

# THE DA'WAH MOVEMENT OF USTADZ FADZLAN GARAMATAN: MUSLIM FIGURE IN ESTABLISHING ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION AT NUU WAAR (PAPUA)

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## **Abstract**

*This article explores the development and da'wah movement carried out by Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan aimed at constructing an Islamic civilization within the Nuu Waar Papuan community. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative method with a cultural da'wah approach, the study collected primary data through observations of Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan's da'wah activities and interviews with him in the everyday lives of the Nuu Waar people of Papua. The findings reveal that Ustadz Fadzlan, acting as a religious leader, has the ability to preach da'wah messages in the Papuan society, steering them towards productive change (taghyîr). This change stems from the people's self-awareness and desire to improve their quality of life. The civilization being built encompasses both physical welfare (material) and non-physical happiness (intellectual, mental, moral, and spiritual). Effective da'wah results in beneficial changes, ultimately leading to the creation of good ethics (akhlâq karimah).*

**Keywords:** *Da'wah Movement, Islamic Civilization, Nuu Waar*

### **Abstrak**

Artikel ini mengkaji pengembangan dan gerakan dakwah yang dilakukan oleh Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan dalam membangun peradaban Islam, dengan tujuan untuk mendeskripsikan dan menganalisis metode serta kegiatan dakwah pada masyarakat Nuu Waar Papua. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif, dengan pendekatan dakwah kultural, yang memanfaatkan data primer berupa pengamatan kegiatan dakwah Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan pada kehidupan sehari-hari masyarakat Nuu Waar Papua. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan Ustadz Fadzlan berperan sebagai opinion leader memiliki kemampuan pesan dakwah di masyarakat Papua menuju perubahan (*taghyîr*) yang produktif. Perubahan ini muncul atas keinginan dari masyarakatnya sadar akan taraf meningkatkan kualitas kehidupan yang lebih baik. Proses peradaban yang dibangun ialah kesejahteraan fisik (materi) dan terciptanya kebahagiaan non fisik (intelektual, mental, moral, dan spiritual). Dakwah yang baik akan memberikan perubahan yang baik, sehingga puncaknya tercipta etika yang baik (*akhlâq karimah*).

**Kata Kunci:** Gerakan Dakwah, Peradaban Islam, Nuu Waar

## **INTRODUCTION**

Cultural preaching has been employed by missionaries since the initial introduction of Islam in the archipelago, including figures like Walisongo, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, and KH. Ahmad Dahlan. They propagated Islamic teachings peacefully, integrating them with the local community culture. Their approach included considerate interaction with society, providing encouragement and direction, gradually altering and eliminating customs that contradicted Islam, and refraining from harsh methods in spreading Islam. Cultural *da'wah* highlights that true *da'wah* leads people to recognize universal goodness, transcending space and time.<sup>1</sup>

Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan, born in Patipi, Fakfak, West Papua, on May 17, 1967, is a preacher who communicates his

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<sup>1</sup> Ashadi Cahyadi, "Pengembangan Dakwah Melalui Gerakan Kebudayaan Oleh Ashadi Cahyadi," *Sya'ar* 18, no. 2 (2018): 75, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.29300/syr.v18i2.1682>.

religious messages to the people of Papua through cultural method. As echoed by James W Craey, communication and culture are intertwined, with da'wah serving as a cultural approach to social communication in introducing Islam to society.<sup>2</sup> In a society marked by diverse cultures and religions, *da'wah* should be grounded in an awareness of this diversity.<sup>3</sup> He adopted a cultural *da'wah* by seeking to understand human potential and tendencies as cultural beings within the framework of Islamic teachings that embody the message of *rahmatan lil' âlamin*.<sup>4</sup> Thus, cultural *da'wah* is perceived as a social strategy to foster Islamic life through an approach to local and community culture, and established values.

Ustadz Fadzlan, known as Ustadz Sabun (Soap), introduced the people of Papua to clean bathing (*thâharah*) practices, utilizing soap and water as a *da'wah* message. This approach resulted in the conversion of 220 tribes in Papua to Islam, with 3712 people proclaiming the two sentences of the shahada.<sup>5</sup> This preaching success aligned with the rhetorical model introduced by Aristotle (340-335 BC), which emphasizes the *speaker*, the *message*, and the *audience*, with the aim of changing attitudes and behaviors.<sup>6</sup>

In the face of social reality, it is possible that the majority of Papuan ethnic groups still adhere to local religions or beliefs, despite some exposure to new religious terms. They still

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<sup>2</sup> James W Carey, *Communication As Culture, Revised Edition: Essays on Media and Society* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 167.

<sup>3</sup> Muliadi Muliadi and A. Zamakhsyari Baharuddin, "Dakwah Inklusif Dalam Kerangka Maqâsid Al-Sharî'Ah: Studi Kasus Pola Interaksi Lintas Agama Pada Masyarakat Kalukku," *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah* 31, no. 2 (2021): 199, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jdr.v31i2.11114>.

<sup>4</sup> Amrullah Husein, "Dakwah Kultural Muhammadiyah Terhadap Kaum Awam," *Ath Thariq Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 1, no. 1 (2017): 91, [https://doi.org/10.32332/ath\\_thariq.v1i1.831](https://doi.org/10.32332/ath_thariq.v1i1.831).

<sup>5</sup> Muhamad Afdoli Ramadoni, Edi Amin, WG Pramita Ratnasari, "Metode Dakwah Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan Pada Masyarakat Nuu Waar (Papua)," *Alamtara: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam* 6, no. 1 (2022): 27-44, <https://doi.org/10.58518/alamtara.v6i1.908>.

<sup>6</sup> Deddy Mulyana, *Ilmu Komunikasi Suatu Pengantar* (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2017), 45.

preserved traditional practices like wearing Koteka, which presents a significant challenge for Islamic preaching aiming to elevate human dignity. In this era of rapid technological advancement and globalization, communication has evolved significantly, with social media playing a crucial role. Preaching in Papua requires a gradual process to invite people to Islam, not through force or the promise of material lifestyle changes, but by exemplifying the excellent and noble lifestyle taught by Islam.

