

***Da'wah* Culture:  
The Way of Bumi Langit Institute  
in Popularizing *Tayib* Lifestyle at  
Imogiri Bantul**

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**Abstract**

This research attempts to describe the Islamic preaching way used at Bumi Langit Institute in fostering Islamic lifestyle, especially *tayib* food consumption pattern, so as to be accepted by the society, including non-Moslems. In order to get an answer to such issue, the researcher conducted interviews to 15 informants, observation, and documentation study. This research found that a superiority of the preaching way at Bumi Langit Institute is the ability to unite some lessons contained in the Qur'an with some current empirical realities as well as present an example of living Qur'an, starting from food to the management of agriculture which can directly be learned, practiced, enjoyed, selfie, and adopted as a lifestyle at home. Bumi Langit gives a lot of scientific surprises showing that the long-left lifestyle and the unimaginable Islamic knowledge reserve far more priceless benefits than the lifestyle that is currently upheld. In addition to logical preaching messages that could be proven by empirical data, the preaching messages delivered at Bumi Langit are also supported with other uniqueness, starting from the figures of the preachers and the establishment of Islamic preaching segmentation for young-middle class who are familiar with gadget.

[Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji cara dakwah yang digunakan Institut Bumi Langit dalam membudayakan gaya hidup yang Islami, terutama

pola makan yang *tayib*, sehingga diterima oleh masyarakat, termasuk non-muslim. Untuk mendapatkan jawaban atas persoalan tersebut peneliti melakukan wawancara kepada 15 informan, observasi, dan studi dokumentasi. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa keunggulan cara dakwah di Bumi Langit yaitu kemampuan untuk mendialogkan hikmah yang ada dalam Al-Quran dengan realitas empiris kekinian serta menghadirkan contoh sistem hidup Islami (*living Qur'an*) mulai dari makanan sampai pengelolaan pertanian yang langsung dapat dipelajari, dipraktikkan, dinikmati, diambil gambarnya (*selfie*), dan diadopsi menjadi gaya hidup di rumah (*bil hal*). Bumi langit memberikan kejutan-kejutan pengetahuan bahwa cara hidup lama yang telah ditinggalkan dan pengetahuan Islam yang tidak pernah dipikirkan menyimpan manfaat yang lebih bernilai daripada cara hidup modern yang saat ini dipraktikkan. Selain pesan dakwah yang logis dan dapat dibuktikan oleh data empiris, penerimaan pesan dakwah yang disampaikan Bumi Langit juga didukung oleh keunikan-keunikan yang lain, mulai dari sosok dai sampai terbentuknya segmentasi dakwah kelas menengah yang muda dan akrab dengan gawai.]

**Keywords:** *tayib* lifestyle, awareness, realization, social media

## Introduction

Development through modernization process has led to a number of changes. In industrial sector, it has produced abundant products with cheaper prices. In transportation sector, modernization has provided convenience so that distance is no longer a problem. In agriculture sector, it has produced abundant food products so that starvation could be prevented.

Modernization in agriculture through green revolution and husbandry is able to accelerate the production process of various crops. Rice, which used to be harvested once in a year, can nowadays be harvested three times in a year. In husbandry sector, the invention of chicken growth hormone is able to accelerate its harvest from one year to only fifty-five days. Therefore, development has a positive side

However, development has two sides of a coin: progress and regress. Tania Murray Li (2012) revealed bitter facts and interpretation of development. A sincere and good intention along with a great plan to create prosperity does not necessarily become a guarantee that prosperity will come true, even in many cases, the intention to build and improve lives

instead results in prolonged misery, let alone bringing prosperity.<sup>1</sup> In terms of community empowerment, there is a philosophy of "the tragedy of monkeys and fish", where the good intention of "monkeys" to save "fish" from flood that could drown "monkey" has instead made "fish" dead because they are saved by being brought up to a tree.<sup>2</sup>

Jurgen Habermas and the Frankfurt School group describe modernization and development as a bus that is full of luxurious amenities, comfortable seats, equipped with air-conditioning; the rooms provide food, and entertainment – film and music shows. In other words, the bus is very comfortable to travel with. However, the passengers who excitingly enjoy the facilities that the bus provides do not have any ideas that the bus is heading towards a cliff, even the bus driver does not know it either. What they know is that the bus is moving so rapidly. Similarly, development has also made many practicalities and conveniences, but due to the absence of reflection, such progress is unexpectedly also bringing adverse effects, particularly on the health and sustainability of the earth.<sup>3</sup>

Development process that results in mass products has neglected quality and debates on ethical issues. One of them is transgenic products or excessive use of chemicals in food products. In one side, modernization indeed produces abundant products and economic benefits. On the other hand, such biological engineering also causes side effects that are very terrible.

Such process has brought various negative impacts. Although there is no clear conclusion, a number of studies show that the presence of industrialization era is accompanied by an increasing number of degenerative diseases. Data from the Ministry of Health show that the number of people who suffer from kidney failure, cancer and diabetes has increased annually. For example, the information center of kidney failure Renal Registry reported that in 2011 the number of people with kidney failure in Indonesia was 12,466 people, but in 2014 the number had

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<sup>1</sup> Tania Murray Li, *The Will To Improve: Perencanaan, Kekuasaan, Dan Pembangunan di Indonesia* (Tangerang Selatan: Marjin Kiri, 2012), 1, 2, 499.

<sup>2</sup> Pajar Hatma Indra Jaya, *Analisis Masalah Sosial: Breakdown Teori-teori Sosial Menuju Praksis Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Senter, 2008), 32, 33.

