



The Role of M. Natsir's Preaching in Strengthening Islamic Law in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role and strategy of Mohammad Natsir's holistic da'wah in strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia after the dissolution of Masyumi. Using a qualitative method with a literature study approach and socio-historical analysis, data were collected from DDII's written works, archives, and documents, with purposive samples from primary and secondary sources, observed in January-February 2025. The findings show that Natsir's da'wah strategy through actions, writings, and speech, is effective in expanding the internalization of Islamic law and empowering the people. The novelty of this study lies in the integrative analysis of Natsir's da'wah strategy in the context of contemporary challenges. The implication is that Natsir's da'wah model is relevant as a reference for developing adaptive da'wah strategies in today's Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Islamic da'wah has a strategic role in shaping Islamic identity and strengthening the implementation of sharia values in Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the, (Feener, 2013). In the history of the development of Indonesian Islam, reformist figures such as Mohammad Natsir stand out in responding to the challenges of modernity, secularization, and social plurality, (Azra, 2017). M. Natsir, besides being known as an Islamic statesman and thinker, is also a pioneer of the da'wah movement that emphasizes the integration of the values of monotheism and community development.

After the dissolution of the Masyumi Party, Natsir founded the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII) in 1967 (Ropi, 2020), developing a comprehensive propagation strategy covering education, social, and public policy advocacy. Recent studies include (Ahmad Syarif Makati & Athoillah Islamy, 2022; Muhammad Adnan, 2021; Nasution, 2023; Supi Septia Wahyuni et al., 2025). show that community-based propagation and education have a significant impact on increasing understanding and acceptance of Islamic law. However, in globalization and secularization, Islamic propagation faces new challenges such as social fragmentation, the influence of Western culture, and resistance to the implementation of Sharia in its entirety, (Hefner, 2019).

Although there have been many studies on the role of da'wah in Indonesia, in-depth studies on the strategies and impacts of M. Natsir's da'wah in strengthening Islamic law, especially in the context of contemporary social dynamics, are still limited. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the strategies, methods, and impacts of M. Natsir's da'wah in building a competitive and characterful Muslim society, as well as its relevance in strengthening Islamic law in a sustainable manner in Indonesia. This study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to the development of da'wah studies and strategies for strengthening Islamic law that are adaptive to current social dynamics, (Feener, 2013).

Therefore, the study of the role of M. Natsir's da'wah in strengthening Islamic law is very relevant, especially to understand the strategies, methods, and impacts in building a competitive and characterful Muslim society. This study is expected to provide an important contribution to the development of da'wah studies and the strengthening of Islamic law in a sustainable manner in Indonesia, as well as being a reference in formulating a da'wah strategy that is adaptive to contemporary social dynamics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Preaching and Strengthening of Islamic Law in Indonesia

Da'wah in Indonesia has long been the main instrument in strengthening the internalization of Islamic sharia values in a pluralistic society. A study (Amril & Syukur, 2024) confirmed that community-based da'wah, such as that carried out by the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Council (DDII), has proven effective in building public awareness and acceptance of Islamic sharia through educational, social, and economic empowerment approaches. This approach is considered capable of answering the challenges of globalization and secularization that are increasingly evident in Indonesia, (Amril & Syukur, 2024). Nasution, (2023) also

highlighted the importance of da'wah is adaptive to the development of the times and the needs of society so that da'wah is not only normative, but also provides solutions in answering social, economic, and educational problems of the community, (Nasution, 2023).

In line with that, other studies reveal that strengthening Islamic law cannot be separated from community empowerment efforts and the development of Islamic educational institutions, (Nur Rahma, 2020). Da'wah that is oriented towards strengthening the capacity of the community and social development is considered more sustainable and inclusive, supporting the creation of a just and harmonious society, (Azis Ahmad Zawawi & Morales, 2025; Fajar & Nor, 2020; Samson Fajar & Nur, 2020a).

