



ENVIRONMENT-BASED DA'WAH IN PANYABUNGAN

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Abstract

The increasing environmental damage demands the involvement of various elements of society, including religious institutions and dai, in efforts to preserve the environment. Environment-based da'wah is one of the strategic approaches to integrate Islamic values with the ecological awareness of the community. This study aims to analyze the implementation of environment-based da'wah in Panyabungan, the forms of activities carried out, and its contribution in increasing public awareness of environmental conservation. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data was collected through observations, in-depth interviews with religious leaders, community leaders, and local residents, and documentation studies. Data analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that environment-based da'wah in Panyabungan is carried out through various activities, such as religious lectures, environmental education, cleanliness campaigns, waste management, reforestation, and mosque-based mutual cooperation activities. The da'wah material presented emphasized the concept of caliph fil ardh, the mandate to protect nature, cleanliness as part of faith, and human responsibility in maintaining environmental balance. The role of religious leaders has proven to be effective in building ecological awareness and encouraging community participation in various environmental conservation programs. This study concludes that environment-based da'wah not only functions as a means of conveying religious teachings, but also becomes an instrument of social transformation that is able to increase public awareness and concern for the environment.

Keywords: *Da'wah; Ecology; Panyabungan*

A. Introduction

Environmental problems have become a global issue that is increasingly receiving attention from various circles (Hael et al., 2024). Various forms of environmental damage, such as water pollution, garbage accumulation, reduced green space, and declining environmental quality, are caused not only by natural factors, but also by human behavior that cares less about environmental sustainability (Saxena, 2025). This condition shows that environmental conservation efforts are not enough to be carried out through technical and regulatory approaches alone, but also require social, cultural, and religious approaches that are able to build public awareness in a sustainable manner.

Islam as a comprehensive religion teaches the importance of maintaining the balance of nature and prohibiting all forms of damage on the earth (Syafaruddin, 2025). The concept of human beings as caliphs *fil ardh* emphasizes that humans have a responsibility to maintain, manage, and preserve the environment as a mandate from Allah SWT (Alfiyah et al., 2024). In addition, various Islamic teachings emphasize the values of cleanliness, wise use of resources, and the prohibition of taking actions that can damage the ecosystem (Prayitno & Lie, 2025). Therefore, *da'wah* not only functions as a means of conveying the teachings of worship and morals, but can also be an educational medium to build ecological awareness of the community.

In Panyabungan, Mandailing Natal Regency, environmental issues are still a challenge that needs attention. Based on initial observations, it is still found that some people still have the habit of throwing garbage in rivers, waterways, and vacant land. These conditions not only interfere with environmental cleanliness, but also have the potential to cause pollution, health problems, and environmental disasters such as floods. On the other hand, the religious activities of the Panyabungan community are quite high, characterized by the many recitation activities, religious lectures, *taklim* assemblies, and mosque activities that take place regularly.

However, the high level of religious activity has not been fully followed by increasing public awareness in protecting the environment (e Nayab, 2025). Da'wah materials that develop in society generally still focus on aspects of ritual worship, faith, and personal morals, while environmental issues have not been widely integrated into da'wah messages (Johari et al., n.d.). As a result, Islamic values related to ecological responsibility have not been optimally internalized in people's daily behavior. This condition shows that there is a gap between religious understanding and environmental conservation practices.

The study of environment-based da'wah has developed as part of efforts to integrate religious values with ecological awareness. Various studies show that da'wah not only functions as a medium for the delivery of religious teachings, but can also be an instrument of social change that encourages people to participate in environmental conservation (Qonitah, 2025). Through the delivery of religious messages that emphasize human responsibility as caliphs on earth, da'wah is considered to be able to build public awareness and concern for various environmental issues.

A number of studies also highlight the role of religious institutions, especially mosques, as centers for community empowerment in the field of the environment. The findings show that mosques can function as environmental education spaces through various programs, such as cleanliness movements, greening, waste management, and healthy living campaigns (Paraswati & Rosyid, 2025). This approach shows that Islamic values can be translated into social activities that have a real impact on environmental sustainability. In addition, various studies on environmental ethics in Islam explain that the concepts of caliph, trust, balance (*mīzān*), and prohibition of doing damage (*fasād*) on earth are theological foundations for the development of ecological awareness of Muslims (Wattoo et al., 2025). These studies show that environmental conservation is not only a social need, but also part of the implementation of religious teachings. However, most of the research still focuses on normative and conceptual aspects so that there

is not much explanation for the implementation of these values in the practice of da'wah in the community.