*Da'wah* today focuses on more actual issues beyond the dialogue of halal and haram, good and bad. It is a means to elevate human dignity, improve economic welfare, advance science, technology, information, and communication, and promote mental health, peace, and spirituality. Essentially, *da'wah* is a process of social transformation, providing alternatives and solutions for people to overcome their life challenges.<sup>7</sup> The objective of *da'wah* is to effect change in individuals, groups, or society as the object of *da'wah*.<sup>8</sup>

The *da'wah* movement led by Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan has made significant strides in building an Islamic civilization, particularly in the land of Nuwua. Over a span of 38 years, beginning in 1984, Ustadz Fadzlan's preaching has led to many residents of Nuwua converting to Islam. His approach was not merely to introduce a new religion, but to observe and understand the community's living conditions and challenges. Ustadz Fadzlan employed the concept of humanity, focusing on cleanliness and personal hygiene (*thâharah*) as an introduction to Islam. This resonated with the community, attracting them towards Islam, which highly values cleanliness as part of the faith.

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<sup>7</sup> Moh Rivaldi Abdul, "Nilai Tradisi Mandi Puasa Secara Massal Dalam Masyarakat Muslim Bolaang Mongondow the Monginbalu Konbunan : History and Value of Fasting Bath Tradition En Masse in Muslim," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 19, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v19i1.892>.

<sup>8</sup> Isabelle Lecomte, "The Integration of Dakwah in Jourenalisme," *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* 4, no. 01 (2014): 1–19, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15642/jki.2015.5.1.185-203>.

Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan, motivated by the conditions he witnessed among the tribes in Papua, embarked on a mission to introduce them to the broader world, the technological advancements, and the concept of personal hygiene. His journey has been marked with challenges, including navigating through rugged terrains, dealing with security threats, and overcoming attacks from tribes in the interior of Papua. Despite these obstacles, his persistence and hard work have had a profound impact, helping indigenous people in the Eastern Islands of Indonesia to learn about Islam and to mitigate negative societal habits.

This study explores Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan's approach, which emphasizes cultural values, avoiding harsh methods, and using the *al-hikmah* method. His *da'wah* is perceived as a friendly approach that pays great attention to various aspects of life, including health, clothing, cleanliness, etc.

This study views *da'wah* as a medium for introducing religious texts and instilling values in those who perceive the benefits (*in nafa'ati adz-dzikra*). Beyond strengthening people's cognition, a preacher also demonstrates affection and effective communication. Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan's role was to openly (outward-looking) preach to the people. The study concentrates on the development of cultural *da'wah* by Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan in Papua and seeks to understand why the *da'wah* approach through culture (local wisdom) is effective for the Papuan people.

Reviving the method of *da'wah* through culture, as exemplified by Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan's preaching in Papua, could serve as a model for *da'wah* in the Islamic world, particularly in Indonesia. This study could potentially contribute to the development of *da'wah* in rural communities and provide valuable insights for *da'i* in planning *da'wah* policies for Islamic *da'wah* development.

In preparing this research, the author reviewed previous studies such as Aipon Asso's "Culturally Sensitive *Da'wah*: A

Portrait of Islam in the Central Mountains of Papua,”<sup>9</sup> "Da'wah through religious guidance to inland Muslim communities by non-PNS Islamic religious counselors in the Tebas District, Sambas,”<sup>10</sup> and "Da'wah to Remote Area Communities, the Bi al-Hal Da'wah Method as an Effort to Improve the Standard of Life in Mad'u." These studies have not yet addressed the Da'wah Movement of Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan in building Islamic civilization in Nuu Waar.

This research employs the Constructivism paradigm, which posits that reality exists in the form of various mental constructions based on social experience, locality, and specificity, and depends on the individual constructing it.<sup>11</sup> The study seeks to provide detailed interpretations of daily life settings. The researcher uses a religious anthropology approach within the social and cultural context of Papua to explore the cultural system that underlies the process of Islamic propagation in Papua. This qualitative research uses a case study<sup>12</sup> to delve into Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan's preaching movement in Nuu Waar (Papua). The research location is the Al-Fatih Kaaffah Nusantara Foundation, Nuu Waar Islamic Boarding School, where Ustadz Fadzlan resides and trains students from the Papua region and its surroundings.

The author used the Interreligious and Cultural Communication Theory proposed by A. Bakti (2004).<sup>13</sup> The theory discus-

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<sup>9</sup> Abu Muslim, "Dakwah Peka Kultur Ala Aipon Asso: Potret Keberislanan Pegunungan Tengah Papua," *Harmoni* 13, no. 3 (2014): 7–21, <https://jurnalharmoni.kemenag.go.id/index.php/harmoni/article/view/109>.

<sup>10</sup> Harles Anwar et al., "DAKWAH MELALUI PEMBINAAN KEAGAMAAN TERHADAP MASYARAKAT MUSLIM PEDALAMAN OLEH PENYULUH AGAMA ISLAM NON PNS KECAMATAN TEBAS, SAMBAS," *Jurnal Bimbingan Penyuluhan Islam* 1, no. 1 (2019): 23–36, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32332/jbpi.v1i01.1470>.

<sup>11</sup> Agus Salim, *Teori Dan Paradigma Penelitian Sosial* (Yogyakarta: PT. Tiara Wacana Yogya, 2001), 67.

<sup>12</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan Kombinasi* (Bandung: CV. Alfabeta, 2016), 67.

<sup>13</sup> Andi Faisal Bakti, *Communication And Family Planning In Islam In Indonesia : South Sulawesi Muslim Perceptions of a Global Development Program* (Jakarta: INIS, 2004), 56.

ses Deracinement, a thought process involving values, perceptions, customs, habits, creations, beliefs, thought patterns, and feelings that are uprooted from their roots, leaving behind the past to look forward to a better and more certain future. The converse of this theory is *Je me souviens*, which tends to recall its past that must be maintained negatively and more directly. In Islam, this perspective is known as *al-Hadharah*, a collection of forms of progress in a given society, encompassing material, scientific, artistic, literary, or social progress.<sup>14</sup> This theory explains various types of culture with several provisions and groupings, divided into right-group theory (communication) and left-group theory (culture).

