



## Islamic Dakwah Strategy in the Cambodian Camp Community: An Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities

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**Abstract.** The Muslim community from Champa in Cambodia was initially welcomed by the ruling Khmer king. The primary ethnic groups among the Champa refugees were the Chams and Malays, who later formed a distinct Muslim community in Cambodia. The process of Islamization in Cambodia differs from other countries, as it was influenced by the migration of the Champa people following the Vietnamese expansion. Although Cambodia was not a major trading hub, it was a significant rice producer before the collapse of the Champa Kingdom in the 15th century, and had long-standing trade and cultural ties with the Malays. This study aims to analyze the strategies of Islamic da'wah (propagation) among the Cham community in Cambodia and to evaluate the challenges and opportunities in spreading Islam in the region. A qualitative approach was employed, utilizing in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that the da'wah strategy in the Cham community focuses on cultural and social integration, with preachers adapting their messages to align with local customs and traditions. This approach has been effective in fostering positive relationships and improving religious understanding. However, challenges such as language barriers, limited resources, and resistance to change persist. The study emphasizes the need for innovative and context-sensitive da'wah strategies, as well as adequate training and support for preachers. In conclusion, the Islamic da'wah strategy in Cambodian Cham society requires continuous adaptation to overcome challenges and leverage opportunities.

**Keywords:** Islamic Da'wah; Cham Community; Cambodia; Islamization; Cultural Integration

### 1. Introduction

Connecting with religion is essential in human life on this earth, as it constitutes a fundamental aspect of existence (Jafar, 2023; Marlina et al., 2023; Rani, 2023). Religion significantly shapes the core of human experience (Farid, 2023; Murodi et al., 2023; Susilowati et al., 2023). Human social interaction with all its existing complexity shows

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that in every activity, humans cannot be separated from existing religious values (Nurmaidah, 2022; Suharto et al., 2022; Yunihardi, 2022). In this context, Islam acts as a religion for mankind with messages that are universal and eternal, because its teachings will continue to be relevant during the time of responsibility (*offer*) (Asiyah & Hakim, 2022; Darajat & Rahmi, 2022; Hasyim et al., 2022). The consequences of this are reflected in the Islamic legal system which offers improvement and improvement in the quality of life of its followers, both in this world and in the afterlife. Islam is a comprehensive guide to life (*kaffah*), following instructions from Allah SWT as taught by his messenger, Muhammad SAW. Islam fundamentally encourages its followers to actively spread its teachings so that messages of goodness can reach all of humanity.

Cambodia is a country located in the Southeast Asia region. Most of Cambodia's population is ethnic Khmer, and the majority of them follow Buddhism (Baker, 2023; Mollica et al., 2023; Taithe, 2016). In addition, there are small groups who follow Catholicism and Islam. Islam is thought to have entered Cambodia in the 15th century, bringing significant changes in cultural and religious aspects to the country (Miles & Crawford, 2020; yamin Ismail, 2022). The presence of Islam in Cambodia is different from its spread in other Southeast Asian countries; This religion was not introduced by Arabs, Persians, or Gujaratis. Instead, Islam was brought by the Cham people who fled the expansion of the Vietnamese Empire in the 15th century, with most of the population of the Champa Kingdom having converted to Islam since the time of China's Zong Dynasty. Islam became known in Cambodia in the 15th century through a process that was different from the arrival of Islam in other Southeast Asian regions. While in other regions, Islam was spread by traders from Arabia, Persia and Gujarat, in Cambodia, Islam was introduced by the Cham people. The Cham people were forced to leave their country due to attacks from Vietnam in the 15th century. The arrival of Islam in Cambodia has a unique history that led to the Islamization movement in the region. Over the course of its development, Cambodian society's response to Islam varied, with some giving positive responses, while others responded negatively

The existence of the Muslim community from Champa in Cambodia was received positively by the ruler at that time, namely the Khmer king. The main ethnicities of the Champa refugees were the Chams and Malays, who later became Muslim groups who settled in Cambodia. Islamization in Cambodia has different characteristics from other countries, because it was brought about by the flight of Champa due to Vietnamese expansion. However, there is a theory which states that before the Champa Kingdom fell, Cambodia had established trade relations with Arab, Persian, Gujarati and Malay traders. Although Cambodia was not a major trade route, before the collapse of the Champa Kingdom in the 15th century, the country was a major rice producer. In addition, there are indications that Cambodia has long had trade and cultural relations with ethnic Malays.