M. Natsir and the Transformation of Modern Preaching

Mohammad Natsir is one of the central figures in the history of modern Indonesian da'wah. After the dissolution of the Masyumi Party, Natsir founded DDII, which pioneered organizational and community-based da'wah. Under his leadership, DDII played an important role in promoting moderate Islam and strengthening Islamic law through education, policy advocacy, and community empowerment, (Fadli & Senjahaji, 2022; Samson Fajar & Nur, 2020b). The da'wah strategy developed by Natsir emphasized the integration of the values of monotheism, education, and social advocacy. Natsir utilized various media, ranging from writing, and organizational networks, to intellectual dialogue, to expand the influence of his da'wah. This approach allows for the internalization of Islamic law values widely in society, while also responding to the challenges of social fragmentation and the influence of Western culture, (Huda et al., 2020; Nur Rahma, 2020). In addition, Natsir is known as a thinker who emphasizes the importance of integral and harmonious Islamic education as the foundation for building a competitive Muslim society.

The Relevance of M. Natsir's Preaching in the Modern Era

Recent literature confirms that Natsir's holistic and integrative da'wah model is still very relevant in facing the challenges of the times. The da'wah approach that combines aspects of faith, education, society, and economics becomes a sustainable and adaptive model for social change (Huda et al., 2020; Ropi, 2020). These studies recommend the need for innovation in da'wah strategies so that they can continue to contribute to strengthening Islamic law in an increasingly complex and pluralistic Indonesian society.

The Relevance of M. Natsir's Preaching in the Context of Social Sustainability

Recent literature confirms that Natsir's holistic and integrative da'wah model is still very relevant to face the challenges of the times. The da'wah approach that combines aspects of faith, education, society, and economics becomes a sustainable and adaptive model for social change (Mansyur, 2023; Nasution, 2023; Waskito, 2023). These studies recommend the need for innovation in da'wah strategies so that they can continue to contribute to strengthening Islamic law in the increasingly complex and pluralistic Indonesian society. Furthermore, da'wah which emphasizes empowering the community and strengthening social institutions is considered capable of creating an inclusive, harmonious, and resilient society against the challenges of

globalization. This is in line with the principle of social sustainability which is the main focus in the development of modern society, (Huda et al., 2020).

Although there have been many studies discussing the role of da'wah in strengthening Islamic law, studies that specifically analyze the strategy and impact of M. Natsir's da'wah in the context of social sustainability are still limited. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by deeply analyzing Natsir's contribution to strengthening sustainable Islamic law in Indonesia.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative method with a library research approach and socio-historical studies to deeply understand the role of Mohammad Natsir's da'wah in strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia, (S. H. Yanti et al., 2023). The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the meaning, strategy, and historical context of Natsir's da'wah thoughts and practices comprehensively and contextually, (Khoirul Hadi al-Asy et al., 2014), related to the role of M. Natsir's da'wah in strengthening Islamic law.

The population in this study is all written works, documents, and recordings of Mohammad Natsir's da'wah activities available in the form of books, articles, speeches, and archives of the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Council (DDII). The research sample was taken purposively, namely by selecting relevant and representative primary and secondary sources to describe Natsir's da'wah ideas and implementation, including historical documents and previous research results that discuss his strategies and contributions, (S. H. Yanti et al., 2023).

Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation and literature studies by collecting data from books, journals, scientific articles, and digital archives related to M. Natsir's preaching. Data analysis used content analysis and thematic analysis techniques inductively, namely identifying the main themes that emerged from the data, and then interpreting the meaning and its relationship to the research objectives, (S. H. Yanti et al., 2023). This approach allows researchers to uncover strategic patterns of preaching as well as the challenges and solutions applied by M. Natsir in the context of strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia.

Research Problem

This study aims to examine the role of da'wah carried out by Mohammad Natsir in strengthening and dignifying Islamic law in Indonesia. The main problems raised are the strategy, method, and implementation of M. Natsir's da'wah in the social and religious context of Indonesia, and how it influences the strengthening of Islamic law in society. In addition, this study also attempts to identify the challenges and opportunities faced in implementing da'wah in the modern era which is full of social and cultural dynamics.