<sup>3</sup> Sudarminto, *Manusia Multi Dimensi* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1983), 123–239.

increased by approximately 31.6% to 16,408 people.<sup>4</sup> It is even estimated that the number is increasing 10% annually.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the number of people with diabetes in Indonesia in 2016 was in the seventh rank in the world record. In fact, the increasing number of people with kidney failure, diabetes, or hypertension occurs not only in Indonesia, but also in various countries around the world. WHO reported that there was a fourfold increase in the number of people with diabetes, from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014.<sup>6</sup>

A number of health studies concluded that one of the causes of diseases is due to poor eating habits (digestive issues). Although macro data show seemingly real symptoms, the effects of such poor eating habits are not directly felt, for example the effects of smoking, so that many people do not have awareness related to such situation. Even foods that have been labelled as junk food still become people's favorite foods. Worse, consuming junk food has become a part of the lifestyles and characteristics of modern people. In fact, the Prophet Muhammad stated the same argument that most diseases arise due to habit related to stomach. When an Egyptian ruler gave Rasulullah SAW gifts in the forms of a servant, horses, and doctors, the Prophet only received the first prize (the servant) and rejected the other gifts (horses and doctor), saying: "*We are people who do not eat until we are hungry and we stop eating before we are full*".<sup>7</sup> This shows that the Prophet does not need any doctors because he has an healthy eating habit.

Although not many people respond to such crisis situation, there are groups of people who take actions. For example, there are groups that promoted the movement *back to nature* or *slowfood* in Rome Italy in 1989 and spread to Indonesia<sup>8</sup> Saiful Arif even proposed a concept to refuse

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<sup>4</sup> Comparing data from Perkumpulan Nefrologi Indonesia, "4th Report of Indonesian Renal Registry" (Jakarta: Pernefri, 2011), 14; and Perkumpulan Nefrologi Indonesia, "7th Report of Indonesian Renal Registry" (Jakarta: Pernefri, 2014), 13, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Izudin, "Penderita Gagal Ginjal Naik 10% Tiap Tahun," 23 Maret 2015, <http://www.pdpersi.co.id/content/news.php?mid=5&nid=1887&catid=23>.

<sup>6</sup> World Health Organization, "Global Report On Diabetes" (Perancis: World Health Organization, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Kurtubi, "Keutamaan Mengonsumsi Makanan Halalan Thayyiba," *Edu-Bio* 4 (2013): 62.

<sup>8</sup> Carlo Petini, *Slow Food Nation* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications Inc, 2003).

development.<sup>9</sup> In Yogyakarta, there is a movement that tries to revive and instill a healthy lifestyle. This movement opposes exploitative and destructive food industrialization processes and seeks alternative lifestyle by digging up the wisdoms of the values contained in the Quran, for examples consuming food that is not only halal, but also *Tayib*. The movement was initiated by H. Iskandar Waworuntu by establishing Bumi Langit Institute. This movement was even able to attract the former President of the United States, Barack Obama, to visit this institute in Imogiri, Bantul, Yogyakarta. Based on this background, this research tried to find out about the methods used by Bumi Langit Institute in doing da'wah in order to instill *tayib* lifestyle in the midst of mushrooming fast foods so that many people are interested and decide to adopt the lifestyle?

### **Methods**

This was a descriptive qualitative research using several data collection methods, namely interview, documentation, and observation. Observation was done by observing any observable things in Bumi Langit Institute, starting from the garden with permaculture system, the use of waste materials, the use of organic energy (biodigester), microbial-bacterial cultivation, and also food stalls that sell *tayib* food menu. Documentation study was performed by tracking websites, news, and video about Bumi Langit Intitute. Interviews were conducted to fifteen informants who were divided into two clusters, the members of Bumi Langit committee and visitors. For the first cluster, the interviews were conducted to Mr. Iskandar Waworuntu as the founder, Mas Salas, and two people working at Bumi Langit, while the visitors interviewed were a group from Singapore, a group from Jakarta, local visitors from Yogyakarta, as well as some visiting lecturers and students to Bumi Langit.

### **Da'wah by Promoting the Culture to Consume Halal and *Tayib* Food**

Amrullah Achmad (1983) defines da'wah as an activity to actualize faith (theology) so that it is manifested in a system of human activity particularly in social field which is done regularly in order to affect the way of feeling, thinking, and behaving in order to manifest Islamic teachings in

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<sup>9</sup> Arif Saiful, *Menolak Pembangunanisme* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2000).

all aspects of life.<sup>10</sup> According to such definition, it can be said that one da'wah activity is to create awareness because da'wah is to enlighten people who are in darkness so that they are motivated to change their behavior. Qur'an was revealed to the earth as a guide for humanbeings to go for salvation or a better life both in the world and in the hereafter. One aspect of salvation that is currently being neglected is regarding eating halal and tayib food.

According to *Indonesian Dictionary*, halal is defined as an act or something that is permitted (not prohibited by *syarak*),<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, in accordance with the origin of the word, halal comes from Arabic language which means "to let go" and "to not be bound"<sup>12</sup>. In the Qur'an, the word halal (food) is found twenty-seven times, while the word halal is stated thirty times.<sup>13</sup> For the word tayib, *Indonesian Dictionary* defines it as good or excellent. The Qur'an mentions the word tayib, in terms of food, nine times.<sup>14</sup> However, there are several uses of the word tayib in the Qur'an that do not refer to good food, for example, in the context of good soil (dust) for *tayamum* (Al-Ma'idah: 6). For the uses in terms of food, the word tayib often appears together with the word halal.

The command to eat halal dan tayib food is stated in several surah, for example Surah Al-Baqarah verse 168:

*“O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan; indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.” (Q.S al-Baqarah: 168).*<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Achmad Amrullah, “Dakwah Islam dan Perubahan Sosial: Suatu Kerangka Pendekatan dan Permasalahan,” in *Dakwah Islam dan Perubahan Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Prima Duta, 1983), 2.

<sup>11</sup> Sugono, dkk, *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008), 503.

<sup>12</sup> Aisjah Girindra, *Dari Sertifikasi Menuju Labelisasi Halal: LPPOM MUI* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jurnal Halal, 2008).

<sup>13</sup> Heri Ruslan, “Alquran Sebut Kata Halal 30 Kali,” *Republika*, 6 Januari 2017.

<sup>14</sup> Ahmad Muhammad Yusuf, *Ensiklopedia Tematis Ayat Al-Qur'an & Hadits Jilid 6* (Jakarta: Widya Cahaya, 2009), 111–129.

<sup>15</sup> Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* (Surabaya: Mahkota, 1989), 41.

