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Participatory Community Based Islamic Boarding School Da'wah Management Strategy to Strengthen Local Islamic Da'wah in Lumajang

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the pesantren-based da'wah management strategy at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Banyuputih Kidul Lumajang, emphasizing the integration of a participatory approach in da'wah management practices. The study uses a descriptive qualitative approach through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The findings show that pesantren da'wah management is carried out through four main functions, namely planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising. Da'wah planning is carried out in a participatory and contextual manner by involving caregivers, ustaz, administrators, and santri, so that the da'wah program is responsive to the internal needs of the pesantren and the surrounding community. Organization is collective and flexible, da'wah implementation is carried out through internal and external da'wah with a persuasive-educational approach, while supervision is carried out continuously even though it has not been formalized administratively. The novelty of this research lies in the formulation of a community-based da'wah management model for Islamic boarding schools that expands the function of da'wah from internal guidance to strengthening social da'wah in the community. Theoretically, these findings enrich the study of da'wah management with a participatory perspective based on Islamic boarding schools, while practically providing an adaptive and applicable model for managing da'wah in Islamic boarding schools as centers for community religious empowerment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Dakwah is a fundamental element in Islamic teachings that serves as a means of transforming Islamic values in society (Zahroh & Pramuja, 2025). In the contemporary context, da'wah is no longer limited to

the verbal delivery of religious messages, but has evolved into a process of community development that requires planned, organized, and sustainable management (Mustopa, 2025). Rapid social, cultural, and technological changes require da'wah to be managed professionally in order to remain relevant, effective, and on target (Pramuja, Ishari, Arifin, et al., 2024). Therefore, the application of da'wah management has become a strategic necessity in responding to the challenges of da'wah today.

Pesantren, as the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, have a strategic position in the development of sustainable Islamic da'wah (Pramuja, Ishari, & Arifudin, 2024). Apart from functioning as centers for the transmission of Islamic knowledge, pesantren also play a role in character building, the formation of religious culture, and community empowerment (Arifin et al., 2024). The proximity of Islamic boarding schools to the social life of the community makes them a contextual da'wah base rooted in local values (Saputra, 2024), thus having great potential in developing da'wah strategies that are adaptive to the needs of students and the community.

Pesantren-based da'wah management is an approach that integrates the functions of planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising all pesantren da'wah activities (Syahida & Citraningsih, 2025). This approach enables Islamic boarding schools to optimize human resources, infrastructure, and the social potential of the community in a coordinated and sustainable manner (Pramuja & MR, 2024). Thus, Islamic boarding schools not only serve as educational institutions but also as active centers for da'wah and social transformation.

The Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Banyuputih Kidul Lumajang is one of the boarding schools that is active in religious guidance and community outreach activities (Rusmini, 2019). This boarding school organizes various internal and external da'wah programs, such as regular recitation of the Qur'an, majelis taklim (Islamic study groups), and religious social activities involving the surrounding community. The continuity and effectiveness of these activities are inseparable from the da'wah management strategies implemented by the boarding school's leaders and administrators.

A number of previous studies have examined the management and leadership of Islamic boarding schools from various perspectives. Fathurrochman (2017) highlights the modernization of the institutional system of Islamic boarding schools, while Sagala (2015) emphasizes the uniqueness of kiai leadership in the culture of Islamic boarding schools. The research by Hakim and Herlina (2018) examines integrated curriculum management in Islamic boarding schools. Although these studies make important contributions, research that specifically examines Islamic boarding school-based da'wah management strategies with a holistic approach to da'wah management functions is still limited. This is the research gap in this study.

The novelty of this study lies in the disclosure of participatory, contextual, and service-oriented pesantren-based da'wah management practices. This study presents an informal yet effective pesantren da'wah management model through the integration of internal and external da'wah as a unified sustainable da'wah strategy.

Based on this background, the research questions include: (1) pesantren-based da'wah management strategies in terms of planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising; (2) the implementation of internal and external pesantren da'wah in guiding santri and the community; and (3) factors supporting and hindering the implementation of pesantren-based da'wah management strategies. This study aims to analyze pesantren-based da'wah management strategies through the application of da'wah management functions and to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in their implementation.