Research Objectives

This research on the role of Mohammad Natsir's da'wah in strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia uses a qualitative research method with a library research approach or literature review, which utilizes written sources such as books, journals, documents, and scientific articles both online and offline, (S. H. Yanti et al., 2023). This approach was chosen to explore in depth the ideas,

strategies, and implementation of Natsir's da'wah based on content analysis and the historical and philosophical context of his thoughts, (S. H. Yanti et al., 2023).

The main objectives of this study are to describe and analyze the role and contribution of Mohammad Natsir's da'wah in strengthening the acceptance and implementation of Islamic law in Indonesia, identify the da'wah strategies and methods used, and examine the challenges and solutions applied in the implementation of the da'wah, (S. H. Yanti et al., 2023). Thus, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of Natsir's intellectual and practical contributions to the development of sustainable Islamic da'wah in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Role and Contribution of M. Natsir's Preaching in Strengthening Islamic Law in Indonesia

One of M. Natsir's main contributions was the establishment of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII) after the dissolution of the Masyumi Party. DDII acted as a propagation institution that drove the re-Islamization process in various regions of Indonesia, including remote areas that previously had minimal access to propagation. Through DDII, Natsir sent preachers to remote areas so that there was an increase in public awareness and understanding of Islamic law (Raihan, 2015). DDII also played a role in establishing Islamic education and propagation facilities that became the basis for strengthening Islamic law in society.

M. Natsir is known as a figure who persistently fought for Islamic aspirations through political channels, especially in efforts to make Islam the basis of the state in the Constituent Assembly. Although his political struggle failed, Natsir viewed his political struggle as part of Islamic preaching, (Raihan, 2015). His multidimensional thinking also influenced the process of modernizing Islamic thought in Indonesia and provided an intellectual basis for systematically strengthening Islamic law.

Natsir emphasized the importance of education as a driving force for the progress of the people and the country. He considered that integral and harmonious Islamic education is very necessary to build a society with high insight and education so that Islamic law can be implemented optimally, (Muridan, 2010). The da'wah strategy developed by Natsir is not only ritualistic, but also includes social, economic, and educational aspects that aim to empower the people to be able to realize the values of sharia in everyday life.

In addition to playing a role at the national level, Natsir was also active in international da'wah as Vice President of the World Islamic Congress and a member of other international Islamic organizations. He tried to unite global Muslims and strengthen Islamic identity amidst the currents of secularization and Christianization that threatened the people's faith. This role shows that Natsir's da'wah contribution was not only limited to strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia but also in a global context.

The preaching carried out by M. Natsir through various channels—political, educational, organizational, and international—contributed significantly to strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia. Through DDII, his preaching reached the wider community and built collective awareness of the importance of implementing Islamic law. In addition, his thoughts that integrated Islam and the state as a unified entity provided a foundation for the development of a legal and social system oriented towards Islamic values, (Muridan, 2010). Indonesia, but also in a global context.

The role and contribution of Mohammad Natsir's da'wah are very strategic in strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia, (Khoirul Hadi al-Asy et al., 2014; Nur Rahmah, 2020a). His holistic da'wah approach, covering educational, political, organizational, and international aspects, has succeeded in building awareness and acceptance of Islamic law widely. Natsir's da'wah not only strengthens Islamic values normatively but also empowers the people to realize sharia in social and state life, (Fahrul et al., 2022a; Halim et al., 2011; Khoirul Hadi al-Asy et al., 2014; H. Yanti et al., 2023).

This study found that Mohammad Natsir played a central role in strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia through the establishment and management of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII) after the dissolution of the Masyumi Party, (Fahrul et al., 2022b). DDII became the main driving force in the re-Islamization process, especially in remote areas that were previously less accessible to preaching. Through the program of sending preachers, establishing educational institutions, and strengthening social institutions, DDII succeeded in increasing public awareness and understanding of the values of Islamic law (Huda et al., 2020).