Data from detik.com show that there are only 20% out of twenty thousand kinds of food and beverages that are distributed in Indonesia that already have halal certification from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), while the remaining 80% have not been registered because they have not obtained halal certification from MUI.<sup>16</sup> Even so, most of Indonesian people, the majority of which are Muslim, have been well educated to only consume halal products. This is evident from several previous studies showing that halal certification has been one factor that determines how Indonesian Muslim community selects food products, especially among the educated class.

In many studies, religion becomes a major factor in determining all forms of behavior that a community is doing, including when one is about to buy food products. This is similar to the result of a research conducted by Jusmaliani and Hanny Nasution (2009) which concludes that the knowledge about halal products has a positive influence on the decisions of Muslims in Jakarta and Melbourne in purchasing beef.<sup>17</sup> A research by Bayu Al Rochmanto and Ibnu Widiyanto (2015) also has almost similar findings, i.e. product knowledge, religious norms and consumer attitudes towards products' halal status directly and simultaneously influence consumers' intentions and actions to consume halal food and beverage products.<sup>18</sup> A research by Kurnia Sari Dewi and Ilyda Sudardjat (2013) in North Sumatra also shows almost similar findings where there is a relationship between the presence of halal label with students' decision to purchase a particular type of imported packaged food.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Wiji Nurhayat, "80% Produk RI Belum Punya Label Halal, di Malaysia Hanya 10%," 6 Maret 2014, <http://finance.detik.com/read/2014/03/06/152024/2517656/4/80-produk-ri-belum-punya-label-halal-di-malaysia-hanya-10>.

<sup>17</sup> Jusmaliani dan Hanny Nasution, "Religiosity Aspect in Consumer Behaviour: Determinants of Halal Meat Consumption," *Asean Marketing Journal* 1, no. 2 (2009): 1, 9, 20.

<sup>18</sup> Bayu Al. Rochmanto dan Ibnu Widiyanto, "Pengaruh Pengetahuan Produk Dan Norma Religius Terhadap Sikap Konsumen Dalam Niat Mengkonsumsi Produk Makanan Dan Minuman Halal (Studi Kasus di Kota Semarang)," *Diponegoro Journal of Management* 4, no. 1 (2015): 11.

<sup>19</sup> Dewi Kurnia Sari dan Ilyda Sudardjat, "Analisis Pengaruh Labelisasi Halal Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Makanan Impor Dalam Kemasan Pada Mahasiswa

In Indonesia, the institutionalization of halal food concept actually only started to emerge in 1989, driven by MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council) that established LP-POM-MUI. In 1991 the concept was approved by the state through the issuance of Presidential Decree No. 2 of 1991 concerning Improvement of Monitoring and Supervision of Processed Food Production and Distribution and Law Number 23 of 1992 concening Health and Law No. 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection which explicitly mention the word halal.<sup>20</sup> As a country with the majority of population upholding Islam, all foods that did not come with halal symbol were halal; only foods that contained ingredients labeled haram were not included as halal foods. Nonetheless, in its development, there are more food products, both local and imported, so it is necessary to have halal label so as to ease consumers. Certification of halal products has currently become popular among the community. Unfortunately, not many people have paid attention to the concept of *tayib* food, let alone being institutionalized in the form of certification, although the concept of halal is actually inseparable from the concept of *tayib*.

In practice, there are lots of halal but not *tayib* food. For example, chicken meat or catfish that are exposed to many hormones through the feed, or lamb for people with certain diseases. Lamb is a halal food, but the food is not *tayib* for those with high blood pressure. Sweet tea is also categorized as halal food, but not *tayib* for people with diabetes. There is also an opinion saying that there are *tayib* food but not halal, for example gecko meat for people with skin diseases (*rukhsah*). There is also an opinion saying that any haram (not halal) food is always not *tayib* because it can bring bad impacts for health. Experts also prove that food which is forbidden (haram) has a much lower nutrient content than any other recommended food.<sup>21</sup>

The concept of halal can be seen from two aspects, namely halal in terms of the content and halal in terms of the process of getting it. Anything

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Kedokteran Universitas Sumatera Utara,” *Jurnal Ekonomi dan Keuangan* 1, no. 4 (2013): 54.

<sup>20</sup> Hasan Bisri, *20 Tahun Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (Jakarta: Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 1995), 81, 242–249.

<sup>21</sup> Azmi Siradjuddin, “Regulasi Makanan Halal Di Indonesia,” *TAPIS* XIII, no. 01 (2013): 59, 106.



whose substance is halal, but the way of getting it is wrong, for example by stealing it, can be categorized as haram.<sup>22</sup>

According to Quraish Shihab (1996), the concept of tayib (whether food is good or not) can be viewed from three aspects, namely the food must be healthy, proportional, and safe for consumption. Healthy food is any food that contains enough and balanced nutrients that are needed by human body. Proportional food is any food that is consumed proportionally according to what is needed, i.e. the amount (quantity) is neither excessive (Surah Al-Araf: 31) nor less. Rasulullah SAW condemned those who fill their stomach with food yet leave no space for the others. He taught that the we should the stomach with not only with food but also drink and air to breathe. As the Prophet said: "*Man fills no vessel worse than his stomach. It is sufficient for the son of Adam to have a few mouthfuls to give him the strength he needs. If he has to fill his stomach, then let him leave one-third for food, one-third for drink and one-third for air*" (Ibn Majah and Ibn Hibban, and At-Tirmidzi through the Prophet's companion Miqdam bin Ma'di Karib). In addition, safe food is any food that is free from any dirt and free from anything haram, as well as not damaged due to being contaminated by toxic or hazardous substances. In Islam it is called *khabsaits*. Based on such opinion, any haram food is never tayib food.<sup>23</sup>

Apart from those three elements, Iskandar Waworuntu mentioned that there can be additional requirements for good (tayib) food, i.e. the production process should not contain any exploitation of labor (fair) and does not bring any harm to the environment. Exploitation of labor violates fairness aspect, especially between workers and capital owners, where the capital owners do not get involved in the working yet they get the largest share, while the workers have to live below the wage standard. In addition, exploitation of the nature occurs when the products cause environmental damage.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Kurtubi, "Keutamaan Mengkonsumsi Makanan Halalan Thayyiba," 60, 61.