The right-group theory of intercultural communication describes a type of culture that is flexible, prioritizing contemporary needs over being constrained by past traditions or antiquated relics, which may not necessarily be ideal in the present context. The communication methods employed by past preachers in disseminating Islam, which utilized various media, including art, culture, and the influence of Islamic kingdoms, can provide valuable insights.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, the left-group theory describes a culture that is rather rigid; this type of culture is steeped in tradition and tends to resist changes or new ideas. These cultures adhere strongly to established norms, customs, and beliefs, often viewing new concepts with skepticism. This theory suggests that some cultures maintain a strong attachment to their historical roots, resisting modern influences and maintaining their traditional ways of life. Both of these theories offer valuable perspectives on the cultural dynamics that can influence the approach and effectiveness of da'wah. Understanding these cultural nuances can aid in refining *da'wah* strategies to resonate better with different cultural contexts.

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<sup>14</sup> Qosim Nurshela Dzulhadi, "Islam Sebagai Agama Dan Peradaban," *Tsaqafah* 11, no. 1 (2015): 3, <https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v11i1.258>.

<sup>15</sup> Zakaria Efendi, "Sejarah Dakwah Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman Al-Qadri: Islamisasi Di Pontianak," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 19, no. 2 (2021): 347–88, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v19i2.914>.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Da'wah of Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan to the Nuu Waar Community (Papua)**

Papua, the birthplace of Ustadz Fadzlan and a land he warmly refers to as Nuu Waar due to its noble philosophical connotations (Nuu meaning 'light' and Waar meaning 'keeper of secrets'), serves as the backdrop for his preaching journey. Nuu Waar aspires to cultivate a civilization founded on enlightenment, education, employment, independence, care, and humanization.<sup>16</sup> Ustadz Fadzlan commenced his preaching mission in the Baliem Valley, Wamena, within the Jayawijaya Mountains of Papua, a region elevated approximately 1600 meters above sea level, and inhabited by the Hubula Tribe. The Baliem Valley encompasses numerous villages and one small town, Wamena, and is a linguistic hub where 240 local languages have developed amongst the existing ethnic groups.

As of June 2021, the region of Papua had a population of 4.31 million people.<sup>17</sup> The religious demographics revealed that 69.54% (2.99 million) were Protestant, 15.71% (676.71 thousand) were Catholic, 14.57% (627.78 thousand) were Muslim, and the remaining populace adhered to Hinduism (0.07%, 3.14 thousand), Buddhism (0.05%, 2.08 thousand), Confucianism (0.00%, 80 individuals), and other religious beliefs (0.07%, 2.86 thousand). From these statistics, it's evident that native Papuans are generally associated with Protestant and Catholic Christianity. The Islamization in Papua transpired around the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries through trade, cultural, and political exchanges with Islamic kingdoms in North Maluku, namely Ternate, Tidore, Bacan, and Jailolo.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Abdul, "Nilai Tradisi Mandi Puasa Secara Massal Dalam Masyarakat Muslim Bolaang Mongondow the Monginbalu Konbulan: History and Value of Fasting Bath Tradition En Masse in Muslim."

<sup>17</sup> Kementerian Agama Provinsi Papua, "Jumlah Penduduk Menurut Kabupaten Kota Dan Agama Yang Dianut Di Provinsi Papua" (Papua: Badan Pusat Statistik Papua, 2020).

<sup>18</sup> Ismail Suardi Wekke, "Islam Di Papua Barat: Tradisi Dan Keberagaman," *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 14, no. 2 (2013): 117, <https://doi.org/10.18860/ua.v14i2.2652>.



Ustadz Fadzlan initiated his preaching of Islam by engaging in direct dialogues with the people of Nuw Waar (Papua), particularly the tribal chiefs. His method of invitation relied on the power of preaching stemming from intentions, morals, and respectful dialogues with priests and tribal chiefs. The goal of this communication was to encourage the participation of the communicant (*mad'ū*) in the ideas or messages relayed, thereby triggering the desired alterations in attitudes and behaviors in accordance with the teachings of Al-Qur'an and hadith, the sources of Islamic teachings.<sup>19</sup> Ustadz Fadzlan views da'wah not merely as an objective, but also as a national dedication. He argues that the state's presence is paramount for providing necessary facilities and building national strength, but also raises the question of the citizens' role in fostering a new human civilization.<sup>20</sup>

Ustadz Fadzlan is recognized as a preacher who prioritizes and instills honesty in his preaching demeanor. Islam, in his view, is a religion that blesses all of nature and perfects preceding religions, thereby etching a memorable impression. In the early stages of Ustadz Fadzlan's da'wah activities, he adopted a primary strategy of seeking dialogue opportunities with tribal chiefs and religious leaders in Papua. This approach was deemed effective for da'wah as the community would instinctively follow the lead of respected figures. After successfully influencing societal figures, Ustadz Fadzlan introduced Islamic thoughts on monotheism and provided useful suggestions for enhancing the lives of the people in Nuw Waar (Papua).

Throughout the process, Ustadz Fadzlan delivered his preaching message to the Papuan people with wisdom and prudence via the *bi-al hikmah* da'wah method, which emphasizes the

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<sup>19</sup> Ahmad Atabik, "KONSEP KOMUNIKASI DAKWAH PERSUA-SIF DALAM PERSPEKTIF AL-QURAN," *AT-TABSYIR: Jurnal Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam* 2, no. n (2015): 117–36, <https://doi.org/10.21043/at-tabsyir.v2i2.499>.

<sup>20</sup> Andi Faisal Bakti, "Media and Religion: Rodja Tv's Involvement in the Civil Society Discourse for Community Development," *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* 34, no. 3 (2018): 226–44, <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2018-3403-13>.

concept of cleanliness (*thâharah*). Ustadz Fadzlan demonstrated that tabligh teaches the correct and rewarding way to practice bathing as a medium for his preaching, utilizing water and soap as symbolic elements in Islamic teachings. He explains the *thaharah* principle as follows.