Natsir is also known as a figure who consistently fought for Islamic aspirations through political channels and public policy advocacy, although efforts to make Islam the basis of the state were not politically successful, (Falamsyah et al., n.d.). However, Natsir's persistence in fighting for Islamic values in the political realm still has a significant impact on strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia. Natsir's multidimensional thinking also provides an intellectual basis for the modernization of Islamic thought and the development of a social system oriented towards Islamic values, (Nur Rahma, 2020).

Natsir is also known as a figure who consistently fought for Islamic aspirations through political channels and public policy advocacy, although efforts to make Islam the basis of the state were not politically successful, (Rizqi & Ahmad, 2022). However, Natsir's persistence in fighting for Islamic values in the political realm still has a significant impact on strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia. Natsir's multidimensional thinking also provides an intellectual basis for the modernization of Islamic thought and the development of a social system oriented towards Islamic values, (Nur Rahma, 2020).

At the international level, Natsir was active in various world Islamic organizations, strengthening the solidarity of global Muslims and fighting for Islamic identity amidst the currents of secularization and Christianization. This shows that Natsir's contribution to preaching is cross-border and has a wide impact, not only in Indonesia but also in a global context.

2. *Da'wah Strategies and Methods Used by M. Natsir in Fighting for Islamic Law*

This study found that the da'wah strategies and methods used by Mohammad Natsir were very comprehensive and adaptive to the socio-political context of Indonesia at that time. The da'wah strategies developed by Natsir were comprehensive and adaptive to the socio-political dynamics of Indonesia. There were three main methods used:

Da'wah Bil Hal

Natsir's Dakwah Bil Hal Strategy emphasizes da'wah through real actions that reflect Islamic values in everyday life. An example is his involvement in post-independence politics to integrate Islamic sharia values into the Indonesian state system, including efforts to reunite the Republic of Indonesia and advocacy of religious education as a compulsory curriculum. (Nur Rahma, 2020). In addition, through the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Council (DDII), Natsir sent Da'i to remote areas to carry out the re-Islamization process and strengthen the faith of the community in areas that were previously less accessible to da'wah, (Raihan, 2015).

Da'wah Bil Kitabah

The strategy of Dakwah Bil Kitabah Natsir actively wrote various works containing thoughts and ideas about Islam and the state, political da'wah, and the challenges of Muslims. These writings function as educational and advocacy media that reach a wide audience, including intellectuals and politicians. This strategy helps to ground the values of Islamic law systematically and intellectually, (Nur Rahma, 2020; Rodliyah Khuza'i et al., 2019).

Dakwah Bil Lisan

Strategy of Dakwah Bil Lisan Through lectures, sermons, and speeches, Natsir delivered da'wah directly to the community. This approach is persuasive by prioritizing the principles of wisdom and firm courage so that it can build strong religious awareness and spirit among Muslims, (Raihan, 2015).

Natsir's da'wah strategy not only focuses on ritual aspects, but also includes kardiya da'wah (individual), structural da'wah (institutional and governmental), and cultural da'wah (cultural and social). This approach aims to strengthen the people's faith while building social and political awareness based on Islamic law, (Nur Rahma, 2020). The concept of monotheism is the main foundation of his da'wah strategy, which is applied to guard the people from challenges such as Christianization, secularization, and nativization, (Rahmah, 2020). DDII is the main forum for implementing Natsir's da'wah strategy. This organization runs various educational programs, training, book publishing, and structured community development to strengthen Islamic law as a whole, (Raihan, 2015). DDII also plays an active role in guarding the people's faith and fighting various threats to the integrity of Islam in Indonesia.

Mohammad Natsir's da'wah strategy shows a combination of ideological and pragmatic approaches that are very relevant to the socio-political context of Indonesia, (Nur Rahmah, 2020b). The bill hal approach emphasizes that da'wah must be reflected in real actions, including in the political and social realms so

that da'wah is not only a discourse but also an impactful action. Written and oral methods strengthen da'wah intellectually and emotionally, reaching various levels of society.