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the development of Islamic preaching and communication studies, particularly in the field of pesantren-based preaching management. Practically,

the results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for pesantren administrators in designing and implementing effective, adaptive, and sustainable preaching strategies without neglecting traditional pesantren values.

2. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type that aims to describe in depth the pesantren-based dakwah management strategy at the Miftahul Ulum Banyuputih Kidul Lumajang Islamic Boarding School (Kumala, 2025). The research location was determined purposively, considering that this pesantren has an active and sustainable role in da'wah activities and community development, both within the pesantren and the surrounding community.

The research subjects consisted of seven key informants who were selected using purposive sampling based on their level of involvement, experience, and understanding of pesantren da'wah management. These informants included: (1) one pesantren supervisor who acted as the decision maker and determined the direction of da'wah; (2) two ustaz who were directly involved in the planning and implementation of da'wah; (3) two pesantren administrators who were responsible for organizing and coordinating da'wah programs; and (4) two senior santri who had active experience in implementing internal and external da'wah at the pesantren. The characteristics of the informants were determined based on the minimum criteria of having been involved in pesantren da'wah activities for two years and understanding the structure and mechanisms of da'wah management applied. The research object focused on the aspects of planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising pesantren-based da'wah (Wabula & Surur, 2018).

Data collection was conducted through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation to obtain comprehensive and accurate data (Romdona et al., 2025). The research was conducted over four months, from January to April 2025, covering the stages of research preparation, field data collection, data analysis, and conclusion drawing. In-depth interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with open-ended questions that allowed for flexible data development. The main interview questions included, among others: (1) how the da'wah program is planned in Islamic boarding schools; (2) how roles and responsibilities are divided in the da'wah organizational structure; (3) the forms and strategies of internal and external da'wah carried out by Islamic boarding schools; and (4) the mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating, and following up on da'wah activities. Documentation was used as supporting data, including da'wah program archives, activity schedules, meeting minutes, evaluation reports, and photographic documentation of da'wah activities.

The data obtained were analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Rifa'i, 2024). To maintain data validity, this study applied source triangulation and technique triangulation by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. All stages of the research were carried out systematically and continuously to produce findings that were credible, transparent, replicable, and scientifically accountable (Susanto & Jailani, 2023).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

The results of the study indicate that the pesantren-based da'wah management strategy at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Banyuputih Kidul Lumajang is implemented through the application of da'wah management functions, which include planning, organizing, implementing, and

supervising (Anajat, 2023). These four functions are not implemented administratively or formally, but are based on pesantren values that emphasize deliberation, service, and the exemplary behavior of the kiai.

3.1.1 Dakwah Planning

Dakwah planning in pesantren is carried out through a participatory and collaborative approach involving all internal elements of the pesantren, from the pesantren leaders, ustaz, daily administrators, to the santri. This planning pattern shows that the da'wah process is not structured hierarchically and unilaterally (top-down), but is built through joint deliberation that places each party as an active subject in formulating the da'wah program. This approach allows da'wah planning to be more contextual, adaptive, and responsive to the real needs of students and the socio-religious dynamics of the community around the pesantren.

The active participation of pesantren stakeholders in planning da'wah reflects a collective awareness that da'wah is not merely a religious lecture activity, but a continuous guidance process that must be in harmony with the social and cultural conditions and challenges faced by the community. This was expressed by one of the pesantren administrators:

"The da'wah program at this pesantren is not determined unilaterally. Everything is discussed together so that it suits the needs of the students and the community." (Administrator, 2025)

This statement emphasizes that Islamic boarding schools view da'wah planning as a space for dialogue and reflection together, so that the resulting programs are not merely normative and formalistic, but oriented towards the welfare and actual needs of the people. In practice, da'wah planning is carried out through regular consultation forums, management meetings, and periodic evaluations of previous da'wah programs. The results of these evaluations are then used as a basis for formulating the next da'wah agenda.

