



## Da'wah Policy Controversy: A Case Study of Discourse on Standardization and Certification of Da'i in Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper aims to analyze the controversy regarding the discourse of standardization and certification of da'i in Indonesia to increase the competence and qualifications of da'i. The research was conducted through a qualitative approach with data sourced from observations and documentation of media texts in the mass media and information from interviews. The study results show that differences in authority, interests, ideology and the da'wah market have become forces that structure different views and meanings on the discourse of the standardization and certification of preacher's programs. Differences in meaning have consequences for the occurrence of tug-of-war and other patterns in the standardization and accreditation of preachers in Indonesia. The differences in authority, interests, and ideologies in the component of authority holders have become critical differentiating factors in interpreting a da'wah reality. The research implies that besides providing academic contributions, it also obtains data which is the basis for controversy, giving birth to an understanding that is mutual respect, not suspicion. This paper has limitations regarding methodology, the number of informants and approaches. For this reason, this study suggests the need for segment expansion and a more varied approach to show a more comprehensive understanding in subsequent research.*

*Keywords: da'wah policy; da'i qualifications; standardization; certification.*

### INTRODUCTION

Since the introduction of the discourse on the application of standardization and certification of preachers by the Minister of Religion Lukman Hakim Saifuddin in 2017, it has generated controversy in the

community. Some consider that the standardization and certification of preachers is a political step in monitoring (screening) preachers by the government, as the New Order Government did. In comparison, others view it as an effort to maintain the dignity of da'wah to improve the quality of the preacher itself. Certain groups support the government's proposal, such as MUI and Nahdhatul Ulama (NU). They view the urgency of implementing standardization and certification of preachers as the authority of Islamic organizations, not the government.

Meanwhile, not a few Islamic organizations are against the implementation of standardization and certification of preachers by the government, including Muhammadiyah and PERSIS. Even the ulama in several areas, such as Madura and Aceh, also questioned and even rejected the program (Andika, 2017). Several religious and community leaders also rejected this program as an absurd discourse and prejudiced against Muslims, as stated by several scholars, including Dadang Kahmad, Anwar Abbas, Tengku Zulkarnaen, Din Syamsuddin and also Hidayat Nurwahid and Didin Hafidhuddin. This kind of thing sharpens the polarization in the ummah and creates discrimination (Permana, 2019). Meanwhile, from the broader community in the area, some accept and reject, such as the results of research conducted by Fahrurrozi in Lombok and Assam in Banyumas (Arsam, 2017; Fahrurrozi, 2018).

So far, studies on the "controversy" of standardization and certification tend to look at two aspects. The first is a study that looks from the perspective of the urgency of standardization which gives rise to the pro and contra attitudes of scholars in several areas towards the qualification standards of preachers (Arsam, 2017; Fahrurrozi, 2018). As emphasized by Hasanah (2020), the preacher's qualification is not only urgent but also the primary requirement in the implementation of da'wah. The two controversial studies looked at the primary considerations used in realizing the idea of standardization and certification, which gave birth to different attitudes and views (Millie et al., 2019; Munib, 2020; Munib, 2021; Hartono et al., 2020). The two trends above show that the study of the controversy over the standardization and certification of preachers is only seen objectively as an idea while still denying the subjective aspect of the birth of the controversy.

The purpose of this paper is to complement the lack of existing studies that do not pay attention to other dimensions behind efforts to implement standardization and certification. In particular, this paper shows

that the controversy that has occurred in the effort to implement standardization and certification of preachers is an expression of the various interests of the authorities, both political and religious authorities. In line with that, this paper, in addition to mapping the form of controversy in addressing the application of standardization and certification of preachers, also analyzes the factors that cause controversy in responding to the program of standardization and certification of preachers. The answers to these two things enable understanding the rationale used as the basis for accepting and rejecting the application of standardization and certification for preachers.

