



Musabaqah Syarh Alquran as Islamic Da'wah and Value Transformation

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the shift in *da'wah* values within Musabaqah Syarh Alquran and to redefine its role as a medium for conveying Quranic messages. Ideally, syarh Quran should not only be regarded as a competition branch within Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran but also as a *da'wah* art that integrates rhetoric, linguistic aesthetics, and comprehension of Quranic content. This research employs a qualitative method with a tafsir-based approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with judges and participants at provincial and national levels, supported by observation, documentation, and literature review. Content analysis was applied to identify meaning patterns from field findings and relevant sources. The results reveal a shift in orientation from *da'wah* to competition, prizes, and self-expression. Nevertheless, this transformation has not eliminated its *da'wah* function, as syarh Quran still holds significant potential in promoting Quranic values. The study highlights the importance of strengthening coaching, establishing standardized assessment criteria, and internalizing social, religious, and cultural values in the practice of syarh Quran

INTRODUCTION

Quranic exegesis is a form of conveying religious messages that combines the recitation of the Quran, explanations of the meanings of verses, the rhetoric of *da'wah*, and the beauty of linguistic art (Wanto, 2018; Zayyan & Sukayat, 2021). In the context of Islamic *da'wah*, the Quranic commentary is not only understood as a form of religious artistic expression but also as a medium for grounding the values of the Quran in society through communicative, educational, and persuasive delivery (Fajrianty & Susanti, 2018). *Da'wah* itself holds a significant position in Islam as it relates to the effort to call people to goodness, convey religious teachings, and foster the moral and social consciousness of the community. Therefore, Quranic exegesis should be positioned as a tool for *da'wah* that connects the Quranic text with the realities of people's lives through language that is beautiful, easy to understand, and tailored to the audience's needs (Kahfi et al., 2025).

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In the Quran, the ideal principle of *da'wah* is affirmed through Allah's words in Surah An-Nahl [16]:125 (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019):

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِهِمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ
عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

Meaning: *Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided* (QS. An-Nahl [16]:125)

This verse emphasizes that *da'wah* must be conducted based on the principles of hikmah, *mau'izhab hasanah*, and constructive dialogue. In the interpretation of this verse, *hikmah* can be understood as the ability to convey religious teachings wisely, effectively, and in a manner appropriate to the conditions of society. Meanwhile, *mau'izhab hasanah* indicates that the message of *da'wah* must be conveyed through good counsel, gentle language, and in a manner that does not hurt the audience's feelings. The command to engage in dialogue in a better manner underscores the importance of communication ethics when addressing differences in religious understanding (Hamka, 1985; Shihab, 2004). In the context of the Musabaqah Syarh Alquran, this verse serves as a foundation that *da'wah* rhetoric must not be oriented solely toward linguistic beauty or stage presence, but must be directed toward guiding the audience toward an understanding of the values of the Quran in a polite, argumentative, and responsible manner.

In the history of Islam, the art of language and literature has played a vital role in conveying religious messages. The beauty of language serves as a key element capable of capturing the audience's attention, raising awareness, and reinforcing the moral messages being conveyed. Literature in the history of Islam has not only functioned as an aesthetic work but has also served as a vehicle for conveying values, social criticism, and the reinforcement of religious identity (Khaerunnisa & Septiana, 2020). In this context, the exegesis of the Quran is closely tied to the Islamic rhetorical tradition because it emphasizes the ability to convey messages clearly, purposefully, and in a way that resonates with the audience's consciousness. *Dakwah* rhetoric is not merely about displaying eloquence but also demands precision in content, sound argumentation, and the alignment of the message with the needs of society (Isina, 2013; Yosuf et al., 2009).

In Indonesia, Quranic exegesis has flourished within a broader religious and social context, particularly through the Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran. The Musabaqah Syarh Quran has emerged as a category that combines recitation, understanding of the verses' meanings, the delivery of *da'wah* messages, and creative performance art. In practice, this category is typically performed in groups and features a combination of verse reciters, interpreters, and readers of translations or summaries of the recitation. This format makes the Syarh Quran a distinctive medium of *da'wah* because religious messages are conveyed through collective effort, the power of language, intonation, expression, and mastery of Islamic content (Fajrianty & Susanti, 2018). Syarhil Quran can also be understood as the rhetorical art of *da'wah* that serves informative, persuasive, and recreational functions, thereby bridging the message of the Quran with the needs of the audience (Andrian, 2020). Thus, the Musabaqah Syarh Quran is not merely a competition but also an educational space for *da'wah* aimed at the younger generation.

However, the development of the Musabaqah Syarh Quran today faces significant challenges. On the one hand, this event has great potential to

introduce the values of the Quran to the public in an engaging way. On the other hand, there is a noticeable shift in focus from *da'wah* toward competition, achievement, prizes, and self-promotion. This shift is important to examine because it can affect the depth of participants' understanding of the messages they convey. If the Syarh Quran is understood merely as a competition, then the da'wah aspect which is the core spirit of this activity risks being weakened. In fact, da'wah in Islam requires not only the ability to speak, but also sincerity, exemplary conduct, the appropriateness of the message, and moral responsibility in conveying the truth (Alimuddin, 2007; Setyawan, 2020).