A holistic approach that combines fardiyah, structural, and cultural da'wah provides a broad dimension in strengthening Islamic law. This is by the findings (Huda et al., 2020) which state that community-based da'wah and education are effective in building a comprehensive and sustainable understanding of sharia. In addition, Natsir's da'wah strategy which prioritizes the principle of monotheism as the basis of faith strengthens the resilience of the people in facing ideological and social challenges, (Nur Rahma, 2020).

The implementation of this strategy through DDII also shows the continuity of Natsir's da'wah struggle to this day, which adapts to the development of the times but still adheres to the basic principles of da'wah that have been formulated, (Fahrul et al., 2022b). Thus, M. Natsir's da'wah strategy and method have not only succeeded in strengthening Islamic law normatively but also in building awareness and empowering the people in real terms, (Nur Rahmah, 2020b).

Natsir's da'wah strategy also integrates kardiya (individual), structural (institutional), and cultural (cultural) approaches, so that da'wah is not only normative but also solution-oriented and empowering. The concept of monotheism is the main foundation that guides all his da'wah activities so that it can strengthen the resilience of the people in facing external challenges such as Christianization, secularization, and nativization, (Al-Asy'ari, 2014; Kutipan: Patahuddin et al., 2022; Natsir & Pandangannya, n.d.).

3. Challenges Faced in Implementing M. Natsir's Preaching and the Solutions Implemented

This study identifies three main challenges faced by Mohammad Natsir in carrying out his preaching, namely Christianization, Secularization, and Nativization. These three challenges are serious threats that have the potential to weaken the faith of Muslims and the position of Islamic law in Indonesia, (Nur Rahma, 2020).

The implementation of Mohammad Natsir's da'wah in fighting for Islamic law in Indonesia faced several significant ideological and socio-cultural challenges, (Al-Asy'ari, 2014). Based on the results of the study, the three main challenges identified were Christianization, secularization, and nativization. Christianization is an effort to spread Christianity which directly threatens the integrity of the faith of Muslims, especially in areas prone to conversion. Secularization emerged as an internal and external challenge that weakened the position of Islam in the political, educational, and social spheres, thus separating religion from public life. Meanwhile, nativization attempts to reject the influence of Islam as a universal religion by highlighting local cultures that sometimes obscure the values of Islamic law, (Nur Rahma, 2020).

To respond to these challenges, M. Natsir developed a holistic and multi-layered da'wah strategy, which includes education, fardhiyah (individual) da'wah, structural da'wah, and cultural da'wah, (Al-Asy'ari, 2014; Nur Rahmah, 2020b). Through education, Natsir seeks to strengthen the faith of the community by instilling a solid and critical understanding of Islam, so that every Muslim

individual has an awareness of their identity and responsibility for da'wah. Fardhiyah da'wah is carried out with a personal and direct approach, building emotional and intellectual relationships with the community so that they are aware of the challenges of da'wah and the importance of upholding Islamic law. Structural da'wah is carried out through institutions such as the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Council (DDII), which is a forum for organizing da'wah, training Da'i, publishing books, and advocating for Islamic policies. Meanwhile, cultural preaching focuses on strengthening Islamic values in local culture, by harmonizing Islamic teachings and community traditions so that there are no cultural clashes that weaken preaching, (Nur Rahma, 2020; Rodliyah Khuza'i et al., 2019).

The implementation of this strategy has proven effective in strengthening the awareness of Muslims towards the importance of Islamic law and building unity among the people amidst Indonesia's diversity, (Nur Rahmah, 2020b). Natsir's contextual and adaptive approach allows his preaching to remain relevant and able to respond to the ever-changing socio-political dynamics. In addition, preaching media such as lectures, writings, and education are the main means of disseminating preaching messages widely and deeply, (Nur Rahma, 2020).

Thus, the solution implemented by M. Natsir is not only normative, but also practical and strategic, including strengthening faith, education, organization, and culture. This approach is a model of sustainable da'wah and can face ideological and social challenges effectively so that Natsir's da'wah contribution to strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia remains relevant today.