*“Using the thâharah method, we teach them how to bathe cleanly, which is clear; we teach them to bathe with water and soap; it is not uncommon to have a mass bath with people from the same village until the tribal chief enjoys the bath soap so much, the tribal chief immediately goes around the village without rinsing again because he feels happy with the smell of the soap. In this way, a message of peace begins to emerge in the people's souls; this calm signal opens up the light of faith for the local community, showing that this is the actual religious teaching”.*(Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan, Pendiri Yayasan AFKN, Bekasi, 12 Desember 2021)

*Thâharah*, a form of worship that encompasses all other forms, is integral to the validity of worship as it necessitates a state of cleanliness and sanctity (*thâharah wa nadhafah*) for achieving perfection in worship. This concept of *thâharah* has been instrumental in Ustadz Fadzlan's *da'wah* transmission, conveying messages to the Papuan people. The effects of *thâharah* provide a lucid message to society that Islamic teachings are comprehensive, regulating aspects of human life ranging from personal hygiene to the practice of worshipping Allah swt.



Source: [www.portal-islam.id](http://www.portal-islam.id)

**Figure 1.**

*Ustadz Fadzlan teaches thâharah to the people of remote Papua*

Ustadz Fadzlan introduced Islam to rural communities in Papua by firstly introduced the concept of *thâharah* or purifi-

cation. He taught how to bathe properly, using water and soap. The story of Ustadz Fadzlan's phenomenal preaching was when 3712 tribal members in Papua were successfully converted to Islam and recited the *shahada*. He mentioned:

*“Success in converting 3712 inland tribal people in Papua requires a complicated process; it requires patience and a wise attitude to change their primitive lifestyle and jahiliyyah culture to become Islamic. Initially, we introduced this clean way to get used to bathing. We gave examples and introduced how to perform ablution. They were warned that before facing Allah SWT, Islam commands us to be clean first. Thus, when you perform takbiratul ihram, Allah SWT will say, your hands have been washed, and all your body parts are clean; the mouth that says Allahu Akbar is also clean.”* (Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan, Pendiiri Yayasan AFKN, Bekasi, 12 Desember 2021)

In addition to purification practices, Ustadz Fadzlan also introduced the Papuan people to the concept of monotheism in Islam, explaining the meaning and practices of prayer in a manner that was logical and easily comprehensible. This led to the Papuan people embracing Islam as their religious choice. Notable progress was observed when the Papuan people chose Islam as their way of life. Prior to their knowledge of Islam, the people were deeply ingrained in ancestral customs and traditions. Ustadz Fadzlan nurtured a Muslim community in Papua, accommodating both knowledgeable and novice practitioners, and prepared a generation of Papuan Muslims espousing strong monotheistic faith. He also equipped them with various scientific disciplines to foster community development. His teachings included knowledge about Allah SWT, Islam, the Prophet Muhammad SAW, and other forms of knowledge.

Ustadz Fadzlan propagated Islam in a peaceful manner, gradually eliminating customs incompatible with Islam. He conveyed information regarding the Papuan people's identity by substituting their names with Islamic ones to further signify their religious identity. Another important aspect of his *da'wah* was his attention to the lifestyle of the Nuw Waar (Papua) people,

encouraging them to adopt lifestyles in accordance with Islamic law. This included transitioning from haram to halal livestock.

In Papua, pigs hold significant social value as they are closely associated with local cultural practices and ritual ceremonies. They are considered sacred, often used in cultural rituals, and the quantity of pigs owned is indicative of a person's wealth or social status.<sup>21</sup> However, Ustadz Fadzlan has worked to replace these practices with those that align with Islamic teachings, thereby further solidifying the Islamic identity of the Papuan people.

Ustadz Fadzlan has implemented an innovative approach to introducing Islam to the Papuan public. This involves applying the concept of *thâharah* and replacing the local tradition of rearing and consuming animals that are prohibited in Islam, such as pigs, with the practice of keeping and consuming animals that Islam permits. This reform is grounded in the fact that Islam forbids the consumption of pork. Ustadz Fadzlan's preaching introduced Halal animals, such as goats and sheep, which are not only permitted in Islam but also constitute nutritious and healthful food. This practice was well-received by the Papuan people.

In addition to his direct preaching efforts, Ustadz Fadzlan also utilizes *Bil-Kitabah* through written and audiovisual means. He shares stories of his preaching journey with a broader audience through new media platforms like the internet. Ustadz Fadzlan employs YouTube as an online da'wah medium, where he shares videos detailing his preaching journey in Papua. Additionally, his preaching partner disseminates recordings of his lectures via YouTube to reach a wider audience.

Ustadz Fadzlan chose the internet as a medium to propagate his preaching. He used YouTube platform namely <https://afkn-nuuwaar.com>, and the AFKN Nuw Waar Facebook media and his

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<sup>21</sup> Odiktor Y Marani, Budi Santoso, and Freddy Pattiselanno, "Persepsi Masyarakat Terhadap Lingkungan Pemeliharaan Ternak Babi Yang Diumbar Di Kampung Gaya Baru Dan Sekitar Pasar Wosi , Manokwari," *Jurnal Ilmu Lingkungan* 21, no. 1 (2023): 115–24, <https://doi.org/10.14710/Jil.21.1.115-124>.

Instagram account @u.f.g\_official. Additionally, the AFKN foundation's Instagram account can be accessed via @afknnu-uwaar. Ustadz Fadzlan's social media contains his da'wah activities or lectures and activities at the Nuu Waar Islamic Boarding School.

Ustadz Fadzlan's mission was to encourage people to uphold *Amar ma'rūf* and *nahi munkar* as a method of preaching. As new converts to Islam, the remote Papuan people need guidance and proper material about the faith. The creed of knowing Allah and other daily worship provides stronger belief in the community after embracing Islam. In addition to conveying the message of faith, Ustadz Fadzlan also imparts the message of Sharia. He has changed the customs of remote Papuans, who traditionally rear pigs, to rearing goats and sheep as halal food animals. This was accomplished through the *tablīgh* method, demonstrating the dichotomy of halal and haram food to the Papuan people. This approach has been well received and understood by the interior Papuan people as a form of understanding the obligations of every Muslim and as guidance for every Muslim in their daily life.