The historical partnership between the Khmer and Champa Kingdoms, which includes political and economic aspects, has deep roots and is the foundation for positive bilateral relations to this day. Before experiencing decline, the Champa Kingdom was even part of Khmer territory. This historical heritage enabled the Champa people who migrated to Cambodia to be warmly received by the local community, both elites and ordinary people. In the early days of their arrival, the Champa people were given the freedom to choose where to live and earn a living in Cambodia.

In fact, they also have the opportunity to have a career in government. The conversion of the king of Cambodia to Islam in the 17th century did not necessarily change the religious composition of the country significantly. However, high religious tolerance



allows Muslims to live side by side in harmony with the majority community. Unfortunately, this harmony was disturbed during the reign of the Khmer Rouge. However, after this authoritarian regime collapsed, Muslims in Cambodia were again able to practice their worship and religious life freely. Despite being a minority, Islam continues to grow in Cambodia, demonstrating the country's high spirit of tolerance and diversity.

The Cham people are descendants of people who fled from the kingdom of Campa, which was once the oldest Malay kingdom. The location of this kingdom is now in the middle of Vietnam. They are spread across the country in varied communities, both small and large. Most of them live in the eastern part of Cambodia, but since the 1980s, they have also established small settlements that can be found in various locations in Cambodia. Apart from that, this community also exists in Vietnam and Laos. Hindu-Buddhist culture had a major influence on Cham society, which is reflected in their religion and art. Around the 9th century, Islamic influence began to penetrate Cham. The subsequent conversion process to Islam was strengthened by their interactions with the Malay community from the Malay Archipelago who had previously converted to Islam. The presence of Malays, known as Chvea among the Khmer and Jva among the Cham, in Cambodia is primarily due to economic activities and religious missions.

The majority of Cham people in Cambodia work as farmers, livestock breeders, fishermen and traders. Some of them also have careers as government employees and administrators at various levels, from the village level known as *chumtup*, *mekhum*, *mesrok*, and *chauvay srok*, up to the highest positions such as Provincial Governor. Apart from that, there are also those who are active in the military or political fields, including as ministers. The development of Islam in Cambodia not only includes religious, economic and political aspects, but is also very influential in the field of education. Education, especially Islamic education, is very important to Cham society. They believe that Islamic da'wah and education are important elements that can help them get out of poverty and achieve prosperity. Their views regarding education and preaching for children can vary from one individual to another. This variation is related to the values and norms in society related to family relationships, religion, and the economic activities they undertake. Apart from that, religious factors and political conditions in the past also contribute to shaping parents' attitudes towards their children's education.

Researchers analyze that the situation of Islamic da'wah in minority Muslim communities is very different from that in Muslim-majority areas such as Indonesia. It is clear that people in minority Muslim communities still need attention in the advancement of their civilization through the propagation of Islam. This is also an important lesson for Muslim academics, higher education institutions, and Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Persis, Tablighi Jama'ah, MTA, Salafis, and others to further expand their da'wah studies. They need to think about international da'wah strategies in areas that have not been touched by Islamic da'wah or where Muslims are still a minority. Several organizations mentioned have different approaches in spreading and developing Islamic da'wah in minority areas, both in Indonesia and in the world. For example, the community organization Nahdlatul Ulama combines a cultural approach with Islamic education to attract public attention, especially in Islamic study activities.