Studies on *da'wah* indicate that the delivery of religious messages must take into account social and cultural values as well as societal developments. Effective *da'wah* cannot be separated from the context of the audience, as religious messages are more readily accepted when conveyed using language, approaches, and cultural symbols that are closely aligned with people's daily lives. In Indonesia's multicultural society, *da'wah* through a local wisdom approach is essential so that Islamic messages are not presented rigidly but can engage in dialogue with the community's culture (Wahid, 2020). Furthermore, the changing times also demand that da'wah adapt to social changes, modernity, and the communication patterns of contemporary society (Zain et al., 2017). Therefore, the Musabaqah Syarh Quran must continue to be developed without losing the substance of *da'wah*, which serves as its foundational principle.

Developments in contemporary da'wah studies indicate that Quranic exegesis should be viewed not merely as a competitive art form, but also as a platform for training young da'wah leaders. Quranic exegesis holds a strategic position as it integrates mastery of the Quranic text, thematic understanding, rhetorical skills, teamwork, and sensitivity to emerging social issues in society (Kahfi et al., 2025). In this context, participants in Quranic exegesis must not only demonstrate speaking skills on stage but also build communicative rapport with the audience so that the *da'wah* message can be received more meaningfully. Effective *da'wah* communication requires interpersonal relationships between the *da'i* and the *mad'u*, ranging from the initial introduction, openness, and emotional closeness, to the establishment of trust in the religious message being conveyed (Nurmala & Prasongko, 2024). This principle aligns with *da'wah bil-hikmah*, which emphasizes wisdom, gentleness, and the ability to adapt Islamic messages to the social and cultural conditions of society (Riyadi & Karim, 2023). Thus, the Musabaqah Syarh Quran should be positioned as a medium for da'wah development that not only trains participants in rhetorical aesthetics but also fosters their social, spiritual, and cultural awareness.

Furthermore, the rise of digital *da'wah* reinforces the urgency of this research, as da'wah today is no longer limited to the pulpit, religious study circles, or competition venues, but has also expanded into social media. Recent studies indicate that digital media offers significant opportunities for young people to disseminate *da'wah* messages widely, particularly in promoting religious moderation and preventing conflicts within heterogeneous societies (Purwatiningsih et al., 2024; Rumata et al., 2021). However, these opportunities also present new challenges, such as a decline in the quality of *da'wah* messages due to a focus on virality, a shift in religious authority from scholars and formal institutions toward social media-based influencers, and the risk of spreading provocative or unethical religious messages (Nase et al., 2025; Rachman et al., 2025). Therefore, da'wah must continue to prioritize communication ethics, timeliness, age appropriateness for the audience, message content, the validity

of materials, and social responsibility in its dissemination (Sukayat, 2023). In this context, the Musabaqah Syarh Quran should be directed not only as a venue for achievement but also as a space for shaping young da'is who are communicative, moderate, digitally literate, and capable of upholding the substantive values of the Quran amidst social change.

Several previous studies have examined *da'wah* from various perspectives, such as the function of da'wah in social life, the values of da'wah in religious behavior, the rhetoric of da'wah communication, and the role of media and culture in the dissemination of Islamic messages. *Da'wah* is understood as an activity aimed at saving humanity from moral corruption and guiding lives toward virtuous values (Alimuddin, 2007). Other studies emphasize that *da'wah* plays a crucial role in upholding societal morality and strengthening religious consciousness (Alamsyah & Yanti, 2019). Meanwhile, the values of *da'wah* are also intertwined with acts of worship and social behavior reflected in the lives of Muslims (Hayati, 2017). These various studies indicate that *da'wah* has a broad scope, encompassing communication, education, moral guidance, and social transformation.

Nevertheless, research specifically examining the shift in the values of da'wah within the Musabaqah Syarh Quran still needs to be strengthened. Some studies focus more on training strategies, rhetorical techniques, or the function of Quranic exegesis as a medium for *da'wah*. There has not been much research that positions the Musabaqah Syarh Quran as an arena where a tug-of-war occurs between the values of da'wah, the interests of the competition, the pursuit of achievement, and the participants' sense of identity. Yet, this issue is crucial because the success of Quranic exegesis cannot be measured solely by the quality of the performance but also by the extent to which participants understand and internalize the Quranic values being conveyed. In other words, the quality of Quranic exegesis must be assessed through a balance between rhetorical beauty, accuracy of content, sincerity of purpose, and the impact of da'wah on the audience (Wanto, 2018).