Ustadz Fadzlan delivered the *da'wah* message about prayer as a form of self-devotion to the creator, Allah SWT. Prayers are held five times a day under the terms and pillars of prayer. This practice provides knowledge about the prayers performed and the obligations of a Muslim. In the *tablīgh* method, he communicates Islamic law regarding prayer services to the interior people of Nuu Waar (Papua). This is a critical aspect of worship that every Muslim must undertake. His primary goal is to convey the history of the Prophet Muhammad and emulate it to provide understanding and thought for mad'ū.<sup>22</sup> This message stems from a hadith: "Indeed, I was sent only to perfect moral piety." This message aims to bring about a positive change in the people of Nuu Waar (Papua) and foster noble morals. Active reception (AR) is anticipated to provide benefits and satisfaction (uses and gratification) and cultivate noble morals.

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<sup>22</sup> Ali Aziz, *Ilmu Dakwah* (Jakarta: PT. Fajar Interpratama Mandiri, 2017), 23.

### ***Taghyîr in the Nuu Waar Community (Papua)***

Da'wah, at its core, represents the process of *taghyîr* (transformation), altering a social reality that lacks divinity into one that is imbued with divine qualities or characteristics. The evolution within Islamic society is an integral part of its teachings. Each transformation invariably results in a multitude of consequences, potentially culminating in a crisis. This crisis arises due to the erosion of societal values that accompanies each change. From the perspective of Islamic communication (*da'wah*), change or *taghyîr*, is seen as a process of transition towards an improved life, encompassing the attainment of satisfaction, comfort (ecology), a sense of security (security), and inner peace (spirituality).

Education, particularly for the Papuan populace, is the linchpin of significant transformation. It is instrumental in acquainting the Papuan people with civilization. Absence of education can result in societal ignorance, backwardness, and continual marginalization. The establishment of an educational institution within a community is the most apt strategy for nurturing religious potential in future generations in Papua. In one of the interviews, Ustadz Fadzlan stated:

*“Children from the island of Nuu Waar (Papua) are brought to the island of Java and sent to school when they are still small, at the Nuu Waar Islamic boarding school, which is located in Bekasi, until they go to graduate school, the school fees are borne by us. The area of Cenderawas Island is shaped like a lafadz of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. When Indonesia's central and western regions still sleep, Papua is awake, reminding it with the call to prayer. (Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan, Pendiiri Yayasan AFKN, Bekasi, 12 Desember 2021)*

Ustadz Fadzlan actively facilitates Papuan children, including those who are less fortunate and underprivileged, as well as Muslim converts, to attend educational institutions outside Java. The primary objective of this initiative is to systematically eliminate unfavorable practices prevalent in the area. Ustadz Fadzlan regularly mentors children from elementary school to university level, with the Nuu Waar Islamic Boarding School

-serving as the hub for education and religious knowledge acquisition. He has observed a transformation within himself and among his Papuan brethren. This change stems from the community's aspiration to improve by pursuing education and acquiring knowledge. Education is provided as a means to eradicate ignorance and alter the fate of the Papuan people.

Ustadz Fadzlan founded the Al-Fatih Kaffa Nusantara (AFKN) foundation and inaugurated the Nuu Waar Islamic Boarding School in Bunut Village, West Java. Several structures have been built within this 5-hectare land area, including a mosque, hall, teacher and caretaker's house, kitchen, boy's and girl's dormitory, study classes, minimarket, and herbal house. Islamic boarding schools are recognized as Islamic educational institutions that foster quality human resources capable of adapting to globalization without compromising their Islamic character. These institutions have had a profound influence on Indonesian society, having grown and developed alongside the society for centuries. The figures of Kiai, santri, and all physical components of an Islamic boarding school form a religious culture that governs individual behavior and patterns of relationships within the community.<sup>23</sup>

Islamic boarding schools are traditional Islamic educational institutions that have evolved within Indonesian society. These institutions aim to educate Indonesian children and have consistently made significant contributions to the country's educational activities.<sup>24</sup> Ustadz Fadzlan provides scholarships to children from Papua and other regions who wish to study at the Nuu Waar Islamic Boarding School. The funds for these scholarships are sourced from donations made by Muslims to the AFKN Foundation, under the management of Ustadz Fadzlan. The scholarship program collaborates with institutions capable of

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<sup>23</sup> M. Yusuf Agung Subekti and Moh. Mansur Fauzi, "Peran Pondok Pesantren Dalam Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Sekitar," *Al-I'tibar: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 2 (2018): 99–100, <https://doi.org/10.30599/jpia.v5i2.554>.

<sup>24</sup> Muhamad Abdul Manan, "Daya Tahan Dan Eksistensi Pesantren Di Era 4.0," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Indonesia* 3, no. 2 (2019): 301–13, <https://doi.org/10.35316/jpii.v3i2.135>.

offering scholarships to Ustadz Fadzlan's students to universities both domestically and abroad.

Ustadz Fadzlan selected the island of Java as a symbol of *Hijrah* (migration/ change) and a means to accelerate the expansion of insight and knowledge, as well as discard unfavorable traditions. Furthermore, it serves to introduce the civilization brought about by the Ulama in the struggle for Indonesian independence, guarded by *salam* and warriors. With this archipelagic insight, it is hoped that the spirit of *Hubbul al-Watan Minal iman*, or love for the homeland as part of the faith, will be deeply ingrained in the students' souls.

Building a community with educational institutions is the most appropriate method of nurturing the religious potential of future generations in Papua. The Papuan people crave intellectual stimulation, change, and peace of life. Ustadz Fadzlan believes that the Papuan generation must be equipped with accurate concepts of knowledge. He hopes that when they have acquired knowledge and return to their hometowns, they will be inspired to improve their society. Generations of Papuan Muslims must emigrate to gain authentic knowledge, making *Hijrah* a necessity.