Researchers are interested in studying Islamic da'wah strategies in Cambodia, especially at the Musa Asiah Integrated Primary School (SERPAMA) in Svay Khleang, Cambodia. In this area, there are 500 heads of families who have converted to Islam and are concentrated in the Svay Khleang area. Researchers want to ensure the effectiveness



of the Islamic da'wah process in the Svay Khleang area as well as the important contribution of the Musa Asiah Foundation to the development of da'wah through educational institutions managed by SERPAMA, because a lot has been done by SEPAMA administrators and teachers for the development of da'wah, for example facilitating learning of the Koran to the surrounding community and learn monotheism fiqh and others. What is interesting that the author wants to examine is that there are a lot of unique things that occur in the Muslim community around Svay Khleang, such as when Muslims dress when praying, everyone wears a jubah and doesn't wear any clothes, women are not seen praying in the mosque because women should be Praying at home wearing Muslim clothing is quite a tradition which is very mandatory, especially regarding Islamic education which may have quite a lot of limitations. Therefore, with initial observations, the researcher wants to raise the research theme of Islamic da'wah in the Cambodian community, analyzing opportunities and challenges.

## 2. Methods

The research method employed in this study is qualitative, aiming to provide an in-depth explanation and understanding of the Islamic da'wah strategy within the Cham community in Cambodia. Qualitative research is particularly suited for this type of investigation, as it allows for an exploration of the cultural, religious, and social dynamics that shape the da'wah process in this unique context (Andre et al., 2020; Ummah, 2020; Yahya et al., 2020). The focus of qualitative research is not on quantifying data but on uncovering the deeper meanings and motivations behind the observed phenomena (Ritonga, 2019; Safi'i, 2019; Yuwafik & Muhid, 2020). This approach is ideal for examining the challenges and opportunities faced by the Cham community in propagating Islam, as it prioritizes depth and context over generalization. In this study, qualitative methods allow for a detailed exploration of how Islamic da'wah is practiced and adapted to the local Cambodian context, particularly within the Cham community. By employing techniques such as in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of the strategies used by preachers and the community's responses to these efforts. In-depth interviews, for instance, enable participants to share their personal experiences and insights regarding the effectiveness of the da'wah strategies. Through these interviews, the study captures the voices of key stakeholders, including local religious leaders and community members, providing a rich and nuanced view of the da'wah process.

Field observations complement the interviews by allowing the researcher to witness firsthand the application of da'wah strategies in daily life. Observing religious practices, community events, and interactions within the Cham community provides critical insights into how Islamic teachings are conveyed and integrated into the local culture. This method is especially useful in a setting like Cambodia, where cultural and historical factors play a significant role in shaping religious practice. By being immersed in the community, the researcher gains a deeper understanding of the subtle cultural nuances that influence the reception of Islamic teachings. Document analysis is another key method in this research, helping to contextualize the historical and social background of the Cham community's Islamic practices. Analyzing religious texts, historical records, and community publications provides a broader understanding of how Islamic da'wah has evolved in Cambodia, particularly in response to external influences such as trade



relations with Arab, Persian, and Malay traders. This method also helps to validate the findings from interviews and observations, ensuring that the study is grounded in both contemporary and historical contexts.

By prioritizing the observation of phenomena and interpreting the meanings behind them, the qualitative method is well-suited for investigating the challenges and opportunities of Islamic da'wah in the Cham community. This method allows for a reflective and interpretative analysis of the strategies used to propagate Islam, considering not just the methods employed but also why they are chosen, how they resonate with the local culture, and what barriers exist. For instance, the study explores how preachers adapt their messages to align with local customs, as well as the language barriers and resistance to change that complicate the da'wah process.