<sup>23</sup> Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an: Tafsir Maudhu'i Atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat* (Bandung: Mizan, 1996), 146, 147.

<sup>24</sup> Iskandar Waworuntu, Wawancara tentang Sejarah Ide dan Pengetahuan di Bumi Langit, 23 November 2015.

Consuming halal and tayib food is important regarding the fact that paying attention to food is a command of Allah, "*then let mankind look at his food*" (Surah Abasa: 24).<sup>25</sup> The verses of the Qur'an and some scholarly opinions show that consuming halal and tayib food is important because food could influence someone's personality and intelligence, even the efficacy of prayers. "*O Sa'ad, look at your food, eat only among good food, surely you will be among the efficacious prayers*" (HR. Al-Tabarani). On the other hand, consuming unlawful (haram) food will have an adverse effect on the person, be it physical or spiritual effect. Empirically, there are many bad behavior among adolescents such as brawling and other criminal acts that are triggered by consuming any food and drink that are forbidden in Islam, such as liquor. A spoon of food from haram sources can make children become rebellious children to their parents.<sup>26</sup> In addition, food with low nutritional contents, especially during "golden age" can be physically debilitating and cause mental disorders. Therefore, Islam encourages mothers who just give birth to breastfeed their babies for two years.<sup>27</sup>

Iskandar Waworuntu is one of those people who believe that neglecting the status of food is a factor that triggers various social and physical illnesses (crises) as well as a lot of deviant behavior in Indonesia, ranging from student brawling, violence, to corruption. Thus, he suggests people to pay attention to the food they consume, making sure that it is not only halal, but also tayib. This activity can be categorized as da'wah activity. In addition to da'wah related to tayib food, other things related to lifestyle that become the concern of Bumi Langit Institute are trading without usury through organic market, permaculture agriculture system, protecting the environment as much as possible by reusing waste materials, and saving the use of non-renewable fuel. In other words, Bumi Langit is a place to do da'wah and learn living Qur'an although only a few verses.

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<sup>25</sup> Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, 1025.

<sup>26</sup> Muhammad Fauzi, *Hidangan Islam Ulasan Komprehensif Berdasarkan Syari'at dan Sains Modern, Alih Bahasa Abdul Hayyi al-Kattanie* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1997); Kurtubi, "Keutamaan Mengkonsumsi Makanan Halalan Thayyiba," 65, 66.

<sup>27</sup> Farida Hanum, Ali Khomsan, dan Yayat Heryatno, "Hubungan Asupan Gizi Dan Tinggi Badan Ibu Dengan Status Gizi Anak Balita," *Jurnal Gizi dan Pangan* 9, no. 1 (2014): 5; Su'dan, *Al-Qur'an dan Panduan Kesehatan Masyarakat* (Yogyakarta: Dana Bakti Prima Yasa, 1997).

### **Determinants of *Da'wah* Success**

There are a number of factors that affect the success of da'wah activities or program. Ace Partadiredja (1983) explained that there are four factors that determine the success of da'wah. These four factors are appropriate targeting of da'wah, preacher (one that delivers da'wah), da'wah media, and appropriate da'wah materials.<sup>28</sup> These four factors are often referred to as da'wah elements.<sup>29</sup>

Da'wah target is segmentation or people who are targeted by da'wah program/activity. Da'wah program that does not pay attention to the target will result in a selection of da'wah materials that are not appropriate. Da'wah materials for children are of course different from those for the elderly; materials for students at campus are different from those delivered in a village.

Da'i (preacher) is the agent of change, that is the person who performs da'wah programs. A good preacher is someone with a good personality or morality and trusted by the people. Da'wah media are media or tools for delivering da'wah, while da'wah material is the content of the message delivered to the public. Good da'wah materials are contextual and able to respond to social issues.<sup>30</sup> In other words, a good da'wah is a good delivery of materials, done by a trusted person, through an appropriate manner, and to the right people. These factors are very crucial because wrong selection may lead to bad result of da'wah, even it may receive society refusal.

Apart from the elements of da'wah, there is also the so-called da'wah method. Da'wah method is a way to invite people to the way of Allah so that the result is effective and efficient. There are generally two da'wah methods: one that refers to the activity using oral or written language (*bil*

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<sup>28</sup> Ace Partadiredja, "Dakwah Islam Melalui Kebutuhan Pokok Manusia," in *Dakwah Islam dan Perubahan Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Prima Duta, 1983), 117.

<sup>29</sup> Santa Rusmalita, "Metode Dakwah Untuk Lansia," *Al-Hikmah* 9 no. 2 (2015): 125.

<sup>30</sup> Muhammad Barmawi, "Aktualisasi Dakwah Islam (Kajian Analisis Formulasi Dakwah Rasulullah)," *Religi* 19, no. 2 (2016): 23, 24.

*lisan/bil kitabah*) and one that involves physical activity or actions (*bi ahsan al-'amal/bil hal*).<sup>31</sup>

Technically da'wah activities using oral and written method can be in the forms of preaching, discussions, debates, dialogue, advice, warning, writing a book, writing a blog, etc. Da'wah activities involving physical activities or action can be manifested in the forms doing righteous deeds such as providing material assistance, community empowerment, policy advocacy, healthcare service, environmental movement, or Islamic institution management. In fact, da'wah often does not run well because it only uses oral method so that the result does not encourage the emergence of social transformation. Even da'wah using oral method often has another weakness, i.e it sometimes does not discuss the implementation of the topic in real life, does not provide concrete evidence regarding the topic, and does not meet the needs of the community. An example of da'wah success by meeting the needs of community, particularly economic aspect, can be seen in International Boarding School Saung Balong Majalengka<sup>32</sup> and posdaya program that is based in mosques in Makasar.<sup>33</sup>

## **Results/Discussions:**

### **About Bumi Langit Institute**

Bumi Langit Institute (IBL) is a place that preaches the concept of tayib way of life to wider community. This institute is located on Imogiri-Mangunan Street KM 3, precisely in RT 005, Giriloyo, Wukirsari Village, Imogiri Subdistrict, Bantul, Yogyakarta. IBL has a vision to:

*Create and share the Islamic principles of sustainable living through integrated skills (including agriculture) and development to support the establishment of a sovereign community throughout the world that is fair, loving, blissful, and free of usury.*<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Syukriadi Sambas, *Sembilan Pasal Pokok-Pokok Filsafat Dakwah* (Bandung: KP Hadid Fakultas Dakwah IAIN Bandung, 1999), 53.