The da'wah program covers two main areas, namely internal da'wah and external da'wah. Internal da'wah focuses on the religious guidance of students, including strengthening their faith, deepening their understanding of Islam, shaping their character, and developing their social awareness. These internal da'wah activities are carried out through regular recitations, scientific halaqah, book studies, and the habit of practicing religion in daily life in the pesantren environment. Through internal da'wah, pesantren strive to shape santri not only as religious individuals, but also as individuals who are socially sensitive and ready to engage in da'wah in the community.

Meanwhile, external da'wah is directed at the community around the pesantren as part of the pesantren's social role. Forms of external da'wah include public recitations, majelis taklim (religious gatherings), religious sermons, and various socio-religious activities such as social assistance, Islamic holiday celebrations, and religious guidance for the community. These activities are designed with the characteristics and needs of the community in mind, so that the da'wah is not patronizing, but dialogical and solution-oriented.

all, this participatory da'wah planning shows that Islamic boarding schools not only function as religious educational institutions, but also as centers for community empowerment that are able to bridge Islamic values with social realities. This approach strengthens the relevance of Islamic boarding school da'wah amid social change, while also affirming the role of Islamic boarding schools as agents of inclusive and sustainable socio-religious transformation.

3.1.2 Organization of Da'wah

The organization of da'wah shows a clear division of roles even though it is not outlined in a written organizational structure (Nasution, n.d.). The kiai acts as a strategic leader and policy maker for da'wah, while the ustaz and administrators carry out technical and operational functions. Santri are involved as implementers and supporters of da'wah activities, which also serve as a means of learning and regeneration. An ustaz emphasized:

"Even though there is no written structure, everyone understands their roles. We involve santri so that they become accustomed to dakwah from an early age." (Ustaz, 2025)

This informal organizational model is effective because it is supported by a religious culture, obedience to the kiai, and a strong spirit of service (khidmah).

3.1.3 Implementation of Da'wah

The organization of da'wah in Islamic boarding schools shows a clear division of roles and responsibilities, even though it is not formalized in the form of a written organizational structure as is common in modern institutions (Nasution, n.d.). This organizational pattern is flexible and based on social-religious relations that are deeply rooted in the tradition of Islamic boarding schools. The absence of a formal structure does not necessarily lead to chaos in roles, but rather reflects a model of da'wah management that is based on values of trust, exemplary behavior, and collective awareness.

In this organizational structure, the kiai occupies a central position as a strategic leader and an authoritative figure who determines the direction, vision, and policies of the pesantren's dakwah. The role of the kiai is not only administrative but also symbolic and moral, so that every dakwah policy formulated has strong religious legitimacy. The kiai's directives are the main reference in the implementation of dakwah programs, both internal and external.

Meanwhile, religious teachers and boarding school administrators carry out technical and operational functions in managing da'wah activities. They are responsible for technical planning, implementation of activities, scheduling, and assisting students in da'wah activities. This role positions the ustaz and administrators as liaisons between the kiai's strategic policies and da'wah practices in the field. Through this role, the sustainability and effectiveness of da'wah programs can be maintained consistently.

Students are actively involved as both implementers and supporters of da'wah activities. The involvement of students is not only intended to assist in the operational aspects of da'wah, but also as part of the learning process and early da'wah cadre development. Through direct involvement in da'wah activities, students gain practical experience, practice public speaking, and internalize the values of da'wah in their social lives. This is as emphasized by one of the ustaz:

"Even though there is no written structure, everyone already understands their roles. We involve our santri so that they get used to preaching from an early age." (Ustaz, 2025).

This statement shows that the organization of da'wah in Islamic boarding schools emphasizes the habit of roles rather than the standardization of structures. Each individual learns to understand their duties and responsibilities through direct practice, exemplary behavior, and informal guidance from kiai and ustaz. This model indirectly shapes leadership, independence, and collective responsibility among santri.

The effectiveness of this informal organization of da'wah is inseparable from the strong religious culture of Islamic boarding schools, particularly the values of obedience to kiai (ta'zhim), community solidarity, and a spirit of service (khidmah). These values serve as social glue that enables coordination

to run smoothly even without rigid bureaucratic mechanisms. In this context, the organization of da'wah functions not only as a work system, but also as a means of internalizing Islamic values and forming an ethos of service.