Given these issues, this study is important for analyzing the shift in the values conveyed by the Quran in the Musabaqah Syarh Quran, particularly in the context of Islamic *da'wah*. The primary focus of this study is to examine how the function of *da'wah* is understood by practitioners of Quranic exegesis, the nature of the value shifts emerging within the competition's practices, and how the role of Quranic exegesis can be redefined as a medium of da'wah that remains relevant. This study offers a novel perspective by positioning the Musabaqah Syarh Quran not merely as a competitive activity, but as a space for evaluating *da'wah* that must take into account social, religious, and cultural values. Through this approach, the study is expected to contribute to strengthening the development of Quranic exegesis so that it remains oriented toward da'wah, rather than solely focused on competition achievements.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the shift in the value of *da'wah* in the Musabaqah Syarh Quran and to redefine its role as a medium for Islamic da'wah. This study also aims to reinforce the understanding that the interpretation of the Quran must be developed as a means of conveying the Quranic message in an informative, persuasive, and aesthetically pleasing manner, while remaining grounded in Islamic values. Thus, the results of this study are expected to serve as input for participants, mentors, judges, the LPTQ, and related institutions in preserving the essence of the Musabaqah Syarh Quran as a medium of da'wah that grounds the values of the Quran within society.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method with an interpretive approach. The qualitative method was chosen because this study seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of the shift in the values of da'wah within the practice of the Musabaqah Syarh Quran, particularly regarding the participants' orientation, the rhetorical function of da'wah, and the role of the Syarh Quran as a medium for conveying the values of the Qur'an. The interpretive approach is used to interpret and contextualize the values of da'wah within the Quranic exegesis based on the principles of Quranic teachings, so that field data is not merely understood as social phenomena but is also analyzed through an Islamic normative framework (Alatise & Akinfolarin, 2025; Creswell, 2015; Engkizar et al., 2022, 2025, 2026; Okenova et al., 2025; Saminu et al., 2025).

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with the judging panel of the Musabaqah Syarh Quran and the top participants of the provincial and national levels of the Musabaqah Syarh Quran. Informants were selected through purposive sampling because they were considered to possess experience, knowledge, and direct involvement in the practice of Quranic exegesis. Secondary data was obtained through a literature review, including books, journal articles, tafsir, and scientific documents relevant to the themes of *da'wah*, rhetoric, Quranic exegesis, and the Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran (Bungin, 2020; Busral et al., 2025; Sugiyono, 2014).

Table 1. Research Informants

No.	Informant	Description
1	Dra. Achiriah, M.Hum.	Judge of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah, North Sumatra
2	Prof. Dr. Achyar Zein, M.Ag.	Judge of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah, North Sumatra
3	Muhammad Abdi Rahman	Best participant of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah at provincial and national levels
4	Naufal Asyraf Hamid	Best participant of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah at provincial and national levels
5	Dianyar Saidatul Husna	Best participant of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah at provincial and national levels
6	Halimah Ibrahim	Best participant of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah at provincial and national levels
7	Navri Zulirfan	Best participant of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah at provincial and national levels
8	Fitrah Zico Amsari Nst.	Best participant of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah at provincial and national levels
9	Naufal Lisanul Haq	Best participant of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah at provincial and national levels
10	Hafiz Fachriansyah	Best participant of the Syarh Quran Musabaqah at provincial and national levels

Data collection methods included interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were used to explore informants' views on the function of Quranic exegesis as a medium for da'wah, the shifts in values occurring within the competition, and efforts that could be made to restore the focus of Quranic exegesis to the values of *da'wah*. Observations were conducted to examine the practice of Quranic exegesis, particularly its rhetorical aspects, message delivery, use of linguistic artistry, and response to *da'wah* values. Documentation was used to trace supporting materials, such as exegetical texts, literature, competition guidelines, and other documents

relevant to the research.

The primary research instrument in this study was the researcher, aided by an interview guide, observation notes, and documentation. The collected data were analyzed using content analysis. The analysis was conducted in several stages: reading all the data, grouping information by theme, interpreting the meaning of the data, and drawing conclusions in line with the research focus. The main themes analyzed include the rhetorical function of *da'wah* in the syarh of the Quran, shifts in values within the practice of the *musabaqah*, and the re-identification of the syarh of the Quran's role as a medium for *da'wah*. Content analysis was used because this study does not merely read the data as text but also as social and religious meanings related to *da'wah* practices in the Musabaqah Syarh Quran (Krippendorff, 2022; Moleong, 2021).

To ensure the validity of the data, this study employed source and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from the panel of judges, participants, and relevant scholarly literature. Meanwhile, methodological triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Through these stages, the data obtained is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of the shift in the values of *da'wah* in the Musabaqah Syarh Quran as well as its contribution to strengthening the syarh Quran as a medium for Islamic *da'wah*.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Rhetoric of *Da'wah* and the Function of Quranic Exegesis

Research findings indicate that Quranic exegesis is understood as a form of *da'wah* that combines the recitation of Quranic verses, an explanation of their meaning, rhetoric, and elements of linguistic artistry. In the context of the Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran, Quranic Exegesis serves not only as a competition category but also as a medium for conveying religious messages to the public. Its delivery format, which involves group work, vocal projection, intonation, expression, and the structure of arguments, gives Quranic Exegesis a unique appeal compared to conventional lectures. Therefore, the existence of Syarh Quran can be understood as a form of performative *da'wah* that seeks to bridge the message of the Quran with the audience's needs in a communicative manner (Zayyan & Sukayat, 2021).