<sup>32</sup> Pajar Hatma Indra Jaya, "Dakwah Pembebasan: Sebuah Cerita Dari Saung Balong, Majalengka, Jawa Barat," *Jurnal Dakwah* 13, no. 2 (2012): 175.

<sup>33</sup> Muliaty Amin, "Konsep Dakwah Melalui Program Posdaya Berbasis Masjid (Suatu Kajian Metode Dakwah bi al-Hāl)," *Jurnal Dakwah Tabligh* 13, no. 1 (2012): 97.

<sup>34</sup> "Dokumentasi tentang Sejarah Bumi Langit di [www.bumilangit.org](http://www.bumilangit.org)," *Visi* (blog), 2 Februari 2017, <http://www.bumilangit.org/indonesian/index.html>.

Bumi Langit Institute was founded by Iskandar Waworuntu in 2006 or after Yogyakarta earthquake. IBL currently has three hectares of land that is used as a place to live, field by implementing permaculture system, animal husbandry, mosque, food stalls, and also a place to stay to learn Islamic lifestyle (introducing Islamic).

Most of its buildings are made of refurbished goods, ranging from tiles, bricks, to the walls of the buildings that are mostly made of used woods. IBL tries to utilize natural energy with solar power, does not use electrical energy from PLN, and tries not to use fossil fuel. These steps are taken in order to sustain and maintain the earth based on Islamic values.<sup>35</sup>

The activities that can be done at Bumi Langit Institute include visiting and having a tour around perma forest, training, having discussions about ways of life, ranging from permaculture farming systems without or by minimizing the use of hoes, breeding worms, rabbits, making use of renewable energy to minimize the use of electricity and energy from fossils, to eating at *warung bumi* (earth food stalls) that offer tayib lifestyle and eating habit.

Bumi Langit Institute is open to anyone from any groups. Visitors who learn tayib lifestyle and food are not only muslim; they are also from various religions who want to learn about good life in Bumi Langit. This place is open every day, starting at 08.00 until 18.00, except on Mondays (day off).

### **Interesting *Da'wah* Materials: Dialog with Reality**

Bumi Langit Institute has da'wah messages referring to the Qur'an, with logical da'wah context and messages. The da'wah materials or messages delivered at Bumi Langit Institute are related to good lifestyle, inspired by the current lifestyle adopted by the society (modern era) that does not reflect Islamic values to maintain the harmony with the nature and justice. Bumi Langit Institute feels the need to deconstruct and reconstruct the values of life to make life better. First of all, it is characterized by the emergence of more diseases and world energy reserves that are reducing. Regarding these conditions, Bumi Langit offers (shares) a good

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<sup>35</sup> Salas, Wawancara Sejarah Bumi Langit, 4 November 2015.

lifestyle, starting from tayib food, trading without usury, the concept of blessed work, to the utilization of energy.

Islam is a lifestyle because it governs life in detail, starting from the time when people wake up to bedtime again. However, people often see it as a form of restraint, but Mr. Iskandar sees it as a guideline so that mankind could live in harmony. He said that:

*The West society believes that the essence of life is freedom, but in reality, when people are doing it, things do not become better. I find that the essence of freedom is the presence of rules that govern mankind without exception. Islam is the perfect religion because in Islam, all activities, starting from the time when waking up to bedtime again, have been arranged according to human nature. Living based on human nature is what mankind sometimes forgets. Mankind, with their intelligence, manipulate because of their greed.<sup>36</sup>*

One of the activities organized in Islam is related to food. Eating is one activity that cannot be skipped by humans. Every living creature needs to eat. All activities require energy that is gained from eating. However, wrong food will lead to negative effects in the long run, even all illnesses start from the stomach, meaning that eating is the root. Human stomach should be alkaline, but various foods that are consumed are acidic thus resulting in a number of diseases. Islam offers the concept of tayib that is (intentionally) brought up by Bumi Langit Institute.

People, so far, do not really take into account the concept of tayib food because they feel that it is enough to just pay attention to the concept of halal. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) only focuses on the concept of halal, while it is not enough because there are still many health-related issues. In fact, there are lots of halal but not tayib food. Such food condition affects health, even the behavior of society. Food that is not good, even haram, can have negative effects on the mental condition of those who consume it, as described by al-Harali in an article written by Quraish Shihab

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<sup>36</sup> Iskandar Woworuntu, Wawancara tentang Proses Pemberdayaan di Istitut Bumi Langit, 14 November 2015.

who argues that the types of food and drink can affect the soul and mental of the ones who consume them.<sup>37</sup>

Bumi Langit Institute believes in such concept because it is proved by some empirical facts that they have found. The messages in the Qur'an can be packed in the form of messages that are dialogued thus being able to discuss with reality. IBL gives an example of a case: in a city whose people are agricultural societies, they sell their crops, but these farmers only consume instant noodles for years. As a result, after a few years, the whole population of such city has mental disorders and low IQ.<sup>38</sup>

From the context of such empirical condition, da'wah message can be taken from the content of Al-Qur'an that instant noodles are halal food, but they are not tayib if consumed continuously. Although Mr. Iskandar never explains the verses of the Qur'an in Arabic version, the knowledge that he has is admitted to be from the Qur'an (Surah Al-Baqarah: 168). The Qur'an serves as bringing a warning and good news; this ability to explain this can be understood by the society and academicians as well. From the concept of tayib, IBL is able to manifest it in a number of daily practices, that is to consume organic crops and to use permaculture farming system.