Ultimately, the qualitative approach used in this research provides a comprehensive and contextualized understanding of Islamic da'wah strategies in the Cham community. By focusing on the lived experiences of community members, the study offers a deeper insight into how Islamic teachings are transmitted, the cultural adaptations required, and the ongoing challenges faced by preachers. This method ensures that the findings are rich in detail and grounded in the local context, providing valuable recommendations for more innovative and culturally sensitive da'wah strategies in the future.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Religious life of the Camp Cambodian people

Most Muslims in Cambodia come from the Cam ethnicity. Their livelihoods are mainly agriculture, plantations and fishing. However, currently there are those who are starting to operate in the business and transportation sectors. During Pol Pot's reign, there was mass murder of Muslims. Almost all Campa/Cambodian Muslim religious figures and intellectuals were murdered, including those who were considered activists. The rest were distributed to various areas under strict supervision, similar to military camps. They were prohibited from praying, mosques were destroyed, and other places of worship also suffered the same fate. The remaining mosque was turned into a pigsty, and the surviving Muslims were forced to eat pork and given porridge with more gravy (Farina, 2007). They were also subjected to forced labor, and anyone deemed to resist or accused of resistance was killed. According to the deputy mufti's statement, the number of Muslims was initially around one million, but after the incident there were only around two hundred thousand remaining. According to official government records, nearly three million Cambodians died during Pol Pot's regime. The atrocities committed by Pol Pot were immortalized in the form of monuments as part of humanity's dark history, known as one of the largest and most horrific genocides, namely the Killing Fields. There are around 200 massacre sites, and some large monuments are erected, such as in the city of Phnom Penh, and several smaller ones in the city of Siem Reap and other locations.

The Muslim community in Cambodia is known to be dynamic, persistent and very committed to maintaining their faith in Islam. This can be seen from their way of life in the Chrang Chomres area, which they call the Muslim area KM 7, 8 and 9. There, there are many mosques and madrasas. Women, including girls, still wear Muslim clothing. Currently, there are 417 Muslim residential villages in Cambodia, with an average of three to seven Islamic schools in each village using the Islamic boarding school model. The spread of Islamic communities throughout Cambodia's districts and provinces is closely related to the exile carried out by Pol Pot during his reign as part of his genocide program.



Some of them remained in exile, while a small number returned to their home villages. In these places they continue to maintain their Islamic traditions to this day. In general, the Cham Muslim community adheres to the Shafi'i school of thought.

### 3.2. *Da'wah efforts carried out by the Cambodian camp community*

The number of Muslim Khmer villages has increased especially since the 1980s due to local migration. The difficulties of living in their hometowns after the polpot era that was defeated with the help of Vietnam in 1979 forced a number of Muslim Khmer people to move away from their original villages. with relatives or friends from the same village to open Tanah Baru and cultivate fruits such as nuts, guava, coffee, black pepper or rubber trees and raise cattle and others. The reason they moved to a new place is because their land prices soared around the national capital due to the very rapid development of the country. thus They sell their expensive land and buy land for gardening and paddy fields in new areas (Z, 2020). As usual, they started their business by setting up a prayer room in the house of a member who was wiser in Islamic teachings. The surau prayer room and this mosque are the center of their da'wah and religious activities, such as congregational prayers, teaching children to read and memorize the Koran and so on. This data obtained from Mukti officials has shown that the total number of places of worship in the kingdom is more than 800. Islamic Khmer people. Finally, the country of Cambodia is the homeland of the Islamic Khmer people, together with the Buddhist people, they have struggled to build and maintain the kingdom for a long time. Meanwhile, this article covers several areas of life of the Islamic Hammer people and also the camp people in the Hainan region of Malaysia (Rasyid, 2021).