Overall, the model of organizing da'wah in Islamic boarding schools shows that the effectiveness of da'wah does not always depend on formal structures, but can be realized through informal systems supported by values, culture, and charismatic leadership. This model is relevant in the context of Islamic boarding schools as community-based educational and da'wah institutions, while also presenting an alternative form of da'wah organization that is contextual, adaptive, and sustainable.

3.1.4 Monitoring and Evaluation of Da'wah

Monitoring and evaluation of da'wah in Islamic boarding schools is carried out informally, participatively, and based on field experience. This pattern is in line with the character of Islamic boarding schools, which emphasize the values of togetherness, deliberation, and collective reflection in every institutional activity. Monitoring is carried out through direct observation by the boarding school supervisors of the implementation of da'wah activities, both internal and external. In addition, pesantren administrators routinely hold internal deliberations to assess the effectiveness of the da'wah programs that have been implemented, as well as to consider the responses and feedback from the community (Halimatussadiah, 2025).

Unlike formal management models that rely on written reports and standard evaluation instruments, the evaluation of da'wah in pesantren places more emphasis on joint reflection and open dialogue between da'wah administrators. Evaluation is not formalized in the form of administrative documents, but is manifested in informal forums that allow each party to express their views, criticisms, and suggestions openly. This approach is considered more in line with the pesantren culture, which upholds the values of kinship and sincerity in da'wah.

This was expressed by the boarding school leader:

"After the da'wah activities, we usually conduct a simple evaluation together to see what needs to be improved." (Leader, 2025)

This statement shows that evaluation is positioned not as a means of judgmental control, but as a collective learning process to improve the quality of da'wah in the future. Through collective reflection, Islamic boarding schools can identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for sustainable development of da'wah.

3.1.5 Factors Supporting and Hindering the Implementation of Da'wah Management

The implementation of da'wah management strategies in Islamic boarding schools is supported by several key factors. First, the charismatic leadership of the kiai is a key factor in maintaining the consistency and legitimacy of da'wah. The moral authority and exemplary behavior of the kiai are able to mobilize all elements of the Islamic boarding school to actively participate in da'wah activities. Second, the strong religious culture of Islamic boarding schools creates a spiritual climate conducive to the implementation of da'wah, where the values of sincerity, devotion (khidmah), and obedience are the main foundations. Third, the high level of public trust in Islamic boarding schools strengthens the effectiveness of external da'wah, as Islamic boarding schools are seen as credible and moderate religious references.

On the other hand, there are also a number of inhibiting factors that affect the optimization of da'wah management. The limited number of human resources with managerial and modern da'wah

communication competencies is a challenge in itself, especially in systematic program planning and evaluation. In addition, limited funding restricts the development of more innovative and sustainable da'wah programs. Another hindering factor is the suboptimal use of digital technology-based da'wah media, so that the reach of da'wah tends to be limited to conventional spaces.

However, these limitations do not completely hinder the implementation of da'wah. Islamic boarding schools are still able to carry out their da'wah functions effectively through cultural and relational approaches that are deeply rooted in society. However, these findings indicate opportunities for development, particularly in integrating traditional Islamic boarding school da'wah management with modern management approaches and the use of digital technology, in order to expand the reach and improve the quality of da'wah in the future.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 Da'wah Management as the Spirit of Pesantren Life

Da'wah planning at the Miftahul Ulum Banyuputih Kidul Lumajang Islamic Boarding School is carried out in a participatory and contextual manner by involving all elements of the pesantren and considering the real needs of the surrounding community. Dakwah is not designed exclusively by the pesantren administrators, but rather through a process of deliberation between the kiai, administrators, ustaz, santri, and community leaders. This pattern of planning allows the pesantren to formulate a dakwah agenda that is responsive to the social, cultural, and religious dynamics developing within the pesantren and the community.

