

Da'wah Thoughts of Hasan Al Banna and Said Nursi: A Comparative Research in Islamic Education Perspective

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Abstract

Islamic education has been strongly emphasized in Muslim communities. The quality of education and adherence to the Islamic worldview will shape Muslim personalities toward the true meaning of excellence in this world and the hereafter. This article discusses and introduces the efforts of Tawhid purification from an Islamic Education perspective undertaken by Hassan Al Banna (1906-1949 AD) and Badiuzzaman Said Nursi (1877-1960 AD) to address emergent problems within the Egyptian and Turkish Muslim community in early 20th century whereby the absorption of values and thought outside the authenticity of Islam had successfully influenced society thinking in terms of religious beliefs and practices. Therefore, both Hassan Al Banna and Said Nursi offered a solution to this problem by implementing measures to purify tawhid in society. This article analyses their efforts in tawhid purification in implementing da'wah dictates in Egypt and Turkey. To achieve this goal, the historical analysis method is utilized to discuss the efforts of Hassan Al Banna and Said Nursi and present a critical examination of their efforts to save the tawhid of Muslims and ensure they return to the true teachings of Islam. The results of this study highlight Hassan Al Banna and Badiuzzaman Said Nursi as da'wah figures who contributed to tawhid purification in the Islamic world. At the same time, the findings could be used as guidelines for the religious, preachers, and researchers to propose tawhid purification as an important da'wah effort in society today.

Keywords: Education, Said Nursi, Da'wah, Hasan Al Banna

INTRODUCTION

Preach (Da'wah) is a collective social activity that has not been realized that it already has been practiced daily on an individual or organizational level. As for the terminology of da'wah itself means is an activity of inviting and calling out humankind to believe and be obedient towards Allah according to aqidah (believe), sharia (Islamic law), and akhlak (Islamic ethics) of Islam itself. Da'wah is an activity of a Muslim to spread Islamic teachings all over the earth; that preacher requires every Muslim to mukallaf (an obliged Muslim) according to his capability. As enshrined in the Quran:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“Be a community that calls for what is good, urges what is right, and forbids what is wrong: those who do this are the successful ones.” (Surah al-Imran, 3: 104)

Da'wah is an activity that needs to be practiced in each sphere of religious life. In Islamic teachings, it is an obligation to all Muslims to preach repentance or to change the situation for a better and perfect one, towards both a person and a society. The existence of da'wah is directed toward a larger goal than

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simply broadening understanding of religion through behavior and views. The success of da'wah is not measured just by the laughter and clapping of the listeners but also by their sorrow. On a deeper scale, success is further measured by the thinking effect that has been taught and the soul that will be reflected in the behavior of the listener. The objective of da'wah is to change human behavior from negative to positive. The source of human behavior comes from the nafs (soul). Therefore, the most effective da'wah is one that can be accepted by the nafs, that is, a da'wah that is compatible with the heart or soul (Rosyidi, 2004).

In a book written by Roland Robertson (1970) titled "*Religion and Analysis*," he stated that religion is the moral fortress of humankind because only with religion can the relationship between humankind and between god and humankind be appropriately organized so that human beings are always preserved in noble behavior, mutual respect, mutual understanding, and loving each other as fellow human beings. In the historical development of Islamic preaching (da'wah), Hasan Al-Banna and Badiuzzaman Said Nursi's ideas and movements have always been discussed. These two prominent figures inspired all da'wah activists in each corner of the Muslim world.

Their concept of da'wah derives from a teleological, philosophical, ideological, and visionary basis. Hasan Al-Banna has managed to identify the questions and challenges that Muslims will face in the future, either internal or external (Samian, 2017). Psychologically, these motivate Muslims to decolonize themselves from imperialism and colonialism. With all hardships and sincerity, his ideas and da'wah movement have spread vastly throughout the Islamic world, even though his da'wah organization has been banned and abolished several times at his own place of birth. Muslim Brothers as a da'wah organization historically appeared in the 1930s as an answer to Muslims' phenomenal moral and ethical crisis regarding the trial of Islamic law and da'wah enforcement (Al Qardhawi, 2004).