Organic plants are plants that are treated and maintained through natural processes, not involving the addition of chemicals, starting from pesticides to various growth hormones. Tayib food is characterized by organic food. The emergence of various diseases usually starts from the stomach, that is choosing the wrong food. Almost 90% of halal food is not tayib because of too much application of science and the emergence of chemicals used to stimulate and accelerate the production process.

Food production that naturally takes months, even a year, could be accelerated to less than two months by adding certain hormones. However, this makes the food contaminated with chemical residues used to accelerate the process so that the food becomes not tayib. Professor Maha M. Hadi,

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<sup>37</sup> Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an: Tafsir Maudhu'i Atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat*, 137.

<sup>38</sup> Bulan Putri Intan Raissa Cindy, Suyatno, dan Siti Fatimah, "Hubungan Konsumsi Mie Instan Dengan Status Gizi Pada Balita Usia 24 – 59 Bulan Di Desa Jamus Kecamatan Mranggen Kabupaten Demak, Indonesia Tahun 2015," *Jurnal Kesehatan Masyarakat* 4, no. 2 (2016): 29–31, 35.

Chairman of the Nutrition Department at Cairo University, warned that cow growth hormone mixed with feed could lead to breast and colon cancers.<sup>39</sup> Besides, a lot of references in social media and scientific journals show that consuming chicken that is administered estrogen hormones and antibiotics can cause degenerative diseases, even infertility.<sup>40</sup>

Bumi Langit also studies old lifestyle and brings it back as a good choice. One of its products is to popularize the production of rice using rice pounder (brown rice); on the other hand in the modern era, good rice is rice that is ground to white. However, white rice actually no longer contains bran elements (vitamins B1, B2, B3, Selenium, Manganese, Iron, and Fiber) that are also needed by human body. Bran and rice are two things that complement each other so that when there is only rice left, it can increase blood sugar, thus triggering diabetes. Selenium (Se) on bran serves as anti-oxidants to prevent cancer and also increase immunity.

In agricultural systems, Bumi Langit popularizes the term permaculture. Permaculture is a creative farming system designed based on the natural circle pattern, that is to make use of nature carefully as needed and to respect life so as to produce a sustainable system for the future. At Bumi Langit, the permaculture system is done by reusing each residue and keeping good bacteria in the soil. Permaculture actually doesn't originally come from Indonesia. Such system was popularized in the late 60s or beginning of 70s in Tasmania, South Australia by Bill Mollison.<sup>41</sup> Even though this system is from abroad, Mr. Iskandar believes and tries to explore good farming concepts that have once existed in Indonesia, but no longer existed today. One of them is the technique to plant at night during full moon.

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<sup>39</sup> Bayu Al. Rochmanto dan Ibnu Widiyanto, "Pengaruh Pengetahuan Produk Dan Norma Religius Terhadap Sikap Konsumen Dalam Niat Mengonsumsi Produk Makanan Dan Minuman Halal (Studi Kasus di Kota Semarang)," 4.

<sup>40</sup> Rofa Yulia Azhar, "Stop Makan Ayam!," 12 Desember 2014, [http://www.kompasiana.com/rofa-yulia-azhar/stop-makan-ayam\\_54f3a3177455137d2b6c7bd0](http://www.kompasiana.com/rofa-yulia-azhar/stop-makan-ayam_54f3a3177455137d2b6c7bd0).

<sup>41</sup> Toby Hemenway, *Gaia's garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture* (Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing Company, 2009), 5; Toby Hemenway, *The Permaculture City: Regenerative Design for Urban, Suburban, and Town Resilience* (United State of America: Chelsea Green Publishing Company, 2015), v.



Several techniques of permaculture system are considered quite strange, compared to many agricultural techniques that are used in this era. One of them is "to prohibit" / minimize the use of hoes to loosen soil. In this institute, loosening the soil is done directly by hand or by directly putting any food leftover on the soil until it is naturally decomposed by beneficial bacteria. Such unusual practice may bring in the interpretation of "occult" because they do not want to hurt the land. In addition, Mr. Iskandar also mentioned that the land should not be harmed by using hoes because it could "cry" when a hoe is used on it. However, behind such philosophy, there is a very logical and scientific explanation, where in the universe, including in the soil, there are billions of bacteria. These bacteria are like "angels", a creature that Allah creates to bring a mission or a particular job. Not only are there bad bacteria, there are also many good bacteria that are beneficial for humans. By treating the soil in a not-good way, such as by using hoes or pesticide-fungicide that is commonly used in modern agriculture, small microbes that the soil needs are disrupted. In factm they are also needed by humans. Thus, Bumi Langit not only wants to protect these good bacteria, but also wants to produce them.<sup>42</sup>

In fact, good microbes are found not only in farming system, but also in food. Improper processing will make the loss of such balance which potentially leads to diseases. Bumi Langit Institute also promotes kefir, i.e. fermented beverage/probiotics, like yogurt, which contains a lot of good microbes. Kefir is a traditional beverage of the people in Caucasus mountain (Russia) and believed to have links with the life of the Prophet Muhammad (legacy of the Prophet). It is a fermented milk and the leaves in it is good for stomach and may cure some diseases, such as diabetes, tumor, asthma, etc.<sup>43</sup>

In association with agriculture, Mr. Iskandar popularizes farming activities because farming is one of the life essences, even it is a respectable job. Such opinion is certainly different from the modern view of life (lifestyle) in which young generations in Indonesia generally do not feel happy when working in agricultural sector. Mr. Iskandar, although he is "a foreigner" also farms, even he has introduced farming to all his children

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<sup>42</sup> Woworuntu, Wawancara tentang Sejarah Ide dan Pengetahuan di Bumi Langit.

<sup>43</sup> Sri Usmiati, "Kefir, Susu Fermentasi dengan Rasa Menyenangkan," *Warta Penelitian dan Pengembangan Pertanian* 29, no. 2 (2007): 12.

since childhood. By being involved in farming, they will know themselves and will respect the nature, so they will be very careful when utilizing nature, including feeling care for other creatures. Farming is important because what people consume is produced by this activity.