### 3.3. *Da'wah and development of Islam in Cambodia*

Da'wah, as a key element and role model in society, must make important contributions and continue to innovate in spreading useful knowledge to overcome various problems of the people. When preachers go into society to develop their da'wah, they need to have competence and good morals. This is important so that their words and actions can be well received by the *mad'u*. Therefore, an in-depth understanding of the guidelines and development of da'wah is very important. Armed with this knowledge, preachers will be successful in carrying out their preaching duties. Therefore, discussion regarding preaching guidelines and the preacher's code of ethics is very necessary. Cambodia is a predominantly Theravada Buddhist country, with around 95% of the population following that religion. Islam in Cambodia is a minority religion adhered to by around 2-3% of the population, most of whom are ethnic Chams and Malays. Cham Muslims have a long history in Cambodia, dating back to the 8th century when Islam was first introduced through trade. In Cambodia, Islamic da'wah is managed by various local and international organizations. Although there are no large, nationally organized missionary institutions as in some other Muslim countries, the Cham Muslim community has a network of mosques, madrassas, and religious organizations that function as centers of missionary activity. Mosques are the main centers for worship, education and social activities for Muslims. Da'wah in Cambodia is usually carried out through traditional approaches, such as religious teaching in mosques and madrasas, Friday sermons, and teaching the Koran to children. Apart from that, da'wah is also carried out through social and humanitarian activities, such as distribution of zakat, assistance to the poor, and education of orphans.



With technological developments, several Muslim communities have begun to utilize social media to spread Islamic messages and teach religious values. However, this approach is still limited due to limited access and knowledge of technology among Muslim communities. The Muslim community in Cambodia faces various challenges in preaching. One of the main challenges is that Muslim minorities often experience marginalization in Buddhist-majority societies. Discrimination and negative stereotypes against Muslims also become obstacles in spreading Islamic teachings. In addition, limited resources, such as a lack of trained clerics and Islamic education facilities, also hinder the development of more effective da'wah. Many Muslim communities in rural areas experience difficulties in accessing quality religious education and adequate infrastructure.

The Cham people have a rich and unique culture and traditions. In Islamic da'wah, a cultural approach is very important to ensure that the da'wah message is well received by society. This strategy involves a deep understanding of Cham cultural traditions and values, so that da'wah can be delivered in a way that respects and preserves their cultural identity. A concrete example of this approach is integrating Islamic teachings with local traditions, such as using the Cham language in sermons and religious teachings, as well as involving traditional figures in religious activities. Religious education is one of the main pillars in the missionary strategy among the Cham people. Islamic education is delivered through madrasas, religious schools, and recitations in mosques. The aim is to provide a deep understanding of Islamic teachings to the young generation of Chams (Yamin Ismail, 2022).

Some of the steps taken include improving the quality of religious teachers, providing teaching materials that are appropriate to the Cham cultural context, and developing educational programs that include religious knowledge and life skills. As a minority in a predominantly Buddhist country, it is important for Cham Muslims to maintain good relations with other religious communities (Farid, 2023). Islamic da'wah is carried out through interfaith dialogue and cooperation in social activities, such as humanitarian aid, health and education. This strategy not only strengthens relations between Cham Muslims and other communities, but also creates a positive image of Islam and reduces the potential for interfaith conflict. Sharia-based economic development is a da'wah strategy that aims to economically empower the Cham community while adhering to Islamic principles. This includes the formation of sharia cooperatives, development of small and medium enterprises (UKM), as well as the provision of microfinance in accordance with Islamic law. By strengthening the economy of Muslim communities, they can be more independent and able to support missionary activities and other social needs.

Religious figures and clerics have a central role in proselytizing among Cham society. They are figures respected and followed by society. Therefore, strengthening the capacity of ulama through education and training is key in the da'wah strategy. In addition, empowering religious leaders to become agents of social change and advocates for the rights of the Cham community is also part of this strategy. In this way, ulama not only play a role in religious aspects, but also in the social and economic development of the community.