This paper is based on an argument that each component of the community holding authority has a basis of authority, interest and ideology, as well as different references and understandings that have influenced the response to efforts to implement standardization and certification of preachers. Not only ideology but different interests also influence the views and attitudes carried out personally and institutionally. Some use national political ideology as the basis for taking attitudes and actions as well as policies, while others use religious and ideological approaches that are believed to be. Differences in authorities, interests, understandings and ideologies have become essential factors causing controversy in the interpretation of the application of standardization and certification of preachers. In addition, the da'wah market factor is an important instrument that gives colour to the controversy's dynamics.

This study uses a qualitative method with a structural, functional approach. This structural, functional approach is intended to answer research questions based on the relationships that arise on the relationship between the existence of individuals, groups and communities related to various social functions and social systems. In his writings, Merton explains that every social structure has a function both as a manifest function and a latent function. The functional analysis seeks to answer why certain social items have inevitable consequences on the operation of the whole social system.

In carrying out the research, the researcher arranges and processes the data obtained from various sources. Data were obtained from interviews with various related parties from various religious organizations, observations and documentation, data from various reports in online media and results from literature reviews. In addition, various additional data were obtained from documents provided by various religious organizations on

their official websites.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### **Controversy on the Standardization and Certification of Preachers**

The discourse on the standardization and certification of preachers has become a hot topic in recent years. This discourse has emerged since early 2012 in the form of the idea of needing clerical certification in the framework of minimizing and preventing the development of radicalism. This idea was first put forward by Irfan Idris, Director of Deradicalization of the National Terrorist Countermeasures Agency (BNPT) and Nia Elvina, a sociologist who also proposed the discourse on clerical certification. (Democracy Lens, 2020). The discourse was immediately rejected by the components of ulama figures from various Islamic organizations, such as MUI, NU, Muhammadiyah, FUI, FPI and others. The clerical certification depicts a form of suspicion rather than an orientation to capacity and quality improvement. According to these figures, the prejudiced attitude towards religious figures concerning radicalism exacerbates the problem and does not end acts of radicalism (Permana, 2019).

The idea of the need for certification of ulama, preachers and preachers is like an effort to control preachers, as the New Order government did. According to the Secretary-General of the Central MUI, the idea put forward by BNPT was the legacy of the New Order, according to a statement by the Secretary-General of the Central MUI, Ikhwan Sam (Bona, 2021). The New Order government's actions at that time screened preachers and preachers who had to obtain a permit issued by the Command for the Restoration of Security and Order (Kopkamtib) as a government agency under intelligence control. This institution has the role of sorting and giving permission to preachers. According to Azyumardi Azra, in an article in the Resonance Republika column, he said that the idea related to the standardization program for preachers and preachers had existed since the New Order era in the form of the need for licensing permits for preachers and preachers. The Khutbah Permit / Muballigh Permit (SIK / SIM) once appeared. Later, the idea was rejected by various components, both Islamic Organizations, Da'wah Organizations, and preachers (Azra, 2017).

The Ministry of Religion, as a government institution that regulates the affairs of religious life since the New Order era, has also carried out

supervision and control of da'wah through several regulations, including Ministerial Regulation number 44 of 1978, Ministerial Regulation number 9 of 1978, Ministerial Regulation number 3 of 1978. Regulations This stipulates that the contents of the sermon delivered to the congregation of more than 300 people must be screened and selected first by the Ministry of Religion and the MUI, both directly and using the media. At the beginning of 2017, the discourse on standardization and certification of preachers/khatib was again launched by the Minister of Religion Lukman Hakim Saifuddin. On one occasion, he conveyed the idea of the importance of standardizing and certifying preachers/ *khatib*.

The program, he admits, is an effort to bring qualified preachers and preachers during the rise of *muballigh* who are incompetent in da'wah and religious knowledge (Doni A, 2017). The Minister of Religion stated that the criteria for *Muballigh* must have at least three things: having adequate religious knowledge competence. Second, having a reputation, good track record, integrity, morality and dedication to society. Third, have a high national commitment (Friana, 2018). Within this framework, the government took several steps, such as releasing the names of religious teachers recommended as preachers/ *khatib*.