Ustadz Fadzlan has implemented significant transformation for his students at the Nuu Waar Islamic Boarding School by means of Cadreization. This method is intended to ensure that the desired competencies, imparted through the *da'wah* movement, can be effectively actualized. Given the challenges posed by globalization and disruption in the modern era, the formation of cadres is deemed essential. This is a task incumbent upon Islamic *da'wah* to ensure its continued relevancy, effectiveness, and productivity in the information age.

There are five recommended strategies to ensure the continued relevancy, effectiveness, and productivity of *da'wah*. First, cadre formation was organized with a clear division of labor. Second, establishment of a dedicated laboratory. Third, the expansion of *da'wah* process beyond *da'wah bi al-Lisan*, incorporating *da'wah bi al-hal*, *bi al-Kitabah*, *bi al-Hikmah* (in a political context), and *Bi al-iqtishadiyah* (economic). Fourth, both print and electronic mass media were used for *dawah* and owned by Muslims. Fifth, empowering Indonesian youth with religious



knowledge to provide a robust defense in the era of globalization and information.<sup>25</sup>

Ustadz Fadzlan has also been involved in cultural *da'wah*, directed towards the Papuan community. This approach takes into account the inherent potential and propensity of individuals as cultural beings, aiming to foster an authentic Islamic society. This is achieved by utilizing local customs, traditions, arts, culture, and the prevalent community marriage system as a pathway towards an Islamic way of life. Ustadz Fadzlan's *da'wah* efforts engage with and seek to enhance the culture of the Papuan community. As the Papuan community embraces Islam, their social norms are gradually aligned with Islamic law, choosing Islam as their way of life. This necessitates the abandonment of any old traditions that contradict Islamic Shari'a. Thus, Islam presents itself as a religion that advocates for a high degree of civilization.

The effectiveness of Ustadz Fadzlan's preaching efforts is evident in the steadily increasing number of Islam followers each year. Beyond sheer numbers, He also seeks to enhance the quality of the community's diversity through study groups, Friday sermons, tabligh akbar, and various other religious activities. His objective, sincere, and diligent efforts have had a profound impact, leading individuals previously unfamiliar with Islam to embrace the faith.

### ***Takwin al-Ummah in the Papuan people***

*Takwîn al-Ummaah* or *Amar Ma'rûf Nahi Munkar* is an endeavor aimed at cultivating benevolence and deterring malevolence. Hamid Mawlanan posits that this principle underscores both individual and collective accountability in preparing subsequent generations to assimilate and derive advantages from Islamic doctrines. The draft of *Takwîn al-Ummaah*, *Amar ma'rûf*, and *Nahi Munkar* constitute the crux of *da'wah* undertakings.

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<sup>25</sup> Samsuddin Samsuddin, Iskandar Iskandar, and Mariyanto Nurshamsul, "Pendidikan Kader Da'i Ormas Wahdah Islamiyah Melalui Halaqah Tarbiyah," *Ta'dibuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2020): 283, <https://doi.org/10.32832/tadibuna.v9i2.3527>.

Broadly speaking, *Amar ma'rūf Nahi Munkar*, according to Bakti, encompasses a range of interpretations and can be paralleled with the concept of development.

The construction of facilities is fundamental in fostering solidarity among communities. Ustadz Fadzlan has demonstrated earnestness in enhancing villages through the establishment of facilities such as electrical installations powered by generators, drilled wells, toilets, and docks or boat moorings. This initiative responds aptly to the community's demand for amenities including electricity, potable water, sanitation, and docking or mooring for boats. Ustadz Fadzlan's endeavors are geared towards facilitating community access. Moreover, his commitment extends to aiding the Papuan populace through the introduction and external sale of indigenous products from Nu'u Waar (Papua), including sweet potato chips, ant nests, and a variety of fruits such as Red and Nutmeg.

Electrification has been implemented in each village, providing power to the homes of residents. Ustadz Fadzlan, along with his *jamaah* (congregation), have also facilitated non-Muslim villages to foster harmonious coexistence. This commitment by Ustadz Fadzlan is aimed at uplifting the economic stature of the Papuan community. The establishment of facilities served as a supportive element in executing da'wah, offering more contemporary perspectives and knowledge. Ustadz Fadzlan persistently imparts guidance and motivation for self-improvement. These facilities serve as conduits for disseminating information, motivating, and conveying positive messages.

Beyond his role as a preacher, Ustadz Fadzlan serves as an opinion leader within the Papuan community. He is integral in shaping and influencing communal perspectives. His role includes communicating *da'wah* messages to religious leaders in the villages he supports. The successful implementation of Da'wah in Papua has culminated in the establishment of 900 mosques across Papua and West Papua. The construction of mosques in Indonesia symbolizes the implementation of Islamic

rules,<sup>26</sup> as part of the mission to propagate Islam.<sup>27</sup> Subsequently, 10,000 Papuans, including 109 tribal chiefs and their 500 followers each, converted to Islam.<sup>28</sup>

Ustadz Fadzlan concentrates his efforts on enlightening the youth of Papua, providing them with facilities that ensure quality education. His aspiration is that this generation will advance Islam in Papua through their knowledge and values. This envisaged transformation may not be instantaneous, but it will nonetheless have a profound long-term impact.

Ustadz Fadzlan carries an optimistic vision for the establishment of an Islamic civilization in Papua. He harbors grand ambitions of guiding Indonesia towards becoming a Medina, with Papua at the forefront. His confidence lies in his ability to construct and cultivate an Islamic civilization in Papua, chiefly through his preaching efforts. A cornerstone of his strategy is to provide quality education and instill religious teachings from an early age among Papuan children. In this vein, he has established the Nuu Waar Islamic Boarding School, located in Kampung Bunut Village, Setu District, Bekasi, West Java. In addition to this, plans are also underway to construct a da'wah data and information center deep within Papua's interior regions. The construction and refurbishment of mosques in Papua form an integral part of this program. Ustadz Fadzlan, through his missionary safari activities, has taken on the task of documenting and mapping villages that either lack houses of worship or have mosques in need of renovation. His endeavors reflect his steadfast commitment to fostering an Islamic civilization in Papua.