#### *3.4. Da'wah Strategy for the Cambodian Muslim Community Camp Opportunities and Challenges*

There are several opportunities and challenges for Islamic da'wah in the Cambodian community. Firstly, the Cham community has a long history as Muslims. They have strong Islamic culture and traditions, which can be used as a basis for da'wah. Second, the Cham



Muslim community has high solidarity, which can be used to organize da'wah programs together. Third, many of the Cham people have a strong desire to learn and explore Islam, so developing Islamic education programs can be an effective da'wah strategy. Third, the Cham people have historical and cultural relations with other Islamic countries, especially in Southeast Asia, which can provide support in terms of resources and da'wah networks. Fourth, with the development of technology, opportunities to use digital media in da'wah are getting bigger, enabling wider and more effective dissemination of da'wah. The challenges of the Cambodian Muslim community are: First, external pressure. Both Cham communities face political and social pressure from the non-Muslim majority in Cambodia, which can hinder their missionary activities. Third Level of Poverty: Many Cham communities live in difficult economic conditions, which limits their ability to support and participate in missionary activities. Fourth, Lack of Resources: Limited resources, both in terms of funds, teaching staff and infrastructure, are a big challenge in implementing da'wah programs. Fifth, Cultural Assimilation: There are concerns that Cham Islamic culture and traditions could be eroded by majority culture or the influence of globalization, which could reduce the effectiveness of da'wah. Sixth Internal Fragmentation: Despite solidarity, there are sometimes differences of views and interpretations within the Cham community which can lead to fragmentation and weaken da'wah efforts (Musa, 2022).

The integration of Islamic education programs with economic skills training serves as a crucial strategy for improving the living standards of the Cham community in Cambodia. By combining religious education with practical economic skills, such as entrepreneurship or vocational training, da'wah efforts can address not only the spiritual needs of the community but also the economic challenges they face. This approach strengthens the community by fostering self-reliance and reducing poverty, which in turn creates a more stable and supportive environment for Islamic propagation. Empowering individuals economically can enhance their participation in da'wah activities and increase the overall receptiveness to Islamic teachings. Collaboration with international Islamic organizations is another vital element in strengthening da'wah strategies. By partnering with global institutions, local da'wah efforts can access much-needed resources, such as financial support, educational materials, and training programs for preachers. These collaborations also help in establishing and expanding networks that connect the Cham community with broader Islamic movements, thus creating a stronger and more coordinated approach to da'wah. International support can help overcome limitations in local infrastructure and provide the community with the tools and knowledge necessary to sustain their religious and cultural identity amidst external pressures.

The use of social media, mobile applications, and other digital platforms represents a modern and innovative approach to spreading da'wah messages, particularly to the younger generation of Chams. Given the widespread use of smartphones and the internet among youth, digital tools offer a dynamic and far-reaching medium for religious education and engagement. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube can be utilized to share educational content, sermons, and religious discussions, making Islamic teachings more accessible and engaging for the younger audience. This strategy helps bridge the gap between traditional da'wah methods and the needs of a generation deeply influenced by digital communication and technology. Interfaith dialogue also plays a crucial role in the da'wah strategy within the Cambodian Cham community. Strengthening relationships with non-Muslim communities through open





dialogue fosters mutual understanding and tolerance, creating a conducive environment for peaceful co-existence and religious propagation. By engaging in meaningful conversations about shared values and addressing misconceptions about Islam, the Cham community can reduce social tensions and build alliances with other groups. This approach ensures that da'wah efforts are seen as inclusive and respectful of the diverse religious landscape in Cambodia, which helps protect the community from potential conflicts and misunderstandings.

This research highlights the importance of understanding and leveraging the unique social and cultural context of the Cham community in Cambodia. Local traditions, historical experiences, and socio-economic conditions play a significant role in shaping how Islamic da'wah is practiced and received. By tailoring da'wah strategies to these specific conditions, practitioners can ensure that their efforts resonate more deeply with the community and are more likely to succeed. The research reveals that culturally sensitive approaches, which respect the Cham people's heritage, are critical for building trust and fostering long-term engagement in religious activities. The multidimensional approach adopted in this research integrates educational, economic, social, and political aspects to provide a comprehensive analysis of da'wah strategies. This broader perspective allows for a more holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by the Cham community. Rather than focusing solely on religious instruction, the study considers how external factors such as economic empowerment, social cohesion, and political dynamics influence the effectiveness of da'wah. This approach demonstrates that successful da'wah is not limited to religious messaging alone but is intertwined with the overall well-being and development of the community.