4. Assess the Impact of M. Natsir's Preaching on the Acceptance and Strengthening of Islamic Law in Indonesian Society

Mohammad Natsir's preaching had a significant impact on the acceptance and strengthening of Islamic law in Indonesian society. Through the establishment of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII), Natsir succeeded in organizing a preaching movement that spread widely to various regions, including remote areas, thus strengthening Islamic religiosity as a whole, (Raihan, 2013). The implementation of his preaching was not only ritualistic but also prioritized the actualization of Islamic teachings in real actions and the development of commendable Muslim personalities so that his preaching was transformative and able to reach all levels of society, (M. Khoirul Hadi al-Asy'ari, 2014).

Natsir's preaching also succeeded in building collective awareness among Muslims about the importance of implementing Islamic law in social and state life. Through writings, lectures, and organizational activities, he instilled the idea that Islam and the state cannot be separated, so strengthening Islamic law must be integrated with the national political and legal system, (Carissa Almaasah Budita, 2023; Muridan, 2010). This strengthens the position of Islamic law as a moral and legal foundation recognized by the wider community. Furthermore, Natsir's preaching contributed to the development of Islamic education, moral development, and sustainable economic empowerment of the people. With this holistic approach, his preaching not only strengthened the spiritual aspect but

also built the social and economic capacity of the people, so that Islamic law could be implemented comprehensively and sustainably in the lives of the community, (Raihan, 2015).

The influence of Natsir's da'wah can also be seen in the formation of a solid and sustainable da'wah network through DDII, which is still actively developing various da'wah and Islamic education programs. This success shows that Natsir's da'wah has created a strong foundation for strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia, both in terms of understanding, acceptance, and implementation in everyday life, (M. Khoirul Hadi al-Asy'ari, 2014).

Overall, Mohammad Natsir's preaching has had a broad and profound impact on strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia. The transformative, organized, and holistic approach to preaching is the key to the success of his preaching in building an Islamic society that is aware of the importance of implementing sharia in various aspects of life, (Al-Asy'ari, 2014). This study confirms that the role, strategy, and contribution of Mohammad Natsir's preaching are very strategic in strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia. His holistic, adaptive, and empowerment-oriented approach to preaching has proven effective in building a competitive and characterful Muslim society. These findings not only enrich the scientific knowledge of preaching but also provide a practical basis for the development of sustainable preaching strategies in the modern era.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that Mohammad Natsir's holistic da'wah strategy through the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Council (DDII) after the dissolution of Masyumi has proven effective in strengthening the internalization of Islamic law in Indonesia. The da'wah approach that integrates real actions (*bil hal*), writing (*bil ketubah*), and oral (*bil lisan*) can reach various levels of society and respond to contemporary challenges such as secularization, Christianization, and social fragmentation. The novelty of this study lies in the integrative analysis of Natsir's da'wah strategy which is not only normative but also solution-oriented and adaptive to socio-religious dynamics.

The implication is that Natsir's da'wah model is very relevant as a reference for developing sustainable da'wah strategies in Indonesia. Islamic da'wah and education institutions are advised to adopt and adapt this holistic da'wah model, especially in facing the challenges of globalization and social change. Innovation in da'wah strategies that combine *bil hal*, *bil ketubah*, and *bil lisan* synergistically, as well as strengthening the role of community-based da'wah organizations, are important steps to strengthen the empowerment of the people and maintain the relevance of Islamic law amidst the dynamics of modern society. In addition, further research is recommended to explore the application of Natsir's da'wah strategy in various local and global contexts to enrich the treasury of developing adaptive and competitive Islamic da'wah.

FURTHER STUDY

This study has revealed the role and strategy of Mohammad Natsir's holistic da'wah in strengthening Islamic law in Indonesia. For further research, it is recommended to explore the implementation of Natsir's da'wah strategy in various regions and social contexts, including Muslim minority communities and urban communities. Comparative studies between Natsir's da'wah model and contemporary da'wah figures are also important to assess the effectiveness of the da'wah approach in the era of globalization. In addition, the use of ethnographic methods or field studies can enrich the understanding of the direct impact of holistic da'wah on the empowerment of the people and the strengthening of Islamic institutions in a sustainable manner.

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