Other kind of lifestyle that is popularized by Bumi Langit is a careful use of natural resources. Even, Bumi Langit Institute uses waste materials to be reused functionally for life. This is manifested in the form of building materials at Bumi Langit that makes use of waste materials, such as tiles, bricks, and the walls of the houses.

In addition, Bumi Langit Institute does not utilize electrical energy from PLN and it minimizes the use of fossil fuels. When cooking, people at this institute use biogas (*biodigester*) produced from cow dung. Bumi Langit tries to make use of solar energy for lighting. They are fully aware when doing this because fossil fuels are not renewable. In addition, this institute also minimizes the use of lighting in the evenings, even most of the buildings at Bumi Langit are left dark at night. According to Mr. Iskandar, it is "sunatullah" to leave everything dark at night so people can rest, therefore it is not necessary to overuse lights at night.

Logical arguments connected with the Qur'an as well as the old lifestyle practiced in the past are not a mere hoax. In fact, these arguments are justified and appreciated by academicians as a source of knowledge, including the Environmental Study Center UGM, Traditional Food Research Center UGM, Department of Architecture UGM, UII and also Duta Wacana University. These institutions have established cooperation, communication, and learning with IBL. In addition, there are many university and high school students from various schools and campuses who visit and study in this institute. In fact, IBL also socializes the knowledge abroad, not only locally.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> "Dokumentasi tentang Institut di <http://www.bumilangit.org>," 3 Februari 2017, <http://www.bumilangit.org/indonesian/institute/index.html>.

### Appropriate Da'wah Media and Segmentation

Promotion is the most important marketing strategy because it can make people who initially do not want something feel that they need it.<sup>45</sup> Good promotion will invite lots of visitors as well. Even, due to marketing, "cat poop" could be seen as if it is chocolate. Marketing process will create simulacrum that influences people's thinking through advertisement.

Mr. Iskandar and Bumi Langit never create a specific advertisement about the da'wah movement that he made. The ideas upheld by this institute are promoted by words of mouth. They believe that when someone does something good, Allah will tell many people so that they will come on their own. This is in line with the philosophy of tape (fermented rice) and sugar: where there is tape, it has become *sunatullah* that moths will come surrounding it or where there is sugar, then ants will naturally approach. When an institution has a concept or something that people need, then people will come to learn. When the visitors themselves feel satisfied for what they learn and have here, they will then be the marketing agents to other institutions and connect with the existing network.

There are two da'wah methods used by Mr. Iskandar, namely with by oral and by taking actions by giving examples in the form of an Islamic system of life (Social Laboratory of living Qur'an). Oral da'wah at IBL is not delivered through lectures with a large number of audience, but it is more in the form two-direction discussion (*mujadalah billati hiya ahsan*) to the people who visit in small groups, which usually consist of two to ten people. With the method of dialogue to exchange ideas in small groups, the materials will be conveyed clearly and when some people do not feel familiar with certain concepts, another dialogue can be created so that the knowledge that refers to the Qur'an is not wrongly interpreted. Mr. Iskandar basically does not give lecture in a large class; he also does not perform oral da'wah (*bil lisan*) anywhere. Instead, he waits for people to come to learn at his house. *Mad'u* (students) are the ones who visit da'i to learn. One of his reasons for not giving da'wah outside this institute is that, if he goes out, visitors to Bumi Langit might not be able to see him. Therefore, he only sets Mondays as da-off so they can rest or go outside.

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<sup>45</sup> Warren J. Keegen, Sandra E. Moriarty, dan Thomas R. Duncan, *Marketing* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995), 12, 13, 18, 19.

High number of visitors who learn at Bumi Langit is also possible because Mr. Iskandar as the owner of this institute has many relations. He used to have a hotel in Bali and during his learning of life, he met many people. Besides, the fact that he has mixed blood has made him attractive to many people, especially because he is a unique foreigner who converted to Islam, has long beard, wear white tagiyah, lives on a mountain, wears sarong, and becomes a farmer.

Most of them know Bumi Langit from social media and from word of mouth. Information from word of mouth dominated the network at the beginning of Bumi Langit establishment. However, along with the development of information, media have become the dominant means of distributing information that lead young people to come to Bumi Langit. The information spread easily because it offers a new lifestyle and a magnificent view over beautiful mountains. This middle-class young group who prioritizes rationality and invention is willing to accept it because this institute has messages that contain different, unique, and authentic lifestyle that can be accepted by common sense.

Although using no advertising, young people of middle-class who visit Bumi Langit are very familiar with gadget. They like taking selfie photographs, reviewing new things on their blog, or creating video blogs (vlog). Through these social media, information has spread quickly; it can even be said to exceed the speed of light. Bumi Langit Institute currently also has a website ([www.bumilangit.org](http://www.bumilangit.org)) to share about its activities.

Social media are able to overcome the issues related to space and time, so it is no wonder that many visitors to this institute are from outside of the city, such as Jakarta-Bandung-Surabaya; some of them even come from abroad, such as Singapore, Australia, the Netherlands, and the United States. Even Barack Obama was also interested in visiting Bumi Langit when having his holiday in Yogyakarta. Visits from popular figures like Obama has made Bumi Langit even more interesting for people to come and learn here.

Mr. Iskandar does not build any da'wah segmentation so he would welcome anyone who comes to this institute. However, based on the da'wah materials and media that are used, da'wah target segmentation appears on its own, i.e. rational middle class who no longer thinks of quantity, but quality.

Even, permaculture system can be said to oppose the massive agricultural system in the modern agricultural industry because the agricultural processes only let everything run naturally with only the help of natural bacteria. It can even be said that modern agriculture industry that is only seeks for profit is a farming system that it opposes ( "following the steps of Satan"). Based on such concept, modern farmers (today) will not be interested in the concept adopted by Bumi Langit because these massive agriculture systems using technology and chemicals still have extensive market. Besides, the profits of (conventional) agriculture can only be increased by extending the crops and accelerating the production process. In addition, the intention to quickly harvest crops is also opposed by the agricultural system at Bumi Langit because it results in the exploitation of nature, by neglecting the aspects of health, environment, and the future of the earth. Agricultural systems that seek quick profit and neglect the environment have emerged due to human greed which "no matter how" is profit-oriented.