Historically, the Syarh Quran *da'wah* gained widespread recognition in Indonesia through the 15th National MTQ in Bandar Lampung in 1988. The basic concept is the delivery of art-based *da'wah* performed by a group of three people: a *qari* (reciter), a commentator, and a sari tilawah reader (who supports the delivery of the message) (Fajrianty & Susanti, 2018). This format demonstrates that Syarh Quran is not merely about showcasing individual skills but also relies on team cohesion to convey the message of the Quran. In practice, Syarh Quran serves three primary functions: the informative function, the persuasive function, and the recreational function (Andrian, 2020). The informative function is evident in the presentation of the verse's content; the persuasive function is evident in the moral exhortations directed at the audience; while the recreational function is evident in the beauty of the language and the performance, which make the message of the sermon more engaging.

Rhetoric is a crucial element in the exegesis of the Quran because *da'wah* is not only about what is conveyed but also how the message is conveyed. In the context of *da'wah*, rhetoric is the ability to use language, logic, delivery style, and communication strategies to influence, inspire, and convince the audience of a religious message (Isina, 2013). Therefore, an exegete must not only understand

the content of the verses but also be able to craft the message into a narrative that is clear, respectful, persuasive, and appropriate for the listeners' circumstances. Effective rhetoric makes the message of da'wah more easily accepted, whereas rhetoric that emphasizes style over substance can undermine the very purpose of da'wah itself.

The interview results indicate that the informants view Syarh Quran as a medium for da'wah that serves a strategic function. Achiriah explained, "The Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran, including the Syarh Quran category, can serve as a means to implement and promote Islamic da'wah to the public" (Achiriah, personal communication, 2024). This statement indicates that the competition holds not only ceremonial value but also serves educational and da'wah functions. In line with this, Abdi Rahman emphasized, "Syarh Quran serves as a medium to explain a topic relevant to the foundational verses of the Quran, which is then integrated with hadith, tafsir, and supporting evidence in daily life" (Muhammad Abdi Rahman, personal communication, 2024). This perspective demonstrates that the Syarh Quran serves as a bridge between the text of revelation and the realities of people's lives. Thus, the Syarh Quran is not merely focused on performance but also on the participants' ability to understand, process, and communicatively convey the Quran's message to the audience.

This perspective demonstrates that Syarh Quran shares similarities with popular thematic exegesis. Participants not only recite verses but also explain their messages in accordance with the themes addressed. These explanations are then presented in a way that is simple and practical for the general public to understand. In this regard, Syarh Quran plays a crucial role in grounding the values of the Quran, as the message of revelation does not end with the recitation but is translated into social, moral, and religious issues that are relevant to the audience's daily lives. This function aligns with the objectives of Islamic da'wah, namely calling people to goodness, guiding behavior, and strengthening religious awareness (Alimuddin, 2007; Setyawan, 2020).

Other findings indicate that aesthetic elements serve as a key strength in Syarh Quran. Achyar Zein states that "Syarh Quran presents a significant opportunity to ground the values of the Quran through beautiful and engaging rhetoric" (Achyar Zein, personal communication, 2024). This perspective suggests that the beauty of language and the power of rhetoric serve not only as visual appeal but also as a means to broaden the reception of the *da'wah* message. In line with this, Naufal Asyraf Hamid explains that "Syarh Al-Quran is a unique form of da'wah rhetoric because it combines the delivery of a speech with poetic expression simultaneously" (Naufal Asyraf Hamid, personal communication, 2024). Hafiz Fachriansyah, Halimah Ibrahim, and Fitrah Zico Amsari Nst. also emphasize that Syarh Quran involves the art of reciting verses with tone, rhythm, intonation, and emotional depth that can enhance the delivery of the *da'wah* message (Fitrah Zico Amsari Nst., personal communication, 2024; Hafiz Fachriansyah, personal communication, 2024; Halimah Ibrahim, personal communication, 2024). Thus, aesthetics in Syarh Quran are not merely an additional element but an integral part of the da'wah communication strategy that serves to strengthen the appeal, understanding, and acceptance of the Quranic message by the audience.

Nevertheless, aesthetics in the recitation of the Quran must not overshadow the substance of the message. The beauty of the voice, the synchronized movements, and the choice of diction are only meaningful for the message if they are directed toward clarifying the Quran's message. If artistic elements become more dominant than an understanding of the content, then the recitation of the Quran risks becoming merely a stage performance.