This model of dakwah planning is in line with Zamakhsyari Dhofier's (2011) view that pesantren are socio-religious institutions that grow from organic relationships between kiai, santri, and the community. Within this framework, da'wah is not merely a formal activity, but a social process designed based on the experiences, traditions, and needs of the community. Suhaemi (2016) adds that the success of pesantren da'wah is largely determined by the institution's ability to internalize Islamic values into its culture and institutional system.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of contemporary da'wah management, Munir and Ilaihi (2020) and Hidayat (2022) emphasize that participatory and contextual da'wah planning can create sustainable da'wah because it is integrated with organizational structures, pesantren culture, and daily practices. Thus, da'wah planning at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School serves as a strategic foundation in maintaining the relevance, effectiveness, and continuity of pesantren da'wah.

In terms of planning, the pesantren implements a participatory and contextual pattern by involving various internal elements of the institution, such as caregivers (kiai), ustaz, daily administrators, and santri. This collective involvement shows that da'wah planning is not understood as a rigid administrative process, but rather as a lively and dynamic forum for deliberation. Each element has a role according to its capacity and proximity to the reality of the pesantren and the community. Thus, da'wah planning reflects real needs, both for the internal guidance of students and for external da'wah services to the community around the pesantren.

Internal da'wah planning is directed at strengthening morals, worship discipline, and developing the scientific traditions of santri through recitation activities, classical book learning, and the habit of daily religious practices. Meanwhile, external da'wah is realized through the involvement of Islamic boarding schools in social-religious activities in the community, such as public recitation of the Qur'an, commemoration of Islamic holidays, and religious guidance based on local needs. Although not formally documented in written planning documents, the direction and objectives of Islamic boarding

school da'wah can be clearly seen through the consistency of programs that have been implemented continuously over time.

These findings reinforce the view that value-based planning, kiai leadership, and social closeness can replace formal planning mechanisms without reducing the effectiveness of da'wah (Zohriah et al., 2025). In the context of pesantren, the moral legitimacy and exemplary behavior of the kiai serve as the main compass that guides all da'wah activities. This pattern is in line with the concept of value-based planning in Islamic management literature, namely planning that is based on noble values, moral vision, and the transcendental goals of the institution, not merely on administrative targets or quantitative indicators (Terry & Rue, 2019; Rahman, 2021). Therefore, pesantren da'wah planning can be understood as an organic process rooted in values, traditions, and social relations, so that it remains adaptive, relevant, and effective in responding to da'wah challenges in society.

3.2.2 Organization of Da'wah Based on the Value of Khidmah

The organization of da'wah at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School shows a distinctive pattern, which is informal but still functional and effective. The organizational structure is not manifested in the form of a rigid organizational chart, but is built naturally through cultural relations between kiai, ustaz, administrators, and santri. The kiai occupies a central position as a strategic leader who determines the direction, vision, and basic values of the pesantren's dakwah. The ustaz and administrators act as technical implementers who translate the kiai's vision into dakwah programs, both within the pesantren and in the community. Meanwhile, the santri function as actors of dakwah in the field who carry out educational, social, and religious roles directly.

The effectiveness of this organizational model does not rely on a formal bureaucratic system, but rather on the internalization of the values of khidmah (service), obedience to the kiai, and a strong sense of togetherness that is built into the pesantren culture. The value of khidmah becomes an ethical foundation that encourages each individual to work not merely out of structural obligation, but out of spiritual and moral awareness. This creates loyalty, sincerity, and a high sense of collective responsibility in carrying out da'wah activities.

These findings reinforce the view that organizational effectiveness is not always determined by the completeness of formal structures and administrative procedures. As emphasized in modern organizational studies, consistently internalized culture and values often determine organizational performance more than structural design alone (Buhori & Ma'arif, 2022; Robbins & Judge, 2020). Recent empirical studies also show that value-based organizations have stronger internal cohesion, solidarity, and sustainability than organizations that rely solely on formal rules and administrative hierarchies (Kurniawan & Saefullah, 2023). Thus, value-based dakwah organization in Islamic boarding schools is not only relevant in a religious context but also contributes conceptually to the development of value- and culture-based organizational theory.