On May 18 2018, the Indonesian Ministry of Religion issued the release of 200 preachers recommended by the Government. They consist of several religious leaders, religious organizations and community leaders, but now these names are no longer found on the official Ministry of Religion website (Kemenag, 2018). Suddenly, the release of 200 preachers of the Ministry of Religion's version caused pros and cons. Some considered this release to be full of political flavour, which divided the category of *muballigh* based on their closeness to the Government and non-government. This view is present because many preachers qualified in the field of religious and popular scholarship are not included in the 200 people. Take, for example, Ustadh Abdul Shomad, a famous preacher who is loved by the public and often speaks loudly and critically of the Government. The release of the Government's version of 200 preachers made some clerics uncomfortable. Some of the preachers whose names were listed even resigned from the release recommended by the Government (Friana, 2018).

Not only stopping at the preacher release program, the Ministry of Religion in the era of Minister of Religion Fachrul Razi continued the idea of Standardization and Certification of preachers that Minister Lukman

Hakim Saifuddin had carried out. The Ministry of Religion is serious about designing the standardization and certification program for preachers, which is planned to be implemented in September 2020. In this program, the Ministry of Religion targets 8200 preachers to be certified.

Meanwhile, for the initial stage, according to the Director-General of Islamic Guidance, Kamaruddin Amin, the Ministry of Religion only targets 200 preachers to attend the briefing for three days. Certification in the form of a workshop is not an obligation that has consequences for funding (honorarium), nor is it a professional certification, but it is only a recommendation. In this program, the Ministry of Religion collaborates with the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), the National Resilience Institute (Lemhanas), the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) and the Pancasila Ideology Development Agency (BPPI) (Kemenag, 2020).

The formulation and mechanism for standardization and certification of preachers from the Ministry of Religion are still experiencing tug-of-war and changes in the terms used. With a lot of criticism and input from various parties, the Ministry of Religion finally changed the term for the program. Deputy Minister of Religion Zainut Tauhid stated that the Ministry of Religion would no longer roll out a preacher certification program but rather strengthen the competence of religious lecturers through workshops and technical guidance. The program aims to equip preachers with material related to da'wah in the millennial era, strengthen aspects of ideological resilience, and share information on actual phenomena that occur in Indonesia and other parts of the world. To support the Ministry of Religion's program, according to the Director-General of Islamic Guidance, Kamaruddin Amin will also launch the Ustazkita application, where the list of lecturers can be clicked through the feature. As for the lecturers listed in this application, apart from understanding moderate religious knowledge, they also have good national insight (Bona, 2021).

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Religion changed the term Standardization and Certification of Preachers to Bimtek for preachers and religious instructors within the Ministry of Religion. Islamic organizations such as MUI, NU, Muhammadiyah and other Islamic organizations regularly continue to standardize and certify preachers with their respective patterns. MUI itself carried out standardization and certification for the first time in November 2019, in the form of debriefing, increasing competence, and giving certificates to da'I. They were deemed worthy of

doing da'wah. The first batch was attended by preachers and senior figures from various Islamic organizations. The participants received a certificate as a form of recognition and legality from the MUI, which could strengthen public trust.

There are three primary standards carried out by MUI firstly, the standard of scientific qualification of mastery of religious knowledge within the framework of *ahlusunnah wal jamaah*, secondly national insight and thirdly, the ability to carry out da'wah (*fiqh da'wah* ability, methodological and da'wah that is *rahmatan lil alamin* and *Islam washatiyah*). by religious leaders and preachers from various Islamic organizations, as well as from celebrity preachers who carry out da'wah through television media. The standardization and certification of preachers by the MUI is voluntary and has no implications for financing, only to the extent of acknowledging the legality of the MUI as long as the preachers follow the standard lines set by the MUI (Permana, 2019).

Meanwhile, several other Islamic organizations have long carried out standardization and certification of preachers in various formats, both in the form of education and training for preachers and preachers, as well as in the form of assessments or competency tests. Even though Nahdhatul Ulama supports the efforts made by the Government in the standardization and certification program for preachers to increase qualifications and coaching for da'I and preachers. According to KH. Masrukhin, internally NU, also conducts coaching, training and internal assessment for preachers from NU.