On the other hand, research on community participation in environmental management shows that the success of environmental conservation programs is greatly influenced by collective awareness, local leadership, and a culture of mutual cooperation that develops in the community (Miao & Nduneseokwu, 2024). However, these studies generally emphasize the social aspects and community empowerment without linking them deeply to the role of da'wah as a means of forming ecological behavior.

The novelty of this research lies in the focus of the study that not only discusses the concept of environmental da'wah in a normative-theological way, but also analyzes the implementation of environment-based da'wah in the context of the local community of Panyabungan. In contrast to previous studies that have focused more on environmental ethics in Islam, the role of mosques in environmental conservation, or the concept of ecological da'wah in general, this study examines how environmental messages are constructed, conveyed, and internalized through da'wah activities so that they can influence people's awareness and behavior towards the environment.

In addition, this research offers a new perspective by placing da'wah as an instrument of ecological transformation of society. The focus of the research is not only on the substance of religious messages, but also on the relationship between da'wah activities and changes in community behavior in maintaining cleanliness, managing waste, and preserving the environment. Thus, this study produces an empirical model of the role of da'wah in building ecological piety, in Muslim communities at the local level.

B. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of field research. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to deeply understand the phenomenon of environment-based da'wah that develops in the Panyabungan community, including the form of

implementation, the strategies used, and its influence on community awareness and behavior in protecting the environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Through this approach, researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding of the meaning, experience, and perspectives of da'wah actors and the community involved in these activities.

The research was carried out in Panyabungan District, Mandailing Natal Regency, North Sumatra. The selection of the research location was based on the consideration that Panyabungan is an area that has a fairly high level of religious activity, but at the same time still faces various environmental problems that require mutual attention. This condition makes Panyabungan a relevant location to study the relationship between da'wah activities and environmental conservation efforts. The research subjects consist of dai, religious leaders, mosque administrators, community leaders, environmental activists, and people involved in environment-based da'wah activities. Research informants were selected using the purposive sampling technique, which is the selection of informants based on certain considerations according to the needs of the research. (Goyes & Sandberg, 2025) This technique is used to obtain in-depth data from individuals who have knowledge and experience related to the implementation of environmental da'wah in Panyabungan.

Data collection was carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation is used to directly observe environment-based da'wah activities and community participation in various environmental conservation activities (Chand, 2025). In-depth interviews were conducted to explore information about the form of da'wah carried out, the environmental messages conveyed, the communication strategies used, and its impact on the ecological awareness of the community. Meanwhile, documentation is used to complement research data through the collection of archives, photos of activities, da'wah materials, program reports, and other documents relevant to the research focus.

The data obtained were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive analysis model which included data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawn (Miles et al., 2020). At the data condensation stage, the researcher selects, groups, and simplifies the data obtained from the field. Furthermore, the data is presented in the form of a descriptive narrative to facilitate the identification of patterns and relationships between findings. The final stage is carried out by drawing and verifying conclusions continuously during the research process so that valid and scientifically accountable findings are obtained. To ensure the validity of the data, this study applied source triangulation, triangulation technique, and time triangulation. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information obtained from various informants, while technical triangulation is carried out by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. Time triangulation is done through collecting data at different times to test the consistency of the information obtained. In addition, the researcher also conducted member checking of several informants to ensure that the results of the interpretation carried out were in accordance with the actual conditions in the field.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Results

a. Environment-Based Da'wah in Efforts to Preserve the Environment in Panyabungan

Environment-based da'wah in Panyabungan developed as a response to various environmental problems faced by the community, such as suboptimal waste management, waterway pollution, and low awareness of some people on the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness. This condition encourages religious leaders, mosque administrators, and community leaders to make environmental issues part of the da'wah materials and activities delivered to the community.

