is my way: I do invite unto God, - on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes, - I and whoever follows me. Glory to God! And never will I join gods with God (Yusuf (12):108.

We can conclude that the da'wah is an activity to help people to introduce the right way of life (follows the rules of Islam) and to help people to solve their problems.

⁴ Ibn Manzur, Jamal al-Din Abu Fadl Muhammad bin Mukarram al-Khazradji al-Afriqi. 1996. *Lisan al-Arab*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, pg.408.

⁵ Abdul Karim Zaydan. 1987. *Usul al-Da'wah*. Mesir: Mua'ssabah Dar al-Wafa', pg.7.

⁶ al- Qur'an, surah Yusuf (12):108.

In the Qur'an, there are many verses that theoretically and practically indicate the approaches of da'wah. As a concept, that there are three basic da'wah approaches in surah al-Nahl (16):125⁷.

Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance (al-Nahl (16): 125).

In this surah, the three approaches are da'wah bi al-hikmah (wisdom), da'wah al-mau'izah al-hasanah (goodly counsel) and da'wah mujadalah bi al-lati hiya ahsan (Goodly dialogue/ arguments/ discussion).

a) Da'wah bi al-Hikmah (Wisdom)

The word hikmah is synonymous with the term *Hukm* which in purely Arabic terms gives the primary meaning of *to set the thing in its place*⁸. Ibn Sina uses Hikmah as the synonym for *Ilm* (knowledge)⁹.

The obligation of da'wah to persuade and convince people who had done wrong were not an easy job. It needed knowledge and qualification to da'wah. Wisdom demands that one should keep in view the mental caliber, capability and circumstances of the addressee and convey the message in accordance with the requirements of the occasion.

b) Da'wah bi al-Mau'izah al-Hasanah (Goodly Counsel)

Goodly counsel is the same concept with giving good advice. The giving of advice is the most important in da'wah. So, Islamic missionaries should apply these approaches in their conversation and say only truth. With goodly counsel, it can be touch our heart and emotion. People are not at has the same level of their education and social back ground. The application of the method of goodly counsel is only for ordinary people who cannot use their minds critically. They are probably among the people who are not well educated. They should be

⁷ al- Quran, surah al-Nahl (16):125.

⁸ *Encyclopedia of Islam*. 1965. vol. III, London: Luzac and Co. pg.377.

⁹ Badlihiham Mohd. Nasir.2003. *Da'wah and the Malaysian Islamic Movements*.Kuala Lumpur: Synergymate Sdn.Bhd. pg.28.

approached through the simplest way, such as with good advice and elementary instruction¹⁰.

- c) *Mujadalah bi al-lati hiya ahsan* (Goodly Dialogue/ Arguments/ Discussion)

Allah says in the Qur'an: "And argue with them in ways that are best and the most gracious". That means that need to be dealt or argued with people, it should be done in the best manner of gentleness, kindness and good speech. The advantage of gentleness and kindness is important in gaining supports and consequently in advancing da'wah¹¹. (Abdullah Md. Zin, 1991: 54). Applying this approach will convince the others in a simple and humble way.

DA'WAH PROGRAMS BY ORGANIZATION OF DA'WAH IN MALAYSIA

The da'wah organization in Malaysia applied the three da'wah approaches in their programs with the Islamic adolescent. The da'wah approaches and programs that being applied by the da'wah organization are based on *al-hikmah* (wisdom), *mau'izah al-hasanah* (goodly counsel) and *mujadalah bi al-lati hiya ahsan*(goodly dialogue/argue/discussion). The da'wah organizations that have been identified are the Counseling Units in Schools, Welfare Department of Malaysia, JIM (Islah Group of Malaysia) and ABIM (Islam Youth Movement of Malaysia). In applying the da'wah approaches, the da'wah organization has made programs that are attractive and suitable for the needs of adolescents. Among of the da'wah programs are:

- a) Motivation Programs

Psychology aspect in da'wah, has it own strength in building and making approaches towards process of individual and social motivation. The process of this motivation can be build from the personality of Islam. Through understanding the aqidah tauhid (the belief), practicing *shariah* Islam (way of life), having good moral will motivate the

¹⁰ Ibid. pg.30.

¹¹ Abdullah Muhammad Zin. 1991. *Islamic Da'wah (Mission)*. Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara. Pg. 54.

adolescents in positive way and against all social problems. Prof. Dr. Abd Aziz Mohd Zin, define motivation as a drives within one person, having the will or determination to archives one goals¹².

From the perspective of da'wah, motivation approaches in its programs are based on *al-targhib* and *al-tarhib*. Al-targhib is a concept where a person is encourage towards good deeds and getting reward from Allah. Al-tarhib is reminding the consequences and punishment from Allah for the sin and bad things that a person done. This approach is a significant approach for the Muslim adolescent as it could dither from doing wrong and encourage doing good deed and right decisions.

In al-Quran, encouraging doing good deeds (al-targhib) is mention in the verse (al- Nisa'(4):124)¹³.