In addition to applying general standards such as competence and moderate mastery of Islamic sciences through mastery of books, as well as understanding national values and NU's, namely Islam in the corridor of *ahlusunnah waljamaah*. The standardization and certification carried out by NU also have their peculiarity, namely the mastery of the yellow book commonly used among Nahdhiyyin, including the Fathul Qarib book (Interview, June 9, 2021). Amas Tajudin, Secretary of PW NU Banten, also confirmed this, who said that preachers' standardization and certification were urgent to be carried out by both the state and mass organizations. The qualification of the preacher is fixed. The preacher must build a peaceful life order, not a narrative of hatred, provocation and intolerance as has happened so far (Interview, July 27, 2021).

Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah, from the beginning, disagreed with the standardization program discourse initiated by the Ministry of Religion.

Dadang Kahmad, deputy chairman of PP Muhammadiyah, assessed that the standardization and certification program had long been carried out by Ormas in various terms and patterns, both coaching and education and training as well as *mudzakarah*. According to Dadang Kahmad, the Ministry of Religion's version of standardization and certification is only suitable for preachers within the Ministry of Religion, not for all mass organizations.

Even Anwar Abbas stated that it was wrong if the standardization and certification of preachers were directed and linked to the radicalism movement, which seemed suspicious of Muslims. An idea that can sharpen the polarization of the government and non-government versions of the ulama. Because da'wah is a religious call and the call of the people, a standardization pattern and certification of government preachers will birth to discrimination (Rini, 2020). Likewise, the opinion of CR Nurdin from the Islamic Association (PW PERSIS Banten) does not agree that the government carries out standardization and certification. Persis members participate in the standardization and certification of preachers carried out by MUI. In addition to internally (PERSIS), they also have the training to meet the quality of preachers according to their organization. (interview, 20 August 2020).

### **Obligations of Preaching and Qualifications of Da'i**

Da'wah is an obligation in Islam which is clearly stated in the Qur'an, including in QS Ali Imran: 104 and 110, as well as Q.S. An-Nahl: 125. As an obligation, da'wah has a vital position, besides being the spirit of religion that moves, revives and develops Islam on earth. Da'wah is also a movement that points the way for the safety and happiness of humankind in the world and the hereafter (Zaidan, 1985). Even da'wah, carrying out commands for makruf and nahi munkar is a distinguishing feature between faith and hypocrisy (Al-Qurthubi, 2007). In the category of people (Muslims) who are the best people, the indicator is through the implementation of da'wah for good and forbidding evil (Q.S. Ali Imran: 110). Thus the urgency of da'wah in human life, scholars agree that da'wah is an obligation for Muslims. It is just that there are slight differences regarding the obligations, whether for individuals or groups. There are two opinions on this matter; namely, the first opinion understands da'wah as the obligation of every individual Muslim (*fardu ain*). The second opinion views da'wah as the obligation of groups or groups (*fardu kifayah*) (Shihab, 2011).



The first group believes that da'wah is the obligation of all Muslims because da'wah is fundamental to religious life. Abdul Karim Zaidan explained that the obligation of da'wah is not only for the Apostle but also for all his reasonable people, both scholars and non-ulama scholars, is more emphasized (Zaidan, 1985). Hamka, in an article, stated that if you live without da'wah, how can humans find the way of truth and goodness? All Muslims must spread goodness (Hamka, 2018).

The first group, where da'wah is the obligation of individual Muslims, refers to the simple da'wah that most people can do. Because not all Muslims have the knowledge or ability and even awareness of their religion. Few Muslims do not understand their religion, have not practised religious teachings correctly, and some are even termed Islamic ID cards, or Islam is just an identity. The reality of such groups of people is impossible to be charged with heavy missionary tasks that require broad knowledge and expertise that a group of people can only carry out. However, this does not mean aborting the obligation of personal da'wah, which is simple and can be done. As stated by Hamka, that da'wah is the obligation of every Muslim who is a mukallaf that must be done in everyday life (Hamka, 2018). Da'wah in things that are simple in everyday life that each individual can do according to his ability.

