Techno-*Da'ie* and Challenges in the 21st. Century

Datuk Su'aidi Dato' Safei[1]

[1]Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), 76100 Melaka, Malaysia

Abstract. Education has always been instrumental in the dissemination of religious ideas, rituals and values. In the Islamic tradition it is the classical method of propagation and, therefore, education as a means of instructing and motivating (prospective) believers is an integral part of *da'wah*. *Da'wah* operates on two fronts: (i) towards Muslim who are perhaps unaware of Islam, maybe because of growing up in the western lifestyle and missing out of a proper Islamic education, and (ii) towards our non-muslim neighbours and colleagues, many of whom may be searching for truth. At the very least, we may be able to counter-act the many incorrect stereotypes of Islam and muslims, no one else will do this for us, we have to speak up and show by our behaviour what Islam is all about. By doing this, we may even bring people into the fold of Islam. Contemporary *du'at* face great challenges to systematize and to apply the practical methodology within the new era of modern context. This paper discusses some suggestions that Muslim *du'at*, individually and collectively can undertake to accomplish *da'wah* goals: i) performing *da'wah* through a worldwide Islamic movement, ii) strengthening *da'wah* with technology, iii) using communication media and conducting seminars and workshops, iv) displaying the real Islamic lifestyle.

1 Introduction

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّن دَعَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا
وَقَالَ إِنَّنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

"And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah, does righteousness and says: Indeed, I am of those who surrender (unto Him)?" (*Fussilat*; 41:33)

Way, technique and method in English, *tariqah*, *manhaj* and *uslub* in Arabic are principles for doing something. *Da'wah* methodology is a discipline which concerns with the question of how *da'wah* is performed systematically and strategically. The deliverer of the islamic *da'wah* ought further bolstering pass on of the individuals those frameworks by which they must take care of their worldly undertakings. The history of the triumph of the islamic *da'wah* is that it is progressive and fit to deal with individual, what's more initiates clinch alongside him a thorough transform. [1, 2]

Da'wah, mission of inviting people to Islam, is a must on every Muslim. It is not honey and dew. It is filled up with complications, problems and difficulties. Many *du'at* invite others, advise them, but at the same time they forget themselves. They think that they are saved from *da'wah*, that it is for others. Those who ignore the duty of reforming and training their own character and ruminate over the reformation and training of others are completely devoid of common sense. Their own house is on fire, yet they are carrying about buckets of water looking for a blaze anywhere else to extinguish. Such people are losers not only in this world but in the hereafter also. The Prophet s.a.w. observed during the night of ascension some people whose lips were being clipped with scissors of fire and Gabriel told him that those are the orators of the *ummah*, they preached piety and fear of God to people, but forgot to follow these teachings in their personal lives. [3, 9]

On one occasion, a person mentioned to Saidina Abdullah ibn Abbas that he wished to instruct people in piety and forbid them to commit evil deeds. He desired to propagate religion among people. Ibn Abbas enquired if he have acquired the proper qualifications for becoming a preacher and the person believed that he is capable of performing the task of a missionary. Ibn Abbas observed: "if you do not apprehend any condemnation in the light of three verses of the Holy *Qur'an*, do preach Islam."

The 1st verse:

*Corresponding author : suaidi@utem.edu.my

أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلۡبِرِّ وَتَنسَوۡنَ أَنفُسَكُمۡ وَأَنتُمۡ تَتۡلُونَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ

أَفَلَا تَعۡقِلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

"Do ye enjoin right conduct on the people, and forget (to practise) it yourselves, and yet ye study the Scripture? Will ye not understand" (*al-Baqarah*; 2:44)

Ibn Abbas then enquired: "Do you follow this verse in your practical life fully?". The man replied: "No". Ibn Abbas then recited the 2nd verse:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفۡعَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

"O ye who believe! Why say ye that which ye do not?" (*al-Saf*; 61:2)

Ibn Abbas then asked: "Are you sure you are following this verse?". The man replied "No".