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<sup>26</sup> Asep Saefullah, "Masjid Kasunyatan Banten: Tinjauan Sejarah dan Arsitektur," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 16, no. 1 (2018): 127–58, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlk.v16i1.486>.

<sup>27</sup> Muktarruddin, "Socio Religious History of Old Mosquein Marbau (North Labuhan Batu)," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* Vol. 19, N (2021): 461–80, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v19.i2.944>.

<sup>28</sup> Dhurorudin Mashad, *Muslim Papua; Membangun Harmoni Berdasar Sejarah Agama di Bumi Cendrawasih* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2020), 165.

The infrastructural advancements initiated by Ustadz Fadzlan represent an application of the preaching technique known as *bi al-'amal*. This approach to preaching seeks to disseminate Islamic teachings to individuals and society by manifesting these teachings into concrete forms. Known interchangeably as *da'wah bi al-Hal*, this methodology involves the transmission of *da'wah* through tangible actions<sup>29</sup>. In the remote regions of Papua, the conversion of individuals to Islam was not the endpoint of Ustadz Fadzlan's efforts. He also embarked on initiatives aimed at economic empowerment within these communities. Recognizing the potential value of local products, Ustadz Fadzlan guided these newly converted individuals in transforming these products into profitable ventures. An economics graduate with business acumen, Ustadz Fadzlan utilized commercial activities to further his preaching efforts. He also provided practical demonstrations such as the conversion of deer meat into jerky, sago into cakes, and flour into sago crackers. These examples serve to illustrate to the converts that Islam encourages the effective and regular management of their resources, ultimately leading to a steady income.

Through the AFKN Foundation, Ustadz Fadzlan established multiple centers for community economic empowerment. These centers processed local natural products into marketable items like candied nutmeg, nutmeg syrup, crackers, fish floss, salted fish, nutmeg paste, shrimp paste, taro chips, and ant nests. Furthermore, Ustadz Fadzlan facilitated the economic empowerment of these communities by providing capital and equipment. The products generated by the community were subsequently introduced and sold to urban communities.

This strategic approach enabled individuals beyond Papua to comprehend the financial independence of Papuan Muslim converts. Ustadz Fadzlan, during his *da'wah* excursions abroad, explored potential marketing opportunities. He also established a herbal clinic and a minimarket in the Kampung Bunut, Setu, Bekasi, West Java. The primary objective of this clinic was to

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<sup>29</sup>Murodi, *Filantropi Dan Dakwah: Jalan Menuju Kesejahteraan Umat* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2021), 10.

promote a healthy lifestyle among Indonesian Muslims through the use of herbal remedies.<sup>30</sup>

Ustadz Fadzlan's active involvement in community development and religious activities was a significant aspect of these community economic empowerment initiatives. His dedication and zeal in establishing an Islamic civilization in Papua piqued the interest of non-Muslim individuals, leading to their conversion to Islam.

The anticipated outcome of these physical and non-physical developments is innovative diffusion among the inhabitants of Nuu Waar (Papua). The establishment of physical and non-physical structures is crucial for fostering social relationships (social marketing) and participatory approaches. The ultimate goal is to cultivate self-reliance and independence among individuals, leading to the development of prosperous communities in all aspects of life.

### **Khariyah al-Ummah or morals in the Nuu Waar community**

Improving *Khariyah al-Ummah*, or morals of the society, is the primary mission established by Rasulullah SAW. From an Islamic communication perspective, as stated by Bakti, human interactions should be grounded in sound ethics (*akhlâqul karima*). The objective of communication is to foster prosperity, productivity, and other essential elements for the evolution and development of society. This can be achieved through principles of equality, fraternity, and solidarity.<sup>31</sup>

The concept of morality in the context of *da'wah* encompasses *al-mauizah*, *al-hikmah*, *ahsan al-mujjadi*, *al-karimah*, *la fitnah*, *la zan*, *ta'awun*, and *mushawarah* or *shura*. Bakti equates the concept of *ta'awun* with a cooperative attitude among community members. The principle of equality and shared decision-

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<sup>30</sup> Benny Munardi, Syukur Kholil, and Achar Zain, "Anger Emotions in the Qur'an From an Islamic Communication Psychology Perspective," *Al-Balagh: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 8, no. 1 (2023): 41–72, <https://doi.org/10.22515/albalagh.v8i1.5559>.

<sup>31</sup> Andi Faisal Bakti, "The Contribution of Dakwah to Communication Studies: Risale-i Nur Collection Perspective." (Istanbul: Sozler Nesriyat San, 2010), 23.

making (*mushawarah or shura*) is likened to the concept of democracy. Meanwhile, *al-hikmah* is associated with knowledge, science, and philosophy. Presently, Muslims in Papua are initiating self-reflection, self-improvement, unifying efforts to enhance human resources, and fortifying their faith, purity, and Indonesian nationality.

Significant improvements have been noted in the *Khariyah al-Ummah*, or morals, among the inhabitants of rural Papua. They have upheld ethics in fostering a civil society, contributing to the betterment of individuals and community groups. The adoption of Islam has led to harmonious interactions with no differences; their communication ties are rooted in their shared Islamic faith, paving the way for a progressive society.

Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan, the founder of Yayasan AFKN, asserted on January 9, 2022, in Bekasi, stated:

*"We need a generation, we need cadres, we need to have legacies who fight to preach in Nuu Waar Papua, to prepare a generation of Papuan Muslims who have faith and monotheism, who are strong and equip themselves with various scientific disciplines to build the Ummah."* (Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan, 9 January 2022)



Source://m.republika.co.id/

**Figure 2.**

Ustadz Fadzlan trained Nuu Waar's children to move to school on the island of Jawa

The people transformation that occurs following the adoption of Islam is manifested in the upholding of moral values and

etiquettes; these have been taught and implemented, eradicating hostility as Islam promotes the brotherhood of mankind. This moral improvement is evident during prayer rituals, which were previously unknown to the inhabitants of Papua's interior. Currently, an increasing number of people are embracing the practice of prayer to fulfil their obligations as Islamic adherents.<sup>32</sup> In daily life, the Papuan people, who are naturally handsome and beautiful, have adopted the Islamic practice of modest dressing, covering their private body parts appropriately. As their understanding of Islamic religious knowledge expands, the Papuan Muslims have undertaken the spiritual journey known as Hijrah, abandoning acts forbidden by Allah SWT such as evil, disobedience, and impiety, and embarking on a new life through the embrace of Islam.<sup>33</sup>

Effective preaching yields positive transformation by conveying *da'wah* messages that can alter the *mad'u*, continue to promote *amr ma'rūf nahy munkar*, and cultivate good morals. From the perspective of Islamic communication, human interaction must be grounded on robust ethics (*akhlâq karimah*). Ustadz Fadzman and his preachers fostered changes amongst the Papuan people, including the establishment of harmonious relations with both Muslim and non-Muslim civil societies, the promotion of good manners and etiquette, mutual respect and collaboration, and proper marriage practices.

*Khairiyah al-ummah*, or the welfare of the community, was created as a result of the appropriate conduct in communication. The information disseminated by Ustadz Fadzman and his preachers fostered positive relations amongst the Papuan people, thereby engendering sound wisdom (Wilson) within society. This wisdom subsequently broadens the scope (public space) for communication and discussion.

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<sup>32</sup> Efendi, "Sejarah Dakwah Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman Al-Qadri: Islamisasi Di PontianakEfendi."

<sup>33</sup> Ummi Kulsum and Bobby Rachman Santoso, "Communication Style of Imigrant Dai in Da'wah," *El Madani : Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi Islam* 4, no. 01 (2023): 83–102, <https://doi.org/10.53678/elmadani.v4i01.1194>.

Significant progress was made once Islam was adopted as the life choice of the Papuan people. Previously steeped in their ancestral culture and customs, following their conversion to Islam, the Papuan people were guided by Ustadz Fadzlan to implement Islamic teachings in their daily lives. Ustadz Fadzlan envisions a future where the Papuan Muslim generation can effectively manage the natural resources in Papua while elevating the status of the Muslim communities living in poverty. His mission also includes equipping young Papuan Muslims to emerge as missionary fighters.

Ustadz Fadzlan's preaching aims to humanize people. He believes that Islam would not exist without preaching and that knowledge about Islam would not have reached us if no one had preached and taught Islam in the past. Propagation of Islam has been continuous, expanding to remote and inland areas, inviting as many people as possible to worship and submit to Allah SWT. This task of inviting fellow humans to the path of righteousness is the goal of human existence.<sup>34</sup> Ustadz Fadzlan's da'wah targets all societal classes in Indonesia, reaching out to various understandings and ideologies. His focus is particularly on rural communities, especially those in Papua's interior, aiding them in becoming better-educated individuals, guiding them back to their origins and purity, and back to the religion of Allah SWT.

In constructing a monotheistic human civilization, Ustadz Fadzlan firmly believes that working as a preacher is not merely a part-time job but a role closely associated with the Prophet and Allah SWT. This role is seen as a human obligation aimed at shaping a civilized human civilization imbued with *akhlaq al-Karima*.<sup>35</sup>

Ustadz Fadzlan uses preaching as a tool to elevate human dignity, improve societal welfare and economic life, encourage mastery of science and technology, foster mental health, ensure

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<sup>34</sup> Mujetaba Mustaf, "KONSEP MAHABBAH DALAM AL-QUR'AN (Kajian Tafsir Maudhu'i)," *Al-Asas: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Dasar Keislaman* 4, no. 1 (2020): 42, <https://ejournal.iainpalopo.ac.id/index.php/alasas/article/view/1645/1188>.

<sup>35</sup> M Yusuf, "Pendidikan Akhlak Menurut Ibnu Miskawaih," *Mau'izhah* 8, no. 2 (2018): 41, <https://doi.org/10.55936/mauizhah.v8i2.4>.



peace and tranquility, among other things. For him, *da'wah* is intended to enlighten, develop, construct, and empower people. Ustadz Fadzlan harbors hope that there will be changes in Papua, beyond physical alterations but also transformations in belief, morals, and ethics based on Islamic law as taught by Prophet Muhammad SAW. Furthermore, it serves as a stronghold in strengthening the monotheism of Muslims against the threats of capitalism, liberalism, and ideologies that may lead Muslims astray.

## CONCLUSION

Ustadz Fadzlan Garamatan is an essential character in the advancement of the Muslim community in Papua. He has employed a unique approach in his Islamic propagation, namely *thâharah* or purification, which involves the ritual of bathing the indigenous people of Papua. One of Garamatan's remarkable achievements was the successful conversion of 3712 tribal members to Islam, an event that earned him the moniker "Ustadz Soap." Ustadz Fadzlan utilizes *da'wah* as an instrument for various societal improvements, including, but not limited to, enhancing human dignity, ameliorating the economic condition of the people, promoting science and technology alongside information and communication, improving mental health, and fostering peace and tranquility. His vision for *da'wah* extends beyond the realm of religious teaching, encompassing efforts to enlighten, develop, construct, and empower the community.

Ustadz Fadzlan's underlying mission is to encourage individuals to adhere to the principle of *amar ma'ruf* (promoting good) and *nahi munkar* (to repudiate evil), as a fundamental methodology of his *da'wah*. This research delineates four integral factors that form the stages of *da'wah*. The first stage, *Tablîgh*, involves the preacher disseminating the intended message to the recipient (*mad'û*). This is followed by an internal transformation within the recipient, referred to as *taghyîr*. Such transformation instills a propensity in the recipients of *da'wah* to perpetually engage in good deeds and avoid evil doings, thereby fostering the development of virtuous character traits within the society. The process of *da'wah* within the indigenous Papuan

community offers invaluable insights for the *da'i* (preacher) in effectively conducting *da'wah*. The ultimate objective is to achieve the desired outcomes, ensuring that the *da'wah* process operates with maximum efficacy.

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