The second opinion views that the obligation of da'wah is the obligation of a group of people or some Muslims, then it becomes (*fardlu kifayah*). The group's obligations are the people who have the knowledge, expertise and competence to carry out Islamic da'wah. They are the so-called heirs of the Prophet, namely the scholars - scholars with various terms (*kyai, ustaz, tuan guru, ajengan, da'i, muballigh* and the like). A group of people bear the responsibility of carrying out da'wah because da'wah is seen as not a simple thing but a heavy task. Da'wah requires knowledge, expertise, and careful planning, which people can only do with expertise in carrying out da'wah (Hasanah, 2020; Hasanah, 2021).

Imam an-Nawawi al-Bantani explained that what is right and wrong must also be based on knowledge. This means that only people who know can distinguish between what is right and wrong and understand the things in society. It is feared that ignorant people will invite evil things and forbid what is right if it is not based on knowledge. Likewise, if people who do not have the knowledge and things in society do not correct them, they will be misleading. Likewise, if he does not know, he does not understand when specific ways can be done in preaching. In this case, Imam An-Nawawai

emphasized the importance of science in mastering the material for preaching and methodological science in preaching (Al-Bantany, 1994).

For this second group, da'wah is a noble task, severe and full of responsibility, not just conveying a message and then being left casually. Preachers are like farmers, as M. Natsir gave an example: sowing seeds and nurturing them until they grow and develop correctly. For M. Natsir, Islamic da'wah invites people to the path of God by conveying as clearly as possible (*balaghul Mubin*) that can be captured by the human mind and feelings, not just a speech in front of many people. Because da'wah requires a lot of preparation and qualified knowledge, the preacher must have provisions. Mastery of religious knowledge to be conveyed (*tafaqub fiddin*) also understanding of the human condition (*tafaqub fi annas*). Because da'wah is the main task which is also heavy, there must be a particular group that is educated and cadreed as skilled da'wah fighters, not only scientific, personal, moral and social qualities (Natsir, 1996).

### **State Regulation and Intervention in Da'wah**

Da'wah policy is a set of rules, regulations and governance of da'wah life carried out by policymakers. In comparison, the politics of da'wah policy is the involvement of power and political power in the regulation and management of da'wah (Aziz, 2018). As a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, the Indonesian government has issued various policies and regulations on religious life for all religious people, including various accommodative and aspirational policies for implementing religious teachings, especially for Muslims (Abdillah, 2013).

This includes various policies related to the life and implementation of the spread of religion (da'wah). Whether institutional, personnel, facilities and materials in its implementation, Da'wah is not merely a religious matter but has also become a political matter. The authorities carry out various political policies in the management and regulation of da'wah from accommodative and repressive policies. Politics Da'wah policy in Indonesia has occurred since the colonial era, which is also known as "ethical politics", which has implications for religious life in the country, such as the Christianization movement on the one hand and Islamic da'wah on the other (Wafiyah, 2017; Mulyanto, 2021).

State intervention in da'wah life does not only occur in the homeland. Even in some countries, the preacher is strictly regulated by the state, such as in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Malaysia, Brunei and several other countries.

State legality for the preacher is the main prerequisite, where the preacher is a figure selected and registered by the state (Millie et al., 2019). The consequences carried out by the state are in the form of assuming all the needs and financing of da'wah activities, both from infrastructure and facilities, including providing salaries for preachers. In comparison, the life of da'wah in Indonesia has its peculiarities.

Da'wah is turned on and developed independently by the community. Both facilities, such as mosques, are built independently by the community, including financing preachers and all activities. It is not uncommon for the da'wah to carry out da'wah independently at their own expense or the da'wah institution itself, which mobilizes people's funds for the benefit of da'wah. Throughout its history, the life of da'wah in the country has run culturally, born from the community, by and for the community. According to David Kloos and Mirjam Künkler, public choice and recognition of preachers are another form of undercurrent public legality, "bottom-up certification" (Kloos & Künkler, 2016).