If any do deeds of rightenouss,-be they male or female- and have faith, they will enter Heaven, and not least injustice will be done (al-Nisa' (4):124).

It is also mention in al-Quran where it mention about the punishment after doing the wrong decision and action in the verse (al-Zumar(39):16)¹⁴.

They shall have Layers of Fire above them, and Layers (of Fire) below them: with this doth God warn off His Servants: " O My Servant! Then fear ye me!"(al- Zumar(39):16)

From these two verses, it can be the motivation factor for a person to do good deeds and avoid the wrongful actions that are forbidden by God. This will eventually drives an adolescent not to be involved in social problems.

Malaysian Welfare Department is one of the active da'wah organizers in motivation programs. These include *Salah* motivation, self esteem program and studies motivation programs. These programs are being held in the mosque. Lectures, workshop, practical that are being done to encourage and guide the adolescents in improving themselves,

¹² Abd.Aziz Mohd Zin. 1999. *Psikologi Dakwah* .Kuala Lumpur: JAKIM. pg. 3.

¹³ al-Quran, *surah al- Nisa'(4):124*.

¹⁴ al-Quran, *surah al- Zumar(39):16*.

avoid the social problems, motivating them in their studies and achieves their goals.

b) Counseling (al- Irsyad)

In *Mu'jam Ilm al- Nafs* counseling is define as *al-irsyad*, which means, help given by the counselor with the purpose of helping the person in making the correct decision and solves its problems¹⁵. The definition of counseling is an interpersonal relationship- usually between two individuals, a teacher- counselor and a counselee- in which the principal objectives are the improvement of an individual's welfare and the amelioration of his problems.

Counseling is a process in helping and guiding an individual that having problems. These processes include understanding them, knowing them and guide them on how to solve the problem. A counselor who has the expertise and used the psychology method does it systematically.

Counseling is similar with *hisbah*. Hisbah in Arabic means the process of teaching learning about social to help one person understand the problem that they are facing and solved it by using the concept *al amr bi al- ma'ruf* (call or invitation to good deeds and stick with it), *wa al- nahy 'an al-munkar* (invitation to keep away from evil, mischief, calamity and so on)

In the process of counseling, the da'wah approach uses Imam al-Ghazali recommendation in handling the session that is interaction. Through interaction a counselor could help one understand him better, help a person to be more open in his problems and can accept other people opinion. Imam al-Ghazali says by knowing oneself and being normal, a person could have the best option in solving their problems. This eventually proves that the da'wah approach through counseling is one of the ways to solve social problems among the adolescent.

In the context of Malaysia, few researches have been done to find the effectiveness of da'wah counseling approach towards the adolescent who had social problems. Research done by Ahmad Hj. Hasbullah (1987) where students with studies and discipline problem in

¹⁵ Fakhir 'Akil. 1985. *Mu'jam 'Ilm al-Nafs*. Beirut: Dar El-Ilm Lil Malayin, pg. 30.

two schools (religious school and government boarding school). After being given the Islamic counseling and psychotherapy, the problem being faced by the students shows a positive result.

Amaluddin Ab. Rahman(2003) did a research on the students of University Putra Malaysia (UPM). This is done in the counseling unit of the religious department. The result shows that most students need counseling in solving their problem especially concerning religious problems. Da'wah counseling and approaches, either individually or as a group has managed to solve their problems.

In the national level, Malaysia has its own counseling unit that being run either privately or government. In schools, the Ministry Education has introduced counseling unit since 1960. These units have help in solving adolescent or student's problem in school. Malaysian Department of Welfare (JKMM) has also holds session of counseling especially for adolescent who are involved in juvenile cases and still in the process of rehabilitation. The unit that responsible for this activity is called Protection and Rehabilitation unit's services.

ABIM (Islam Youth Movement of Malaysia) has its own counseling unit called Islamic Outreach ABIM (IOA). This unit gives the guidance, moral and mental support to the youth that has converted to Islam. ABIM has counseling unit called HELPLINE. This unit is involved in giving counseling session to the adolescent who are facing with daily problems.

JIM (Islah Group of Malaysia), a Islamic movement body, has a counseling unit that offer it service through e-mail and telephones. JIM has another unit called Pusat Pemulihan Akhlak-Raudhtus Sakinah (Rehabilitation centre), that is specific to help and gives moral support to Muslim adolescent who have social problems¹⁶. In the implementation aspect, counseling programs are divided into three approaches. Program Enhancement of Insan, where the counseling will help the client to acknowledge and build its own strength and potential. Program Rehabilitation, is the approaches where counseling will help the client to solve and help overcome his mental psychology and emotion problems. Lastly, Program Avoidance. This counseling approach helps the adolescent to avoid and distance themselves from all aspect of social problems.

¹⁶ Badlihisam Mohd. Nasir. 2003. *Da'wah and the Malaysian Islamic Movements*. Kuala Lumpur: Synergymate Sdn.Bhd. pg. 8

These counseling programs are also mention in al- Quran (al-Imran (3):104)¹⁷.