The emergence of Badiuzzaman Said Nursi and his works (AD 1960) from the end of the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century is a huge contribution to the Islamic world and Turkey in order to save Muslims' faith (aqidah) from major changes that occur in the Muslim world's political landscape (Suhail & Farid, 2020). According to Alkan (2016), the overthrow of Abdul Hamid II (AD 1909) by the Young Turks Movement in pursuit of a new modern and western-style Turkish state has opened the door to foreign intervention by powers such as Italy, France, and Great Britain. The situation became worse when Sir William Ewart Gladstone (AD 1898) proposed during a session of a parliamentary conference to keep Muslims away from their Quranic guidelines. By observing the problem, Said Nursi took proactive steps to save the faith by strengthening the faith of Muslims (Alkan, 2016). Even though Nursi faced social limitations, such as exile and imprisonment, he did not consider these events a challenge to execute the urgency of preaching (da'wah) toward God with *Risale-i Nur* (Hasrul *et al.*, 2018). According to Wan Rashidah (2015), his works have functioned as a source for Muslim society to return to Quranic teachings in such a way that they could be integrated into the world (*dunya*) and hereafter (*akhirah*). Therefore, the education system of Muslims must be formed based on the true Islamic philosophical mold.

Thus, the wrong system and principles of education will affect the formation of a Muslim individual. There is what is called "confusion" in faith and religious beliefs, such as mental confusion and moral decay. All of these require collective effort and comprehensive planning by Muslims as a whole. The reliance on western ideologies, principles, and frameworks in shaping modern Muslim behavior has the potential to destroy Muslims' future.

This study attempts to provide a comprehensive picture of Islamic education based on the views of the two prominent figures examined. More specifically, the researcher wants to achieve three main

objectives of the study: (1) To investigate the aspects of faith problems in the development of Islamic preaching (da'wah); (2) To identify the efforts to purify the faith made by Hassan Al Banna in Egypt and Badiuzzaman Said Nursi in Turkey; and (3) To re-examine the work of Majmu' Rasail and Risalah al-Nur in issues related to faith education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This fundamental research used a qualitative approach based on text examination. For data collection methods, the authors use library research methods and documentation methods, where the data obtained are from primary sources (such as the collection of books Majmu' Rasail and Risalah al-Nur) as well as secondary sources (including studies conducted on the purification creed, i.e., in the form of books and journal articles).

Next, the content analysis method was applied objectively to the data obtained based on the research objectives that have been outlined. This study uses qualitative methods in the data collection process. Data will be analyzed to understand the theory and practice of Hassan Al Banna's Islamic preaching (da'wah) communication in Egypt and Badiuzzaman Said Nursi in Turkey. In this study, the researcher used primary and secondary data sources in the process of collecting data.

Primary data is obtained through the documentation method. Secondary source data, on the other hand, is derived from a research report on Islamic preaching (da'wah) communication, a resolution from a da'wah seminar or discourse, and documents from Islamic bodies and organizations using the content analysis method. The data obtained were analyzed using a content analysis framework. The findings and analysis in this writing can be used as academic contributions and references in developing a model or method of effective Islamic preaching (da'wah) communication in the Muslim world.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Muslims' personal and moral development has been considered the main agenda in every Muslim society. Muslim countries have shared ideas to find a solution in the form of research, seminars, conferences, and writings among themselves in order to resolve the question they are facing and figure out solutions for their education system for their country in the form of a true framework. Moreover, postcolonialist ideologies have created a critical level of complexities in Muslim minds. Ideologies such as secularism, liberalism, socialism, and marxism have deeply rooted in Muslim life. Even though Muslims have shown some developments in various spheres of life, these developments can be construed positively.

Al-Tibawi (1972), in his work titled "*Islamic Education: Its Tradition and Modernization into the Arab National System*," explained that educational development in most Muslim countries had been widely opened after World War II and independence had been gained from foreign powers in the 1950s and 1960s, which embodied nationalism in the form of nations and states (Nasir, 2015). To resolve this question, Muslim intellectuals worldwide gathered at the 1977 World Conference on Muslim Education in Makkah, intending to solve the critical complexities that occurred. Finally, a book written by Syed Sajid Husain and Syed Ali Ashraf titled "Crisis in Muslim Education" was published at King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, in 1979 (Syed Sajjad Husain & Syed Ali Ashraf, 1989).

Reaction about Muslim education did not begin with this conference; it was already discussed ten years prior to the related event by Muslim scholars such as Abu Hasan Ali al-Nadawi in his 1969 work titled "*Nahwu al-Tarbiyah al-Islamiyyah al-Hurrah*" as an effort to liberate the Muslim education system from foreign ideology (Nasir et al., 2020). According to al-Faruqi (1988), the core problems are derived from the internal weakness of Muslim education itself. According to Muhammad Qutb (1985), he mentioned that the damage does not only exist in the education system, but more than that, the damage has destroyed the axis of Muslims' lives in general: thoughts, behaviors, politics, social, moral, and cultural. He discussed damage and complexities in his work "*Jahiliyah al-qarm al-Isyrin*" (Jahiliyyah in the 20th Century). Various contemporary Muslim scholars have faced this question.