Environment-based da'wah in Panyabungan is not only manifested in the form of lectures and the delivery of religious messages, but also through various social activities aimed at building ecological awareness of

the community. These activities include environmental cleanliness movements, mutual cooperation to clean mosques and public facilities, community-based waste management, reforestation, and campaigns to maintain the cleanliness of rivers and waterways. Through these activities, da'wah is not only understood as a verbal activity, but also as a concrete action (*da'wah bil hal*) that provides a direct example to the community about the importance of protecting the environment.

A community member commented:

When religious leaders actively participate in cleaning campaigns and environmental activities, people are more motivated to follow. Actions speak louder than words (RH, personal communication, 2025).

The environmental da'wah process is carried out through efforts to raise public awareness about the relationship between Islamic teachings and human responsibility towards nature. The dai and religious leaders emphasized that humans were created as caliphs on earth who have the obligation to maintain, maintain, and utilize nature wisely. This understanding is an important foundation in building awareness that protecting the environment is part of the practice of religious teachings, not solely a social obligation.

An imam of a local mosque stated:

We often remind the congregation that cleanliness is part of faith. Maintaining the environment is not merely a social responsibility but also a religious obligation. Therefore, environmental messages are regularly included in sermons and religious gatherings (AN, personal communication, 2025).

In addition, the da'wah material presented also emphasized that the environmental damage that occurs is basically the result of irresponsible human behavior in utilizing natural resources. Therefore, the public is invited to understand that the act of littering, polluting rivers, or ignoring environmental cleanliness not only has an impact on health and comfort of life, but also contradicts Islamic values that teach cleanliness, balance, and mutual benefit.

In its implementation, the success of environment-based da'wah is greatly influenced by the role of religious leaders and community leaders. Research has found that people tend to be more receptive to and implement environmental messages when leaders lead by example. Therefore, the da'wah bil approach is the most effective strategy in building a culture of caring for the environment. Example shown through direct involvement in cleanliness, greening, and environmental management activities has a stronger influence than just verbal messaging.

The success of environmental da'wah requires the support of various parties, including religious institutions, local governments, educational institutions, community organizations, and environmental communities. Synergy between these institutions is needed to strengthen the process of education, supervision, and the formation of community habits in protecting the environment. With this collaboration, da'wah messages do not only stop at the normative level, but can be realized in programs that have a real impact on society.

Representatives from local community organizations noted:

Environmental awareness programs become more effective when mosques, schools, local government agencies, and community groups work together. Cooperation ensures that environmental messages are continuously reinforced in different social settings (TAF, personal communication, 2025).

There are several main forms of environment-based da'wah in Panyabungan. First, da'wah through the delivery of Islamic values that emphasize the concept of caliph, trust, and human responsibility towards nature. Second, da'wah through educational and socialization activities regarding the importance of maintaining cleanliness and environmental sustainability. Third, da'wah through social action and collective activities that involve the community in efforts to preserve the environment. Fourth, da'wah through the example of religious leaders and community leaders in implementing environmentally friendly behavior.

b. Da'wah Strategy in Environmental Development and Utilization to Realize Community Ecological Awareness in Panyabungan

The da'wah strategy in developing and utilizing environmental potential in Panyabungan is basically directed to realize the welfare of the community which is not only material, but also spiritual and ecological. In line with this view, community development da'wah must be oriented towards the well-being of birth and mind and encourage social change (social engineering) towards a better life, including in terms of awareness of protecting the environment. Principles such as needs, participation, integration, sustainability, harmony, and independence are important bases in formulating an environment-based da'wah strategy.

In the context of Panyabungan, the environment-based da'wah strategy is based on the principle of balance between human needs and natural preservation. The welfare of the community is not only seen from the fulfillment of physical needs such as the economy, but also from inner peace that comes from the values of faith. Strong faith will encourage wise behavior towards the environment, as humans realize themselves as the caliph responsible for protecting the earth. Therefore, environmental da'wah must be able to build awareness that damaging the environment is the same as betraying Allah's mandate.

A senior religious leader explained:

The purpose of da'wah is not only to improve religious understanding but also to guide people toward a better quality of life. Environmental preservation is part of that mission because a clean and healthy environment contributes to both physical welfare and spiritual comfort (AL, personal communication, 2025).