Therefore, participants must maintain a balance between mastery of the material, rhetorical skills, and the sincerity of their *da'wah* orientation. Effective *da'wah* is not determined solely by the appeal of the performance but also by the depth of the content, the accuracy of the message, and the ability to address the moral needs of the audience (Alamsyah & Yanti, 2019; Hayati, 2017).

In the context of training young preachers, Syarh Quran plays a very important role. Recent studies indicate that the Syarh Quran program can serve as a training ground for future leaders, as it equips participants to master the Quranic text, understand thematic exegesis, draft *da'wah* scripts, speak in public, collaborate in teams, and adapt messages to contemporary social issues (Kahfi et al., 2025). Thus, Syarh Quran not only trains public speaking skills but also fosters critical thinking, social sensitivity, and the courage to convey religious messages. This function is vital because modern *da'wah* requires preachers who are not only eloquent speakers but also capable of wisely interpreting social realities.

Furthermore, the success of Syarh Quran as a medium for *da'wah* depends heavily on the participants' ability to establish a communicative relationship with the audience. Effective *da'wah* communication requires a sense of closeness between the *da'i* and the *mad'u* so that the religious message does not feel detached from the listeners' lives. In *da'wah* communication theory, message acceptance is stronger when the communicator is able to build trust, openness, and emotional closeness with the audience (Nurmala & Prasongko, 2024). Therefore, the presenter needs to understand the psychological and social conditions of the listeners, not just memorize the text or embellish their speaking style. *Dakwah* messages delivered with empathy will more easily resonate with the public.

Syarh Quran is also relevant to the multicultural character of Indonesian society. In a society marked by diversity in culture, language, and traditions, *da'wah* must be delivered through a communicative approach that resonates with people's daily lives. *Da'wah* that incorporates local wisdom will be more readily accepted because the message of Islam is presented in a dialogical manner, rather than rigidly (Wahid, 2018). In this regard, Syarh Quran holds great potential to integrate religious values with polite and educational cultural expressions. Presentations incorporating elements of local art can enhance the appeal of *da'wah* as long as they do not compromise the substance of the Quran's values.

Based on the above discussion, it can be affirmed that the rhetoric of *da'wah* and the function of Syarh Quran are closely intertwined. Rhetoric serves as the method of delivery, while *da'wah* defines the direction and purpose of that delivery. An ideal Syarh Quran is one that successfully integrates linguistic beauty, accuracy of content, strength of argumentation, mastery of the verses, communication ethics, and social relevance. Thus, the Musabaqah Syarh Quran must continue to be directed as a medium of *da'wah* that grounds the values of the Quran, not merely as a competitive arena that highlights performance skills. The primary substance of Syarh Quran remains the effort to convey the Quran's message in an informative, persuasive, aesthetic, and responsible manner.

The Values of Syarh Quran and Shifts in Meaning in the Context of *Da'wah*

Research findings indicate that Syarh Quran contains *da'wah* values that should serve as the foundation for every participant in formulating, understanding, and conveying religious messages. These values include sincerity, mastery of knowledge, compassion, justice, objectivity, patience, tolerance, simplicity, and exemplary conduct. These values are crucial because *da'wah* is

not merely about the ability to speak in public but also concerns intention, depth of understanding, ethical delivery, and the moral impact on the audience. In the context of Syarh Quran, the values of da'wah should serve as the guiding spirit that directs all aspects of the presentation, from the selection of themes, the drafting of scripts, the mastery of verses, the use of rhetoric, to the way participants present the message before the public.

In the context of Indonesia's multicultural society, da'wah through the Syarh Quran must incorporate cultural values and local wisdom so that religious messages can be conveyed in a more accessible manner. Dakwah that takes local culture into account does not mean diminishing the substance of Islamic teachings, but rather making the message of Islam more closely aligned with the social experiences of the community. This is important because dakwah that is too rigid risks being difficult to accept, whereas dakwah that considers the social context is better able to build a connection with the audience (Wahid, 2018). Furthermore, changes in modern society also require the Syarh Quran to adapt its da'wah methods to the times. Contemporary da'wah no longer takes place solely on the pulpit or in religious forums but also extends into digital spaces, social media, and various forms of creative communication that resonate with the younger generation (Rumata et al., 2021).

However, the interview results indicate signs of a shift in meaning within the practice of Syarh Quran. This shift is particularly evident when some participants view Syarh Quran more as a competition, a means of achieving success, winning prizes, and asserting one's identity, rather than as a medium for da'wah. In the initial article, this issue was already evident from the introduction, namely when the public's enthusiasm for the Quranic Exegesis competition opened up significant opportunities for da'wah, yet simultaneously encouraged some participants to capitalize on the momentum to build their presence and pursue prizes. This situation indicates that the substantive value of the Quran commentary risks shifting if participants' focus is no longer directed toward conveying the Quran's message.