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoying what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity(al-Imran(3):104).

c) Dialogue and Discussion

There are a lot of al- Quran verses that mention about how one person should think and how is the process of thinking. This thinking process involved observation, understanding and using one intellectual that is a gift from Allah. From this point of view, dialog and discussion has taken place in the process of da'wah towards the adolescent. Through this process, a person can start thinking, sharing experience, and at the same time change for the better.

Imam al-Ghazali in his book *Ihya' Ulum al- Din*, explain that moral development of human being are based on the stages of their lives (age). Guiding a person to have good morals, the person needs to be identified in their stages of lives. At the stage of the adolescent, the development is identified as the third stage. This stage a person starts to have his or her own mind of thinking, own evaluation and think through logical process. As the result, using the approaches that excites one adolescent mind through dialogue and discussion is the best's way at this stage of lives.

Discussions and dialogue could be done through the platform of forums and group discussion. The main reason for these discussion and dialogues are to hear and understand the adolescent perception towards any issues. Interaction, getting the ideas, knows their goals are part of the result when two-way communications happens in the da'wah counseling session.

Discussion and dialogue has been organize in Malaysia to overcome the social problem being faced by the adolescent Welfare Department of Malaysia has frequently organizes discussion through their counseling units, workshop and seminars in the purpose of to interact with the adolescent. Parents are involved in this session as they find it could help in solving certain aspect of the problems. For ABIM and JIM, they have

¹⁷ al- Quran, *surah ali-Imran* (3):104.

used the electronic media such as web-site, e-mail to discuss and dialogue with the adolescent.

Adolescents, being group of young people will appreciate if their view, thinking and opinion is being heard and accepted. Having platform for the discussion and dialogue helps their idea and problems to be heard. This eventually helps to solve the social problem that being faced by the adolescent. In da'wah approaches towards this process are to encourage the counselor to be kind and willing to hear the problems while doing the discussion and dialogue. At the same time, da'wah approaches encourage critical thinking, open-minded and having the correct attitude while doing the session. The da'wah approaches that being done by, Rasulullah s.a.w. while doing his da'wah mission can be used as an example. Rasulullah s.a.w. think critically and create an open discussion while having discussion and with the Quraisy, Jews and Nasrani.

In al-Quran, there is a verse that encourage a da'wah counselor to be kind and truthful in while doing the discussion (Fussilat (41):34)¹⁸.

Nor can goodness and Evil be equal. Repel (evil) with what is better: then will he between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate.(Fussilat(41:34).

CONCLUSION

As the conclusion, we can say that, the da'wah approaches that being practice in Malaysia are relevant to others. It is because the da'wah approaches that being practice by the da'wah organization in Malaysia is one of the effective's way to help the Muslim adolescent in solving their social problems. These organization have used the three basic da'wah approaches in their programs; *da'wah bi al-hikmah*, *da'wah bi al-mau'izah al hasanah* and *da'wah bi al-Lati Hiya Ahsan*. The programs that being conducted by these organizations has produced positive results in overcoming the social problems among the Muslim adolescents. From this point, the experience by the da'wah organization in Malaysia could be an example, used and applied by other organization to all other Muslim adolescent in the world.

Da'wah Islamiah itself is universal. There are different culture, with different language and background from one society to another. When we discuss this different, it will surely not have any similarity. It is

¹⁸ al-Quran, *surah Fussilat* (41):34.

belief that the approaches that being mention in surah al-Nahl (16):125, can be the turning point of similarity and applicable to the other Muslim society in the whole world.

Invite(all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious; for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance(al-Nahl(16):125).

The da'wah programs in Malaysia, might be applied to other society is based on few factors. There are:

- a) Muslim adolescents in the world hold Islam as their faith. They believe in al-Qu'ran and the sunnah of Rasullulah s.a.w. This directly involves the teaching of Islam, the law of Islam and the way of their lives. With these similarities, the da'wah approaches and programs in Malaysia can be applied in other Muslim society. If there is any difference it could be based on culture but the basic rules still the same.
- b) Social problems that being faced by the adolescent in Malaysia are the same as elsewhere in the world. Social problems in the world could also be recognized as global adolescent social problems. Only the culture and the value of one society would differentiate one social problem from another. In Islam, social problems are defined based on the teaching of the religion itself. It is easy to define the wrongs and the right as the Muslim used the same reference (al-Qu'ran and Sunnah). Based on these facts, the programs and approaches that being applied in Malaysia could be applied in other society.
- c) The da'wah programs that being organized in Malaysia are based on the three basic da'wah approaches as mention above. The da'wah approach is recognized as it is based on the Islamic teachings. The difference here would be the government policy and the culture itself. The programs would change to accommodate these variables; but the programs still could the similar and successful because it still based on the three basic da'wah approaches

In future as these programs and approaches grows and being recognize, one country could built the network within themselves, integrating the programs, approaches and at the same time share their experience with other Muslim society in other countries. In the end,

these programs with its organization and approaches will help and overcome the social problem that being faced by the Muslim adolescent.

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