Furthermore, this research introduces innovative concepts, particularly in the use of digital technology and social media within the local context. The study explores how digital platforms can be harnessed to address the challenges of modernization, such as the growing disconnect between traditional religious practices and the younger generation's lifestyle. By incorporating modern communication tools, da'wah strategies can remain relevant and impactful, ensuring that Islamic teachings continue to reach and engage all segments of the community, especially the youth. Community participation is another key element examined in this research. The active involvement of the Cham community in designing and implementing da'wah strategies is crucial for overcoming challenges and maximizing opportunities. Local community members, including religious leaders and laypersons, play an essential role in shaping how da'wah is practiced and received. Their participation ensures that da'wah efforts are not only top-down initiatives but are rooted in the community's needs and aspirations, making the strategies more effective and sustainable in the long term.

The research also explores the link between da'wah strategies and economic empowerment. It investigates how religious propagation can be integrated with programs aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of the Cham community. By aligning da'wah with initiatives that promote economic self-sufficiency, such as microfinance, small business development, and vocational training, religious efforts can simultaneously address spiritual and material needs. This integrated approach enhances the overall impact of da'wah, as improved living conditions can foster a more receptive attitude toward religious teachings. Based on the research findings, practical and strategic recommendations are provided for da'wah practitioners, policymakers, and Islamic



organizations. These recommendations focus on enhancing the effectiveness of da'wah efforts by promoting cultural sensitivity, leveraging digital technology, fostering economic empowerment, and encouraging community participation. By adopting these strategies, da'wah in the Cambodian Cham community can become more effective, sustainable, and responsive to the challenges of the modern world.

#### 4. Conclusion

This research highlights the complex dynamics involved in the strategy of Islamic da'wah among the Cham community in Cambodia. A key finding is that da'wah strategies emphasizing cultural and social adaptation have proven to be highly effective. By aligning Islamic teachings with local values and customs, preachers are able to build positive relationships within the community. This approach not only increases the acceptance of Islam but also deepens the community's understanding of the religion. It demonstrates that sensitivity to local cultural practices can significantly enhance the effectiveness of da'wah efforts. The study also identifies several opportunities that could be leveraged to further strengthen Islamic da'wah. Collaboration with local community leaders is one such opportunity, as these figures hold significant influence and can help bridge the gap between religious teachings and local customs. Additionally, the use of local media for disseminating religious information provides a way to reach a wider audience, particularly in a society where traditional media outlets may have strong ties to the community. Educational programs also present a valuable opportunity to increase religious literacy, offering a structured platform to teach Islamic principles in a way that resonates with the community's existing knowledge and practices.

However, the research also underscores several challenges that hinder the effectiveness of da'wah in the Cham community. Language barriers present a significant obstacle, as differences in language can complicate communication and limit the reach of Islamic teachings. Additionally, the limited availability of resources makes it difficult for preachers to maintain sustained engagement with the community. Resistance to change from certain members of the community further complicates the situation, as some may be hesitant to embrace new religious practices or reinterpretations of their existing beliefs. To address these challenges and capitalize on the opportunities, the research recommends that da'wah strategies continue to be adapted to the local context. This includes providing more comprehensive training for preachers to better equip them with the skills needed to communicate effectively in the community. Developing preaching materials that are relevant to the local conditions, such as those that reflect cultural norms and values, is also crucial. Furthermore, increasing direct engagement with local communities can help overcome resistance and create a stronger, more receptive environment for the spread of Islamic teachings.

In conclusion, the success of Islamic da'wah strategies in the Cambodian Cham society is closely tied to their ability to adapt to the social and cultural dynamics of the region. A more inclusive approach that responds to the specific needs of local communities will not only enhance the effectiveness of religious outreach but also help strengthen the presence of Islam in the region. By understanding and respecting the local context, da'wah practitioners can build stronger, more lasting connections within the community.



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