This shift can be seen in two trends among the informants' views. First, some informants believe that the essence of da'wah in Syarh Quran is beginning to weaken. Achiriah stated that quite a few participants do not yet understand the value of the Syarh and have not shown strong motivation to use it as a means of *da'wah*. Dianyar also emphasized that Syarh Quran participants must understand the content being presented so that the message can be understood by the audience. Navri even assessed that Syarh Quran tends to be treated merely as a competition and does not sufficiently prioritize the da'wah aspect. This perspective indicates that the primary issue does not lie in the competition format itself, but in the weakening of the internalization of da'wah values among some participants.

Second, some informants view the evolution of Syarh Quran as an expression of creativity and adaptation to the times. Hafiz believes that Syarh Quran is linked to the artistic creativity of participants in their *da'wah* efforts. Naufal Asyraf also holds the view that changes in the times can be embraced as long as they do not diminish the essence of Syarh Quran. Halimah believes that the use of variations such as beatboxing or certain songs is not necessarily disruptive, as long as it remains within limits that do not undermine the purpose of da'wah. This view demonstrates that the modernization of Syarh Quran need not be rejected, but it requires ethical and substantive boundaries to ensure that creativity does not overshadow the values of the Quran, which form the foundation of the message's delivery.

Table 2. Forms of Shifts in Interpretation in the Practice of Quranic Exegesis

Aspect of Findings	Ideal Form	Shifted Form	Analytical Meaning
Participant Orientation	Syarh AQuran is directed as a medium of <i>da'wah</i> and transmission of Quranic values	Some participants are more oriented toward competition, prizes, achievements, and self-existence	A shift occurs from <i>da'wah</i> orientation toward competitive orientation
Material Understanding	Participants understand verses, tafsir, hadith, and the social context of the delivered theme	Some participants only present the script without deepening its meaning	<i>Da'wah</i> messages risk becoming stage memorization rather than internalization of values
Function of Art	Art is used to beautify and strengthen the <i>da'wah</i> message	Art may become more dominant than the substance of the content	Aesthetics need to be controlled by <i>da'wah</i> values
Modernization of Performance	Creativity is used to make <i>da'wah</i> more engaging and relevant	Modernization may raise doubts about the accuracy of content and seriousness of <i>da'wah</i>	Adaptation to contemporary times must be accompanied by ethics and validity of material
Impact on Audience	The audience gains understanding and motivation to practice Quranic values	The audience remembers the performance more than the core message	The success of Syarh Quran should be measured by its <i>da'wah</i> impact, not merely by festivity

The table shows that the shift in values in Syarh Quran does not occur in isolation, but manifests across several layers. The first shift relates to orientation. When participants focus more on competition achievements, prizes, or social recognition, the value of sincerity as the foundation of *da'wah* becomes weakened. The second shift relates to mastery of the material. If participants focus only on memorizing the text, intonation, and the cohesiveness of their performance, the message of the Quran risks not being deeply understood. The third shift relates to the dominance of aesthetics. Art is indeed important in the Syarh Quran, but it must remain a means to clarify the message, not replace the message itself.

From a *da'wah* perspective, this situation should be viewed as a challenge in terms of guidance. *Da'wah* fundamentally requires a balance between content, method, and the ethics of delivery. A correct message can lose its impact if delivered through inappropriate methods. Conversely, an engaging method is insufficient if not supported by substantive depth. Therefore, Quranic exegesis

(Syarh Quran) must be positioned as an activity that integrates mastery of the Quranic text, rhetorical skills, social sensitivity, and moral responsibility. Studies on Syarhil Quran as training for young preachers also emphasize that this discipline should train participants in mastery of the sacred text, critical thinking skills, communication skills, manuscript preparation, the ability to listen to the needs of the audience, and speaking persuasively in public (Kahfi et al., 2025).

The shift in values within Quranic exegesis can also be linked to changes in the contemporary landscape of *da'wah*. Modern *da'wah* demands practices, materials, strategies, and methods that align with the needs of society. However, such adaptations must still adhere to the guidelines of *da'wah* so that the religious message does not lose its substance (Rumata et al., 2021). In the digital context, *da'wah* does indeed present significant opportunities as it can reach a broader audience, particularly the younger generation. However, ease of access can also lead to problems if da'wah merely follows popular trends, seeks attention, or presents unverified messages. This aligns with findings that digital da'wah requires communication ethics regarding timing, the audience's age, and message content and must avoid elements that offend religious, ethnic, or racial sensitivities or treat religious material as inappropriate jokes (Sukayat, 2023).

In Syarh Quran, similar issues can arise when participants place too much emphasis on entertainment and popularity. If participants are solely focused on audience reactions, applause, or stage ratings, then Syarh Quran will begin to resemble the logic of virality in digital *da'wah*. In reality, *da'wah* should not be driven solely by popularity. Studies on religious authority in the digital age indicate that digitalization has shifted religious authority from scholars and formal institutions toward popular figures, such as celebrity preachers and Islamic influencers. This shift poses challenges in the form of the commodification of religion, the fragmentation of teachings, and the oversimplification of religious content (Rachman et al., 2025). In the context of Syarh Quran, this phenomenon serves as a warning that the popularity of a performance must not replace the credibility of knowledge and the depth of the message.