3.2.3 Integration of Internal and External Da'wah

Da'wah is carried out in an integrated manner between internal and external da'wah as a unified strategy for community development. Internal da'wah focuses on character building among students through strengthening morals, deepening worship, and developing continuous Islamic scholarship. This process is not only directed at cognitive aspects, but also at the internalization of Islamic spiritual and ethical values in the daily lives of students. Meanwhile, external da'wah is directed at the development of the wider community through regular recitation activities, majelis taklim, and various

socio-religious activities that are responsive to the needs of the community. The integration of these two forms of da'wah reflects the concept of holistic da'wah, which places education, social, and religious aspects as a unity that supports and strengthens each other (Prayogi et al., 2025; Ilaihi, 2020). This approach is in line with the findings of research over the past five years, which confirm that Islamic boarding schools have a strategic role as a link between Islamic education and community empowerment, as well as being a center for value transformation and strengthening religious social capital (Huda et al., 2022; Ma'arif & Widodo, 2024).

3.2.4 Persuasive Da'wah and Strengthening Social Capital

The persuasive, educational, and cultural methods of pesantren da'wah reflect the adaptive and contextual nature of Islamic da'wah. Da'wah is not carried out in a coercive or instructive manner, but rather through moral exemplary behavior (uswah hasanah), open dialogue, and social services that respond to the real needs of the community. This pattern makes Islamic boarding schools not only centers for the transmission of Islamic values, but also social institutions that are present and function in the daily life of the community. Through a cultural approach, Islamic boarding schools are able to harmoniously integrate Islamic teachings with local traditions, so that da'wah is accepted voluntarily and sustainably without causing social resistance.

This persuasive approach has been proven to strengthen community trust in Islamic boarding schools and form significant social capital for the success of da'wah (Hatami et al., 2023). This trust is built through consistent, transparent, and mutually beneficial long-term interactions. The social capital formed includes social networks, shared norms, and religious values that bind the relationship between Islamic boarding schools and the community, which are important foundations for the sustainability of da'wah and social harmony (Ahmadi & Gunarti, 2024; Putnam, 2020).

Recent studies show that religious social capital contributes significantly to the effectiveness of community da'wah, especially in strengthening social solidarity, collective participation, and moral compliance in society (Nasrullah & Fauzi, 2021). In the context of Islamic boarding schools, this social capital functions as a symbolic and practical force that encourages active community involvement in da'wah, education, and religious social activities.

The supervision and evaluation of pesantren da'wah is carried out informally through direct observation, internal deliberation, and community input. Although there are no formal managerial instruments, this mechanism is effective because it is flexible and sensitive to the socio-cultural context. The success of da'wah is also supported by the charismatic leadership of the kiai, a strong religious culture, and the participation of santri and the community (Hariyadi, 2020), although challenges related to management, funding, and technology still exist (Suryana et al., 2022; Aziz & Hakim, 2024). The novelty of this research lies in the findings of a participatory, informal, and khidmah-based pesantren da'wah management model as a contextual and sustainable managerial strength.

4. CONCLUSION

The pesantren-based da'wah management strategy at the Miftahul Ulum Banyputih Kidul Lumajang Islamic Boarding School has been effectively implemented through da'wah management functions that include planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising. Dakwah planning is carried out in a participatory and adaptive manner by involving various elements of the pesantren, while organization shows a clear division of roles and responsibilities between kiai, ustadz, administrators, and santri. The implementation of dakwah integrates internal and external dakwah

activities, so that the pesantren not only functions as a religious educational institution, but also plays a role as a center for dakwah and community development. These findings contribute theoretically to the development of pesantren-based da'wah management studies and provide practical benefits for pesantren administrators in improving the effectiveness and sustainability of their da'wah programs.

However, this study has a number of limitations, including limited coverage of locations to one Islamic boarding school and a lack of in-depth examination of the use of digital media in da'wah management strategies. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the scope of study to Islamic boarding schools with different characteristics, while also examining the integration of da'wah management with information technology and digital media. In practical terms, it is also necessary to strengthen the managerial capacity of Islamic boarding school administrators and develop a documentation system for da'wah programs so that the da'wah strategies implemented are more adaptive to the dynamics of modern society and developments of the times.

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