The 3rd verse:

وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنۡ أُخَالِفَكُمۡ إِلَىٰ مَآ أَنۡهَىٰكُمۡ عَنۡهُ

"I desire not to do by your backs that which I ask you not to do" (*Hud*; 11:88)

2 *Da'wah* Methodology In The *Qur'an* And *Prophetic Traditions*

As far as the method of *da'wah* is concerned, we find a large number of verses in the *Qur'an* related to this subject. The basic teaching of *da'wah* methodology has been formerly laid down by the *Qur'an*. This tends to be conceptual guidance which was later applied in reality by the Prophet. It was then adopted by later Muslim missionaries. [4, 7]

Allah commanded the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. to start his *da'wah* mission with his family members including his relatives:

وَأَنذِرۡ عَشِيرَتَكَ ٱلۡأَقۡرَبِينَ ﴿٢١٤﴾

وَٱخۡفِضۡ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٢١٥﴾

"*And admonish thy nearest kinsmen, and lower thy wing to the believers who follow thee*" (*al-Shu'ara'*; 26:214-5)

As very well-known verse which describes the method of *da'wah* in the *Qur'an* is in *Surah al-Nahl*. It clearly consists of the three ways to perform *da'wah*, namely *hikmah* or wisdom, fair exhortation or goodly counsel and argumentation with a gracious manner:

ٱدۡعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلۡحِكۡمَةِ وَٱلۡمَوۡعِظَةِ ٱلۡحَسَنَةِ وَجَٰدِلۡهُم بِٱلَّتِي هِيَ أَحۡسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِٱلۡمُهۡتَدِينَ

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

Allah has reminded the Prophet to be kind, compassionate, low, humble, loving and friendly to all. It is only through love and mercy that he will be able to bring people together.

فَبِمَا رَحۡمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمۡ وَلَوۡ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلۡقَلۡبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنۡ حَوۡلِكَ فَٱعۡفُ عَنۡهُمۡ وَٱسۡتَغۡفِرۡ لَهُمۡ وَشَاوِرۡهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَمۡرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمۡتَ فَتَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

"*It is part of the Mercy of God that thou deal gently with them. Were thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee, so pass over (their faults, and ask for)God's) forgiveness for them, and consult them in affairs (of moment). Then, when thou has taken a decision, put thy trust in God, for God loves those who put their trust (in Him)*" (*ali-Imran*; 3:159)

In the process of *da'wah* every Muslim is to say the best or else *satan* may play his dirty tricks. *Du'at* are to use the best approach as they are talking to the *mad'uw* (subject).

وَقُل لِّعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا۟ ٱلَّتِي هِيَ أَحۡسَنُ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَ يَنزَغُ بَيۡنَهُمۡ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَ كَانَ لِلۡإِنسَٰنِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٣﴾

"*Say to My servants that they should only say those things that are best, for satan does sow dissensions among them, for satan is to man an avowed enemy*" (*al-Isra'*; 17:53)

Islamic workers should not address labourers with the language of grave diggers nor the atheists with tongue of emotionalists. They should use appropriate language at the proper place and time. As derived from the Prophet's *hadith*: "We are commanded to speak to people according to their mental capacity." [10, 15]

3 *Da'wah* Methodology In The Modern Context

The deliverer of the Islamic *da'wah* ought to pass on to the individuals the frameworks by which they have to settle their common illicit relationships. The mystery of the achievement of the Islamic *da'wah* is that it is moral force and ready to manage man as a man, and starts in him a far reaching change.