Therefore, the modernization of Syarh Quran remains acceptable as long as it does not undermine the fundamental values of *da'wah*. Variations in art, style, intonation, and presentation can enhance the appeal of *da'wah* as long as they remain grounded in ethics, accuracy of content, and the goal of nurturing the community. Conversely, modernization can become problematic if it merely produces a flashy performance that is lacking in substance. In this regard, the perspectives of informants who are in favor of creativity and those who are critical of shifting values can actually be reconciled. Creativity is necessary to keep the Syarh Quran alive and relevant, but creativity must always be subordinate to the goals of da'wah. Thus, innovation in form must not sacrifice the depth of content.

This subsection emphasizes that the values of the Quranic commentary must be reoriented toward da'wah. Sincerity, knowledge, compassion, justice, patience, tolerance, simplicity, and exemplary conduct must form the foundation for the development of participants. Competitions may serve as a means to improve quality, but they must not become the primary goal that overshadows da'wah. The ideal Syarh Quran is one that successfully combines the quality of performance with the purity of its orientation, creativity with depth of content, and stage aesthetics with the responsibility of conveying the values of the Quran. In this way, the Musabaqah Syarh Quran can remain a space for healthy competition while also serving as an educational, relevant, and influential medium of *da'wah* for society.

Re-examining the Role of Quranic Exegesis as a Medium for Islamic *Da'wah*

Da'wah holds a very important position in Islam because it is directly related to the responsibility of Muslims to call people to goodness, convey religious values, and improve the social life of the community. Linguistically, *da'wah* can be understood as an invitation, an appeal, or a call toward a specific goal. In the Islamic context, *da'wah* does not merely entail conveying religious teachings verbally but also encompasses efforts to guide people in understanding, internalizing, and practicing Islamic values in daily life (Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2018). Therefore, the commentary on the Quran (Syarh Quran), as one form of conveying religious messages, should be situated within the framework of *da'wah*, not merely as a competition category in the Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran. The normative foundation of *da'wah* can be found in Surah Al-Imran [3]:104:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

Meaning: "Let there be among you a group of people who call to what is good, enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong.111) They are the ones who will prosper." (Quran 3:104)

This verse indicates that *da'wah* is a collective duty aimed at building a society based on the values of goodness. In Tafsir al-Jalalain, the verse is understood as a command that a group of Muslims should call people to the teachings of Islam, enjoin what is good, and forbid what is evil. This command is understood as a social-religious responsibility that cannot be separated from scholarly knowledge and the ability to convey the message accurately (Al-Mahalli & As-Suyuti, 2011). Thus, the commentary on the Quran can be seen as one form of the actualization of this call to *da'wah*.

From an exegetical perspective, *da'wah* is not merely understood as the verbal conveyance of a message but must be linked to knowledge, practice, and exemplary conduct. Knowledge motivates one to practice religious values, while such practice, evident in societal life, constitutes a living form of *da'wah*. Therefore, individuals and society need to be continually reminded through religious messages conveyed with knowledge, wisdom, and exemplary conduct (Shihab, 2004). In this context, the Exegesis of the Quran holds a strategic position because it not only recites the verses of the Quran but also explains their meanings and connects them to the social issues currently facing society.

The research findings indicate that the informants view Syarh Quran as a medium for *da'wah* that still holds an important position in instilling the values of the Quran. Achiriah emphasized that all participants, the government, and the LPTQ need to work together so that Syarh Quran can truly serve as a means of spreading Islam. This perspective indicates that the success of Syarh Al-Quran depends not only on the participants' abilities but also on the training system, regulations, and institutional support. Abdi Rahman also emphasizes that Syarh Quran should not merely be a competition but rather a medium for *da'wah* that benefits both the participants and the audience. This perspective indicates that the competition should be understood as a means, while the primary goal remains *da'wah*.

The views of other informants also reinforce the role of the Syarh Quran as a medium for nurturing a Quranic generation. Naufal and Hafiz believe that the proliferation of Syarh Quran competitions can serve as a platform for *da'wah* and a means of training the younger generation to love the Quran. Dianyar proposed the establishment of training or development centers for young talents interested in Syarh Quran. Meanwhile, Halimah and Navri emphasized the importance of maintaining the integrity and primary purpose of Syarh Quran,

while Fitrah views Syarh Quran as a significant da'wah potential for the younger generation. Naufal Lisanul Haq also emphasized that Quranic Exegesis must be informative, relevant, inspiring, and easy to understand so that the Qur'an's message can be effectively conveyed.