*Da'wah* is a religious activity that is essential in building religious community life. Religiosity is an essential part of building the life of the nation and state, as stated in the state foundation, namely Pancasila. As the basis and guidance of life, Pancasila contains noble values in its precepts. It began with the precepts of the One Godhead, describing the basis and goals of the state and nation based on trust and obedience to God Almighty. Based on these precepts, Indonesia upholds religious values in the life of the nation and state. The symbiotic relationship between state and religion that requires one another is illustrated by how the dialectic of religion and state complements and needs one another. Even though it is not a religion-based state with one particular religion, the state provides freedom and guarantees the continuity of religious life in carrying out their respective religious obligations (Hasyim, 2013; Makin, 2018). As also stated in the 1945 Constitution, article 29. Although there are dynamics in each leadership phase in its implementation, those create an intimate religious and political intersection, but sometimes friction occurs. The intersecting relationship between religion and politics sometimes leads to political secularization, although it does not lead to a secular state (Abdillah, 2013).

As a country that prioritizes religious aspects, it becomes necessary if religious rules become part of the community's social life. Religious regulations by the state are different for each regime, the Old Order Regime, the New Order Regime and the Post-Reformation Regime. The

New Order regime, which has led for approximately 32 years, has issued regulations related to religious life that describe the face of religious life in this era and its implications in the future (Ropi, 2017). The symbiotic relationship between religion and national politics has its characteristics, although it does not mean that it is a theocratic state like Saudi Arabia or secular like Turkey. Indonesia is different from both, not secular but nationalist and not theocratic but religious. Although in practice, according to Myengkyo Seo, religiosity practised in Indonesia is not about building spiritual values but instead on administration, as seen in several issued regulations (Seo, 2012).

The relationship between religion and the state in national politics is balanced with the application of Pancasila as something final. However, in its implementation, there are still trade-offs (Salam, 2016). Some groups tend to balance the concept of moderation (*tawashuh*). Nevertheless, on the other hand, some groups tend to attract relationships that tend to be "right", and other groups tend to "attract" to the "left". The tug-of-war tends to occur at all times. There are extreme right and extreme left groups in various forms, both vaguely and openly. The extreme right, such as religious radicalism and the extreme left of communism, liberalism, and secularism, are real threats to the life of the nation and state (Wibisono, 2018). Communism, Secularism and Liberalism are as dangerous as radicalism, both in the life of the nation and state as well as in religion.

### **The Struggle for Political Authority, Da'wah and the Market**

Da'wah in Indonesia, as well as in Muslim countries, has experienced very rapid development for several decades. Various new formulas and approaches in da'wah have also been introduced. The development of da'wah institutions and the emergence of various organizations with local, national and global networks add to the splendour of the da'wah world (Meuleman, 2011). In the reform order, the da'wah revival gained momentum with the emergence of an era of openness.

The emergence of various kinds of da'wah organizations and movements that are developing on campuses and government institutions makes the world of da'wah in the archipelago more lively and dynamic. The splendour of da'wah is marked by the religiousness of da'wah activities that develop in the community, in the form of recitation, not only in religious spaces but also in other public spaces. Various Islamic study and study groups thrive in urban areas with various formats. It is not only driven by

mainstream religious organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah but also by new da'wah organizations such as FPI, HTI, Tablighi Jamaat and Salafi-Wahabi groups. The transnational da'wah movement that entered Indonesia grew after the reformation (Mufid, 2013).

These new groups have not only attracted the public's attention but have also established their authority. The strength of this group is marked by the significant interest of the community, both members and members of its da'wah congregation. In some places, this new group became a new source of Islamic authority. Din Wahid describes the results of his research which show the presence of a Salafi group with many followers and is now present as a new religious authority holder (Wahid, 2012). Da'wah organizations, both mainstream and new, are not only intensively mobilizing conventional da'wah through recitations, as well as printed media such as books, magazines, pamphlets and leaflets, but also intensively preaching through mass media, radio and cable television. And national television. Some mass media become the mouthpiece of da'wah, which develops its *manhaj* and ideology.