Da'wah operates on two fronts: (i) towards Muslims who are perhaps unaware of Islam, maybe because of growing up in the western lifestyle and missing out on a proper Islamic education, and (ii) towards our non-muslims neighbours and colleagues, many of whom may be searching for truth. At the very least, we may be able to counter-act the many incorrect stereotypes of Islam and muslims, no one else will do this for us, we have to speak up! and show by our behaviour what Islam is all about. By doing this, we may even bring people into the fold of Islam. [13]

Effective du'at perceive that their part is not just in conveyance of the message, but but rather stretches out to the limits of consistent *tarbiyah* (education) of youthful energetic generations from claiming adherents. The *du'at* must plant the seeds of goodness in the hearts of the Muslim youth and then pledge to constantly raise them progressively in accordance with Allah's law. [5, 6]

Contemporary *Du'at* face great challenges to systematize and to apply the practical methodology within the new era of modern context. Provided below are some suggestions that *Muslim Du'at*, individually and collectively can undertake to accomplish *da'wah* goal. [16]

3.1 Performing *Da'wah* through a Worldwide Islamic Movement

The *Qur'an* has obviously directed the *Du'at* to work within group:

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وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

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"Let there arise out of you a nation inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful." (*ali-Imran*; 3: 104)

The technique of *da'wah* through aggregate work or deliberate association was started when *Dar al-Da'wah wal-Irsyad* was established by Shaykh Rashid Rida in the early 19th century. His ambition was to train *Muslim Du'at* within an established *da'wah* college and to send them into Christian lands for propagating the message of Islam. They were also sent into those Muslim countries in which attempts had been made to induce the Muslims to abandon their faith. This approach is quite similar to the idea of al-Maududi and Hassan al-Banna that *da'wah* and politics are inseparable and the mass movement should struggle to create an Islamic order within the society.

3.2 Strengthening *Da'wah* with Technology

There appears to be a consensus on the compelling reason for preachers of Islam to utilise modern instruments to carry out the mission of *da'wah*. Today's culture is a whole lot technocentric. Technology has broken down physical, geographical and political barriers that once may have stood in the way of completing things proficiently and effectively. Consequently there exists a substantial compelling reason for the creation of a new breed of Muslim preachers. This new breed of techno-*da'ie* is a critical perspective for advanced Islam. Without them, it would be troublesome to present the genuine Islam in this post-modern world that we currently live in.

The new era particularly are becoming more techno smart. So what better way to approach the post-modern generation than to apply that which they are most comfortable with? Why not use technology to narrow the gap between the *da'ie* and the community? ICT, for instance, could be utilised to the best by the techno-*da'ie* to share and disseminate info data on Islam. Multimedia could be used to teach kids and adolescent how to read the *Qur'an* correctly. Multimedia is interactive and combines the usage of most senses. This would make learning the *Qur'an* more interesting, especially to today's children.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) additionally displays a perpetual likelihood of the techno-*da'ie*. Say, for instance, a techno-da'ie were to address a lecture in a mosque. He could make use of web-based presentation tools and online gadgets to make his talk extra charming. The audience would also be capable should recall more adequately if multimedia is utilized. [8, 12]

Likewise, assuming that conventional works of Islam such as the voluminous Imam Syafii's *Kitab al-Umm* or Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah* are digitally transformed and stored

in the form of Compact Disc Read-Only Memory (CD-ROM) or Hard Disk Drive (HDD), this would help the techno-*da'ie* carry these references wherever and whenever. The techno-*da'ie* would just need to carry a couple of CD-ROMs as contradicted with several volumes of very thick books around. All the techno-*da'ie* would need is of course a laptop or tablet, which is becoming lighter, much simple and easier to carry as technology engineering advances. [11]

The substances are generally there; the *Qur'an*, prophetic traditions, history of Islam, stories of the prophets, writings on Islamic jurisprudence, scholar works of Muslim *ulama* and many more. These materials need to be inventively repackaged using the latest technology so that they can be used to empower the task of *da'wah*.

Thus, a linking bridge between Muslim preachers and technologies must be established in order for *da'wah* in the 21st century to be successful. Neither of these two assemblies can afford to conduct *da'wah* all alone. One lacks the state-of-the-art technical knowledge of disseminating information but has a great deals of materials for *da'wah*, while the other has the innovation and technology, but fails to offer the content. Reliably these two clusters should facilitate supporting collaborate and work together accordingly, that a win-win circumstances could be created. Over the long haul, Islam will benefit.