These findings indicate that the role of *da'wah* in the Quranic commentary has not been lost, but it needs to be reinvigorated. The shift in focus toward prizes, achievements, and self-promotion is indeed a challenge, but this does not mean that the Quranic commentary has lost its da'wah function. In fact, these findings reveal that there remains an awareness among the judges and participants regarding the importance of returning the Quran Commentary Competition to its fundamental purpose: conveying the values of the Quran to society. In other words, the primary issue lies not in the format of the competition itself, but in how participants, mentors, the judging panel, and relevant institutions guide the competition to ensure it remains within the framework of *da'wah*.

It is important to redefine the role of Syarh Quran so that this activity does not become merely a competitive spectacle. Syarh Quran must be understood as a medium for da'wah that combines three key elements: mastery of the Quranic text, rhetorical skills, and sensitivity to social realities. Recent studies confirm that Syarhil Quran plays a strategic role in shaping young da'is because it integrates verse comprehension, thematic exegesis, public speaking skills, teamwork, Quranic leadership, and spiritual character (Harahap, 2022; Kholifah & Hikmah, 2024). Thus, Syarh Quran can serve as a training ground for young preachers who are not only eloquent speakers but also capable of identifying societal issues and conveying the messages of the Quran in a contextual manner.

This reidentification must also be directed toward strengthening social, religious, and cultural values. Social values are necessary so that the message of Syarh Quran does not remain merely theoretical but is able to address the needs of society. Religious values are necessary so that all material presented remains grounded in the Quran, hadith, tafsir, and the principles of Islamic *da'wah*. Meanwhile, cultural values are necessary so that the da'wah message can engage with the cultural diversity of Indonesian society. Such an approach aligns with the principle of *da'wah bil-hikmah* that is, da'wah conducted with wisdom, gentleness, and the ability to adapt the message to the social conditions of the community (Riyadi & Karim, 2023). Therefore, the development of Syarh Quran must maintain a balance between the substance of the teachings, the aesthetics of delivery, and the socio-cultural context of the audience.

In the context of contemporary *da'wah*, the role of Syarh Al-Quran also needs to be expanded from the competition arena to the broader public sphere. The best performances in the competition can be developed into da'wah content, learning materials, or educational resources in schools, Islamic boarding schools, mosques, and digital media. This is important because *da'wah* today is no longer limited to physical spaces but also operates through social media and digital platforms. Studies on digital da'wah indicate that digital media can expand the reach of *da'wah* and provide significant opportunities for the younger generation to disseminate religious messages more widely (Rumata et al., 2021). However, it is important to remember that the expansion of digital media must be accompanied by ethical communication, the validity of the content, and social responsibility to ensure that *da'wah* messages do not degenerate into mere entertainment or viral content.

Thus, the Syarh Quran can serve as a bridge between the tradition of oral da'wah and the needs of modern *da'wah*. On the one hand, the Syarh Quran

preserves the tradition of conveying messages through the recitation of verses, commentary, and the art of rhetoric. On the other hand, Syarh Quran can be developed to be more responsive to contemporary issues, such as the morality of the younger generation, religious moderation, the environment, education, and the social life of the community. Effective Syarh Quran training must equip participants with the ability to understand verses, construct arguments, use polite language, understand the audience, and present religious solutions relevant to the community's needs (Kahfi et al., 2025).

Based on the above discussion, the role of Syarh Quran in Islam can be defined as a medium for *da'wah*, education, and leadership development. As a medium for *da'wah*, Syarh Quran conveys the message of the Quran to the public. As a medium for education, Syarh Quran trains participants to understand verses, exegesis, and social realities. As a medium for leadership development, the Syarh Quran shapes a young generation that possesses the courage to speak out, social sensitivity, and moral responsibility in conveying Islamic teachings. Therefore, the Musabaqah Syarh Quran must continue to be guided so that it not only produces competition winners but also nurtures young *da'is* who are Quranic, communicative, courteous, moderate, and capable of grounding the values of the Quran within society.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Musabaqah Syarh Quran holds an important position as a medium for Islamic *da'wah* that combines the recitation of Quranic verses, the explanation of their meanings, rhetoric, and the art of conveying religious messages. The research findings reveal that Syarh Quran functions not only as a competition category within the Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran but also as an educational space for *da'wah*, the training of young preachers, and a means of embedding Quranic values within society. However, this study also identified a shift in values, particularly as some participants prioritize achievement, prizes, and self-promotion over the goals of *da'wah*. This shift risks undermining the substance of Syarh Quran if aesthetic elements and stage performance take precedence over an understanding of the Quran's message. Therefore, the Quranic Exegesis Competition needs to be redefined as a *da'wah* medium that balances rhetorical beauty, accuracy of content, ethical delivery, and the internalization of social, religious, and cultural values. The implications of this study underscore the importance of more targeted guidance from the LPTQ, the panel of judges, mentors, and related institutions so that the Musabaqah Syarh Quran remains a space for healthy competition as well as an educational, moderate, and relevant medium of *da'wah* for the younger generation.

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