The presence of internet-based new media adds to the splendour of da'wah in the public sphere. Social media has become a new medium for spreading da'wah in the digital era. Various groups and individuals take advantage of the presence of this new media as a propaganda channel. Even the transnational da'wah movements such as HTI and Salafi are the most intensive and dominate the public sphere with various da'wah offerings. It even beats mainstream organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah, which are the most significant groups but are still minimal in using new media (Akmaliah, 2020). The presence of new media is not only a medium of communication and information but also a religious reference. Digitally literate people are now no longer a congregation of clerics in mosques but also become "congregations" on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and other social media. In fact, according to the research results of UNDP & PPIM UIN Jakarta in 2017, around 54.37% per cent of students and students learn the religion from the internet (Syafuruddin et al., n.d.).

High public interest in da'wah either through instal da'wah or joining da'wah institutions, from the *taklim* assemblies, dhikr assemblies, and the hijrah community and other spiritual assemblies. Various groups, from ordinary people middle class to celebrities and jet setters, including urban youths, have migrated and are active in the world of da'wah. Some of them even take part as preachers. Religion was predicted 30 years ago. John

Naisbitt called it the New Age, which is marked by the rapid inclination of humans to the spiritual aspect. Modernism and hedonism have become anomalies. Modern humans experience alienation and inner aridity. The rise of the recitation movement among urbanites is not only a fulfilment of spiritual needs that have been neglected so far but also a means of building a collective middle-class identity (Jati, 2015).

Modern human needs for da'wah are increasingly opening up market opportunities for da'wah. Mona Abaza described the number of assemblies of taklim institutions and recitation forums, including da'wah on television media, opening up opportunities for the need for preachers. Through these forums, many prominent preachers fulfil the market share according to the "tastes" of the market (Abaza, 2004). The market dictates how the da'wah is carried out, from the style, method, content and even appearance of the preacher who has become part of the commodity. Market intervention in da'wah makes da'wah no longer ideally and rigidly controllable. The existence of regulations and increasing qualifications is an effort to restore the dignity of da'wah as it should be, and da'wah does not lose its "SPIRIT". The importance of da'wah signs outlined by the authority holders can maintain the value of sacredness and nobility of da'wah as a medium that connects the vertical relationship of humans with God while maintaining horizontal harmony as caliphs on earth.

## CONCLUSION

This study finds that the controversy that has occurred in understanding and responding to the standardization and certification program for preachers is caused by different authorities and interests. The group's position, authority and characteristics have structured the views and meaning of the concept of standardization and certification of preachers, which have broad implications for the life of da'wah on the one hand and the life of the nation-state on the other. Although, in general, there are also points of commonality between each party, which is undeniable about the importance of improving the quality and competence of preachers even though they use various terms. Because da'wah is a religious area, full hope and trust in Islamic organizations' authority are paramount in upholding national social values and ethics.

The controversial analysis in understanding the concept of standardization and certification of preachers has made it possible to find two important things. First, the meaning of standardization and

certification of preachers is dynamic and contestation, which shows not only positions and authorities that give rise to differences in understanding but also ideological backgrounds. Second, this research also provides a new perspective in looking at the top-down program of standardization and certification of preachers with a reality that grows from below, where the bottom-up angle has not yet become a perspective. The dynamic meaning of efforts to standardize and certify preachers from various important components becomes a point of view that becomes a new direction of research on standardization and legality for the continuation of da'wah. This rolling discourse has implications for public unrest and mutual suspicion between the community and the government and vice versa between the government and religious groups as well as between people from different groups. Even the controversies that occurred were interpreted not only as a result of differences in religious concepts but also as political ones.

This research is limited to analyzing one unit group and only at the level of the informant's view. This analysis does not allow the research results to be used as a reference to explain the differences in detail and broadly. Likewise, the informants' views as the basis for inferring the meaning and understanding of the standardization and certification of preachers have not described a comprehensive understanding of the controversy. Based on these limitations, it is necessary to carry out further research that pays attention to aspects of group comparisons and broader segmentation sourced from more varied data. This way, more appropriate policies in the context of issuing responsive regulations that are more accommodating and acceptable to all groups can be realized.

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