It must be noted that the techno-*daie* is embarking to dislodge the customary, traditional and conventional methods and techniques of *da'wah*. This new breed of preachers should be seen as supplementing and fortifying the *da'wah* movement.

Devices like the tablet, laptop, smartphone and the personal digital assistant (PDA) could be used by audience of a religious lecture to take down notes. Listening alone is not sufficient. Research has shown that to fully understand what is being taught, one must listen and jot down what one hears. This, lamentably, is infrequently carried out by Muslims when it comes to learning. [11]

3.3 Using Communication Media and Conducting Seminars/ Workshops

Ismail Faruqi suggested that the method of *mujadalah* should be applied in a kind of academic seminar on a large scale where *Du'at* can freely present and argue with other religions. This approach can achieve its objective because Islam

puts in man's rational power to discriminate between the truth and false.

On the other hand, his approach may differ from Ahmad Deedat who eludes a charismatic and saintly appearance and his wit and charm temper what might otherwise be considered an acid tongue. He, moreover, regards Christianity as his chief enemy, and this creates tension between faiths rather than peaceful method required by Islam.

To practise *da'wah* one must be well mannered and conscious. *Da'wah* implies to gently persuade, attract, be polite, be friendly, be caring and understanding, and try to have a sense of humour. Outward appearance has a role to play; i) be clean and neat, ii) don't eat raw onions or garlic before attending mosque or meeting people, and iii) chew gum or something mint for good breath. [14]

3.4 Displaying the Real Islamic Lifestyle

The above discussion is thoroughly concerned with the method of direct *da'wah* or activitistic preaching which is directed to the non-Muslim. In fact, *da'wah* should also be directed toward the Muslim. It is called as indirect/ non-verbal *da'wah* or Islamic lifestyle (*Da'wah bil-Hal*). It is to take Islam to non-Muslim, not by pulpit preaching and mailing Islamic literature but by doing what Muslim ought to do (action); living, drinking, eating, sleeping and behaving as Muslims are enjoined to do. This method is more attractive because people can practically see the beauty of Islam within the *ummah* (muslim community).

Word alone however will not suffice. *Da'wah* can be by writing, speaking, behaviour, attitude, manner, sharing and caring with and for others. The best *da'wah* is to be a good example.

Success in *da'wah* work means first of all knowing Islam and *Qur'an* and being familiar with the traditions and stories of the Prophet Muhammad's life, for only then it is possible in conversation to give answers to followers of other faiths.

Da'wah through humanitarian causes should be pondered thoughtfully in order to prove the fruit of Islam. Without such as this credibility, the whole effort of *da'wah* will be rhetorical and devoid of meaning. Unfortunately, it has been left to Christian missionaries to work on such lines.

Showing the fruit of the teaching is more effective than calling to something abstract and theoretical which is written on papers. For this

purpose, Muslims should improve their achievement in every aspect of life. Problems such as poverty and illiteracy within the Muslim *ummah* should be overcome. [14]

4 Conclusion

Educational training has a focal and key part, particularly when it is associated with the push to improve HR quality. It is brought about by the acknowledgment for human standing and glory increment. Socialization of Islamic qualities should be possible just by prominent human asset.

One of the best means for Islamic worker to attain the gentle and effective method of *da'wah* is to know what he wants. This clear conception and analysis of goals dictates the method the work should follow. Knowing what he wants, the Islamic worker will save effort and time and will make well-planned moves. This will enable him to avoid taking arbitrary decisions which are the results of a lack of planning and proper calculations. Al-Hasan al-Basri was quite right in his saying: "The one who acts without knowledge is like the one who travels on no road, and the one who accomplishes what he doesn't want, spoils more than he amends."

Deliverers of the Islamic *da'wah*, are not searching for any common compensate or expecting acclaim from individuals. They request nothing aside from the delight for Allah. May Allah keep us on the straightway, and acknowledge our modest endeavors for His adoration.

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