Based on conditions in the field, da'wah strategies that can be carried out in developing environmental awareness of the Panyabungan community include several main steps. First, mapping and strengthening data on potential and environmental problems at the local level, such as waste management, river cleanliness, and land use. Second, strengthening and empowering the potential of the community through religious

institutions such as mosques, taklim councils, and social organizations in driving environmental da'wah. Third, increasing the role of da'wah through optimizing the elements of da'wah, namely dai, materials, methods, media, and da'wah targets to be more responsive to environmental issues.

In efforts to develop environment-based da'wah, a participatory approach is very important. The community is not only the object of da'wah, but also the subject who is actively involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of environmental activities. These forms of participation can be in the form of mutual cooperation activities for cleanliness, community-based waste management, greening, and environmental education in mosques and schools. Thus, da'wah is not only theoretical, but also implementive through concrete actions (*da'wah bil hal*).

Furthermore, da'wah strategies also need to integrate environment-based education and training. The community needs to be provided with knowledge and skills regarding environmental management, such as waste management, waste utilization, and greening techniques. This process is a form of synergy between religious knowledge and ecological knowledge that generates a new awareness about the importance of maintaining the balance of nature.

Resource mobilization is also an important part of the environmental da'wah strategy. Resources owned by the community, both in the form of natural, economic, and social, need to be managed optimally to support environmental conservation activities. Support from local governments, financial institutions, and social organizations is also needed in strengthening environmental da'wah programs, especially in the provision of cleaning facilities, waste management, and reforestation programs.

In addition, environment-based da'wah also requires strengthening cooperation networks with various parties, such as the government, educational institutions, community organizations, and environmental communities. This collaboration is important to expand the impact of da'wah so that it is not only limited to the religious space, but also enters

into public policies and regional development programs. In its implementation, the principle of sustainability is very important. Environmental da'wah should not be temporary, but must continue to be carried out consistently and continuously. Awareness of protecting the environment must be a culture that lives in society, not just incidental activities. Therefore, the role of religious leaders, community leaders, and the younger generation is very important in maintaining the sustainability of the environmental da'wah movement in Panyabungan.

One preacher stated:

We continuously remind the community that Allah entrusted the earth to human beings. When people damage rivers, forests, or public spaces, they are neglecting their responsibility as khalifah. Therefore, environmental conservation is an act of worship (AN, personal communication, 2025).

The principle of harmony also needs to be considered, namely the harmony between the economic needs of the community and environmental sustainability. Da'wah must be able to provide solutions to people's living needs without sacrificing the environment. For example, the development of an environmentally based economy such as waste banks, eco-friendly agriculture, and recycling-based businesses can be alternatives that are in line with Islamic values.

Finally, the principle of independence is the ultimate goal of the environment-based da'wah strategy. The community is expected to be able to manage the environment independently based on religious and social awareness without full dependence on external parties. In this case, da'wah plays a role as a process of fostering and empowering that gives birth to an environmentally conscious, responsible, and sustainable society.

2. Discussion

The results of the study show that Panyabungan has the potential for very strategic natural resources, especially in the agricultural sector, river flows, plantations, and productive land which are the main source of livelihood for the community. This potential can theoretically be the basis for improving community welfare if managed optimally and sustainably (Kharazishvili et al., 2020). However, in practice, the management of this

potential still faces various serious problems, especially related to environmental degradation, irregular land use, and low ecological awareness of the community in maintaining the balance of nature (Kumari et al., 2025).

From the perspective of environment-based da'wah, this condition shows that there is an imbalance between the values of Islamic teachings and the socio-economic practices of the community (Saukani & Sabani, 2026). Islam expressly places man as a caliph who has a moral responsibility to protect, prosper, and not destroy the earth (Rahman, 2025). However, the reality in Panyabungan shows that some of the community's economic activities tend to exploit nature without considering the long-term impact, thus causing environmental damage that has the potential to threaten the sustainability of social and economic life.

This phenomenon can not only be seen as a technical environmental problem, but also as a problem of da'wah and religious awareness (Nordin et al., n.d.). Environment-based da'wah in Panyabungan has not fully functioned as an instrument of social behavior change. Da'wah activities are still dominant in ritual and ceremonial aspects, while the aspect of ecological value transformation has not been the main focus (Zaenuri, 2025). In fact, the internalization of Islamic values of balance (*mīzān*), the prohibition of doing harm (*fasād*), and human responsibility towards nature is an important foundation in building the ecological consciousness of society (Hayat & Arif, 2025).