Al-Faruqi (1982), in his observation, stated that the Muslim education system is the worst and most devastating tragedy. According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1992), one of the reasons for these confusions and backwardnesses in the Muslim education system in most Islamic countries today is because the vision of knowledge classification in line with Islamic intellectual foundations as pioneered by Muslim intellectuals in the past has been neglected. According to Abdul Halim (2007), the education of Muslims does not refer to the true philosophy of Islamic education. This problem was also mentioned by Muhammad Kamal Hasan (1988) regarding the ambiguity of the philosophy of Islamic education. When the philosophy of education is not evaluated as carefully as possible, the integration between the knowledge of the world and the hereafter, as practiced in Islam, will not occur. Social and pure sciences are taught displaying secular and skeptical views of the world where religion and monotheism are not given exactly as they should be.

Meanwhile, students will be influenced by foreign ideologies that have different historical and geographical experiences in their theoretical construction. These theoretical frameworks are hidden behind the disciplines taught in universities. Many subjects taught at the university do not bring students to an awareness that Allah has a role in creating success (al-falah), loss (al-khusran), or misfortune. This is true in both the social sciences and the pure sciences. This matter has also been shared by Abdul Halim El-Muhammady, who believes that the continuous confusion has deviated from the original Islamic education system and is more geared towards the basic education of others (western) and not the division and emphasis prescribed by Islam (Nasir, 2015). Eventually, it produced a man whose personality and disposition were unclear, albeit in terms of his materiality and intellectuality. Therefore, the education system of Muslims must be formed based on the true Islamic philosophical mold.

Discussion

The history of Islamic preaching (da'wah) started at the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (570–623 AD). The Makkah phase (570–622 AD) was the phase of the Prophet's da'wah on the issue of faith (theology), while the Madinah phase (622–632 AD) was a broader phase of da'wah that covered up the questions of faith, worship, politics, and the military. During the period of Islamic rule established by the prophet Muhammad S.A.W and then continued by four major Islamic caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali) in 632–661 AD, until the dynastic rule started by the Umayyads (661–750 AD), Abbasids (750–1517 AD) and the Ottomans (1453–1923 AD), the thought and theology of Muslims can be divided into several forms; first, composed of the Sunni stream; second, the influence of the Shiite sect; and third, the influence of Greeks and Romans such as Plato (428–348 BC), Aristotle (384–322 BC) and Plotinus (270–204 BC). In addition, the teachings of Sufism also contribute to the formation of the Muslim thinking structure (Makmor, 2019).

The factor that drove the acceptance of the influence of Greek and Roman philosophy was the existence of similar elements of belief, such as belief in the existence of one God. Nevertheless, radical attitudes in philosophical thought have led to a tendency towards rationalism and humanism with the belief that divine knowledge, including the supernatural, is attainable without the need for revelation. Among the influential Islamic philosophers were al-Farabi (872–950 AD), Ibn Sina (980–1037 AD), Ibn Miskawayh (932–1030 AD), Ibn Bajjah (1095–1138 AD), Ibn Tufail (1105–1185 AD), and Ibn Rusyd (1126–1198 AD), who were also influenced by such doctrines (Makmor, 2019). As a result, there is support for Said Nursi's contention that philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle, as well as Ibn Sina and al-Farabi, did not succeed in achieving their ambitions and goals unless they were captivated by sweet words (FazrulAzdi et al., 2018).

Said Nursi does not deny the knowledge of these Muslim philosophers because they have contributed to the development of science through research on nature. However, according to Said Nursi, they are, in fact, behind the divine science (science from the point of view of the hereafter) (Muaz *et al.*, 2018). According to William Jones, the development of the teachings of Sufism, as stated by Syamsuddin Arif, consists of five theories (Ismail, 2020).

First, as claimed by Margaret Smith, tasawwuf (Sufism) is derived from the effects of the clash between tradition and older religions. Second, tasawwuf (Sufism) is derived from the teachings of the Upanishads and Vedanta in Hinduism, as claimed by Alfred Von Kremer, R.C. Zaehner, and Max Horten, because there are fundamental similarities between Sufism, Hinduism, and Buddhism themselves, such as the rejection of worldly pleasures, modest living, and feelings of guilt. Third, Sufism originated in ancient Greece, as claimed by R.A. Nicholson, and there is a mystical element in the philosophical connection with Aristotelianism and Neoplatonism, such as a synthetical thought of Plato and Aristotle. Fourth, Sufism originated in the ancient Persian tradition because there was a clash of cultures when Islam emerged there, thus showing some Persian figures such as Muhammad Iqbal claiming that Sufism is the development of religious attitudes and society's way of translating latent beliefs in order to revive Zoroastrianism, Manicheism, and Mazdaism. Fifth, tasawwuf (Sufism) derives from all theoretical elements, including Islamic ones (Suhaib & Farid, 2020).