### **Unique *Da'i***

Da'i or preacher must have credibility that is shown by positive perception of his personality, must be accepted, and must gain trust so he will become a role model for other people. Before becoming a prophet, Muhammad SAW had been known as someone who was honest and trustworthy, to which these attributes became his "capital" in doing da'wah.

In social science studies, perception could actually be built through a process, but its authenticity is more valuable than such process. Referring to a statement from Irving Goffman, authenticity is marked by consistency between the front stage and the back stage.<sup>46</sup> Bumi Langit and Mr. Iskandar Waworuntu are perceived to have integrity and credibility because of what they speak and what they do in everyday life.

Mr. Iskandar is a figure of da'i who has integrity and has a unique physical appearance. The integrity of Bumi Langit arises because Mr. Iskandar not only uses words as a means of da'wah, but he also has

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<sup>46</sup> David Shulman, *The Presentation of Self in Contemporary Social Life*. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2017), 5, 18.

evidence for what he says, i.e. land which he processes based on the da'wah materials that he delivers (living Qur'an).

The figure of da'i will be easily remembered when he has positive uniqueness that the audience can immediately notice. People could easily accepted Sunan Kalijaga because he dressed differently from other *wali*. Aa Gym was also easily identified by the public because he was the "first" figure that appeared on television with a turban and playful expression. Iskandar Waworuntu is also unique because he physically looks taller and bigger than most Indonesian people because he is an Indonesian Dutch descent (a foreigner), but with a long beard, sarong, T-shirts, *taqiyah* (usually white), and he becomes a farmer who lives on top of a mountain. He is also known for his casual look, even when welcoming Barack Obama, he did not change his look. He did not wear a suit like the west people, but he did not wear thawb like the middle east people either. According to marketing studies, authenticity is favored by today's young generation (Generation Y who was born after 1978 and generation Z who was born after 1995).

Mr. Iskandar is attractive to Muslims because he converted to Islam. His decision to convert was not instantly because he got married or because of politics, but it was based on a long searching process. He converted to Islam in 2000, but his interaction and quest was long enough. When he was still a teenager, he had been exposed to Islam and together with his playmates, he learned *kasekten* to one *kiai*. He also learned with several artists, such as WS Rendra. He also learned about puppet, sufi from Prof. Simuh, and also visited several Islamic boarding schools in Yogyakarta. Although he had been studying Islam, but he is a humble figure who always says that he does not know much about Islam. In conveying Islamic values, Mr. Iskandar does not use Quranic verses textually, does not take for granted any surah or hadith. Instead, he contextualized any verse that he uses with science and scientific logic.<sup>47</sup>

Mr. Iskandar Waworuntu is easily accepted by the Indonesian people because he is different-foreigner. According to postcolonial conception, one characteristic of post colonial community is to feel inferior and consider other people higher, so it is no surprise that many artists want to get married with foreigners, eat western food, study about Islam da'i who has Arabic

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<sup>47</sup> Waworuntu, Wawancara tentang Sejarah Ide dan Pengetahuan di Bumi Langit.

physical look and dress in middle east clothing style. However for Westerners themselves, Mr. Iskandar is unique because he digs, lives and presents the way of life of the local people, even the way of life which no longer exists among the local community. This can be seen from the buildings at Bumi Langit which are made from wood, exactly the same as Javanese buildings, more specifically the Javanese on top of mountains. In terms of agricultural systems and ways of processing food, he also uses the old styles, for example, he reconstructs that good rice is brownish and has a lot of rice bran, instead of white. The lifestyle offered at Bumi Langit is not only used as Muslim lifestyle, but also for non-Muslims because it is logical. His ability to popularize Islamic teachings is the same as popularizing *assalamu'alaikum* that was done by Gus Dur, in which the greeting is today also adopted by non-Muslim communities<sup>48</sup>

The name of this institute established by Mr. Iskandar Waworuntu is also unique, Bumi Langit (earth sky) Institute. Bumi Langit Institute has various meanings; the first meaning is related to the location of Bumi Langit at an altitude of approximately 350 m above sea level so the buildings seem to be close with clouds (sky). Besides, Bumi Langit could also be interpreted as integration, balance of the life in this world and hereafter. Bringing prosperity to the earth to get to the eternal afterlife in heaven. Meanwhile, the word institute is used because this institution is intended as an institution to teach and learn from each other about how to live by implementing sustainable principles as taught in Islam.<sup>49</sup>

## **Conclusion**

In general, the success of popularizing Islamic lifestyle at Bumi Langit Institute so that it can be accepted by both Muslims and non-Muslims is because it is supported by four unique factors, starting from its da'wah materials, da'i, da'wah media, and the targeting of da'wah. However, its main strength lies in the da'wah materials which target the

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<sup>48</sup> Moh Mahfud MD, "Islam, Lingkungan Budaya, dan Hukum dalam Perspektif Ketatanegaraan Indonesia," *KARSA: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Keislaman* 24, no. 1 (2016): 5, 6.

<sup>49</sup> "Dokumentasi tentang Bumi Langit," 7 Desember 2016, <http://www.bumilangit.org/indonesian/farm/index.html>.

logic and awareness of the majority of people nowadays, supported with rational explanation, empirical data, and directly implemented in the institute. Although the content of da'wah is not something new, this institute is able to deliver it in a way that it seems to become something new (creating a news).

In addition to the contextual da'wah materials, the success of this institute's da'wah is also supported by the uniqueness and integrity of its da'i who is perceived to have many strengths, for examples his physical appearance, friendly and humble attitude as well as his authenticity that directly applies the message in his da'wah into his real life. Integrity of da'i is maintained by not only giving lecture (*bil lisan* method), but also directly giving example (*bil hal* method). Another supporting factor is the visits from the middle-class with their gadgets, which then help spread news and information very quickly and form a network by using social media without any space and time limit. Based on these conclusions, this paper recommends that da'i not only deliver da'wah materials orally, but also try to breakdown a verse of the Qur'an to be applied directly in everyday life (living Qur'an) and spread using social media.

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