Furthermore, economic factors are a strong determinant that influences people's behavior in utilizing natural resources (Savari et al., 2020). The urgent needs of life make some people prioritize short-term profits over environmental sustainability (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2017). This condition shows that there is a dilemma between economic needs and ecological responsibilities that have not yet found a balance point. In such a situation, environment-based da'wah should be present as a solution that not only provides normative understanding, but also offers an environmentally friendly and sustainable economic alternative.

From an institutional perspective, the role of local governments, religious leaders, and community leaders in controlling environmental damage is still not optimally integrated (Boufounou et al., 2024). The regulations that have been available are often not effective in the field due to weak supervision, low commitment to implementation, and the existence of conflicts of social interest in the community (Poeh & Gah, 2026). This shows that institutional da'wah has not functioned as a strong social control system in maintaining environmental sustainability in Panyabungan.

In the context of environmental conservation, the da'wah approach is very important to be developed. Da'wah is not enough just in the form of delivering a verbal message, but must be realized in real actions that can be seen and imitated by the community (Zargar, 2026). The example of local leaders, community-based environmental management, and the implementation of clean and environmentally friendly living practices are concrete forms of transformative da'wah. When leaders are able to set a real example, the process of internalizing values will be easier to occur in society.

In addition, the development of local potential also needs to be directed to a sustainability-based development model. The agriculture, plantation, and water resource utilization sectors in Panyabungan have great opportunities to be developed through a community-based green economy approach. This approach is not only oriented towards increasing income, but also on preserving the environment as a long-term asset. In this case, da'wah plays a role as a value orientation so that economic activities do not deviate from the principles of Islamic environmental ethics (Nuradi et al., 2025). More broadly, environmental problems in Panyabungan show that the ecological crisis cannot be solved by technical or regulatory approaches alone. A more comprehensive approach is needed that combines spiritual, social, economic, and institutional aspects. Environment-based da'wah is a strategic approach because it is able to integrate religious values with the needs of community development.

Therefore, it can be concluded that strengthening environment-based da'wah in Panyabungan is an urgent need. Da'wah must be directed not only at increasing religious understanding, but also at forming ecological

awareness, strengthening environmental ethics, and sustainable community economic empowerment. With this integrative approach, it is hoped that a balance will be created between the use of natural potential and environmental conservation, so that the welfare of the community can be achieved comprehensively, both materially and spiritually.

D. Conclusion

This research shows that environmental problems in the Panyabungan area are still a challenge that requires serious attention from various parties. Various forms of environmental degradation, especially those related to the use of natural resources that do not pay attention to sustainability aspects, have the potential to disrupt the ecological balance and reduce the quality of life of the community. Although the public in general has understood the importance of protecting the environment, this awareness has not been fully realized in consistent social practices so that efforts to preserve the environment still face various obstacles.

The findings of the study also reveal that da'wah has a strategic role in building ecological awareness of the Panyabungan community. Various da'wah activities carried out through sermons, lectures, recitations, and other religious activities have contained messages about the importance of preserving nature as part of religious responsibility. However, the implementation of ecological da'wah still tends to be normative and has not been optimally integrated with community empowerment programs and environmental management policies. As a result, the influence of da'wah on changes in the ecological behavior of the community has not shown maximum results. This study also found that strengthening ecological da'wah in Panyabungan needs to be carried out through a more contextual approach by paying attention to the social, cultural, and religious characteristics of the local community. The integration of Islamic values with local wisdom, including the social principles that live in the Mandailing community, can be an effective instrument in building a collective awareness of environmental conservation. In addition, synergy between local governments, religious leaders, educational institutions, community

organizations, and local communities is an important factor in encouraging the realization of sustainable environmental management.

This study recommends the need to strengthen ecological da'wah through integrating environmental issues in da'wah materials in a more systematic and sustainable manner. Local governments need to improve coordination with religious leaders, educational institutions, and community organizations in designing environmental conservation programs based on community participation. In addition, the values of local wisdom of Mandailing that emphasize social harmony and collective responsibility need to be optimized as social capital in building a culture of caring for the environment. Further research is suggested to examine a more applicable model of ecological da'wah based on local culture and measure its effectiveness in empirically shaping the ecological behavior of the community.

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