Fazlur Rahman (1985) views Sufism as derived from Islamic teachings, thus refuting the theory by Jones, which is related to the inner elements of man (spirituality) as done by the Prophet (Muhammad) and the early generations of Islam before the development of theory and practice in the following ages. However, there is no denying the existence of the influence of external cultural elements, such as Shiites, in this concept (Ismail, 2020). This view is strengthened by the firm view by Asrie (2018) that the relationship of Shiites with Sufism is inevitable because there is strong evidence for it, such as Tashayyu' doctrine (excessive towards Ahlu al-Bait and being ghuluw) against their spiritual imams.

Sufism in its early stages was driven by the early generation of Islam, namely the prophet, companions, *tabi'in*, and *tabi' tabi'in* in the first century of the Hijrah. It was later continued by scholars in the 2nd century Hijri with the title of *al-zahid*, such as Abu Abd Rabb al-Dimsiqi al-Zahid (112 H), Abu Abdillah al-Kufi al-Zahid (120 H), and Abu Yahya al-Bishri al-Zahid (130 H). Sufism began to flourish in the 3rd Hijri with *al-Sufi* titles, such as Abu Ja'far al-Kufi al-Sufi al-Abid (264 H) and Abu Bakr al-Anmathi al-Sufi al-Hafiz (271 H). In the next stage, in the 6th and 7th centuries Hijri, Sufism was first introduced through the concept of *tarekat* by Ahmad al-Rifa'i (570 H), 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jailani (651 H), and Abu al-Sazzli (656 H). At the same time, philosophical mysticism or philosophy was also formed in the 6th century Hijri by al-Syuhrawardi al-Maqtul (549 H) and Muhyidin Ibn 'Arabi (638 H) (Suhayib, 2013). Among the figures of Sufism he mentioned was Salman al-Farisi, a friend of the prophet who sought the truth in Persia.

Al-Attas (2020) also referred to Salman as the pioneer of the sect before the second emergence of the generation of the spiritual sect.

In addition, the impact of the disputes between Mu'awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan and Ali ibn Abi Talib since 40 AH has led to divisions among Muslims into several groups that exploit the evidence of the Quran and hadith for the sake of their respective ideologies and thinking (Suhaib & Farid, 2020). Following this incident of division, some groups have tried to understand the meaning of the Quran and hadith by using inaccurate methods, and they also use much rational reasoning in interpreting the texts of the Quran and hadith, to the point of creating false hadith. They create this false hadith to influence society (Sakinah & Azwira, 2011).

These events indirectly paved the way for the development of trends that prioritize rationalism in the debate of religious knowledge, such as Muktazilah, pioneered by Abu Huzaifah Wasil bin 'Ata (80–131 H), who placed the authority of reason over the Quran and Hadith (Aizam, 2013). Under the leadership of caliph al-Makmun (786–833 AD), the Abbasid ruler successfully influenced the thinking of Muslims. The culmination of such a development is to determine whether the Quran is a creature or vice versa (Makmor, 2019). This coincides with Asrie (2018); the era of al-Makmun's rule was the culmination of deviant movements in the faith because it had been at the stage of successfully gaining the support of the caliph.

This is due to several factors, such as the influence of Shiites and their philosophies significantly affecting the thinking of the caliph, in addition to efforts to translate the books of philosophy widely during his reign to the extent that it became the main focus. As a result, the doctrine of Mu'tazilah became more prominent. The solution to the problems that arose in relation to monotheism must return to the source of monotheism. Therefore, the author finds that Said Nursi has offered a solution to this problem that aligns with the Quran and al-Sunnah approaches.

This is consistent with Hassan Al Banna's views in his book *Usul Isyryn* (Usul 20) and Said Nursi's views in his book *al-Lama'at*, which state that the principles of faith, sharia (Islam), and sunnah are the most effective treatments for the spiritual, mental, and emotional, which are essential elements in society's social aspects (Nursi, 2018). Confidence in this solution is the foundation of a civilization that can remove human beings from ignorance, thus creating world leadership based on Islam in the future.

CONCLUSION

The responsibility of a Muslim preacher in conveying the message of da'wah to the community is extensive, as stated in the writing of this study. The message delivered by the da'wah must cover questions of faith, sharia, morality, and even current issues. Therefore, various ways can be used to complete the delivery of the da'wah. Among others are using the appropriate method of da'wah, such as da'wah in wisdom, advice, debate, and community understanding with the addition of issues.

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