



NAHDLATUL ULAMA'S DA'WAH STRATEGIES AGAINST ONLINE GAMBLING AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN PAYA BAKUNG VILLAGE

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Da'wah, Nahdatul ulama, Omline gambling, Strategy.

This study analyses the strategies of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in addressing the growing issue of online gambling among adolescents in Paya Bakung Village, Deli Serdang Regency. Using a qualitative approach through observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews, the research identifies three main da'wah strategies sentimental, rational, and sensory. The findings show that NU's approaches have contributed to reducing adolescent involvement in online gambling by strengthening religious awareness and community values. However, their effectiveness remains limited due to economic pressures, easy access to gambling platforms, and the lack of structured follow-up. The study highlights the need for continuous collaboration between NU, families, and educational institutions to reinforce religious and ethical values as well as to provide sustainable preventive measures.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology today has brought significant impacts on various aspects of human life, both positive and negative [1] the advancement of the internet, smart devices, and social media has made it increasingly easy for society to access various forms of information and entertainment. However, this progress has also created considerable opportunities for the misuse of technology, one of which is online gambling practices [2] Online gambling is an activity of wagering money or valuable items through the internet, the outcome of which depends on either luck or the player's strategy. Unlike conventional gambling conducted in person, online gambling can be accessed anytime and anywhere simply by using a mobile phone or a computer connected to the internet [3].

The phenomenon of the growing prevalence of online gambling in Indonesia has generated social anxiety, particularly among adolescents. This is evidenced by data from the Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (PPATK), which indicates a significant increase in online gambling transactions from year to year. A similar condition has occurred in Paya Bakung Village, where some adolescents have become involved in online gambling practices, affecting economic, social, and moral aspects [4]. In this context, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), as the largest Islamic organisation in Indonesia, holds a strategic role through its da'wah activities. Based on this condition, this research seeks to address the question of how NU's da'wah strategy tackles online gambling among adolescents and to what extent it proves effective.

At the national level, online gambling practices have reached an alarming stage, particularly among children and adolescents. According to a report released by the Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (PPATK) in mid-2024, and reported by Haryanti Puspa Sari in Kompas.com (26 July 2024), the number of online gambling players from the under-19 age group has experienced a significant increase. The data revealed that approximately 197,540 children were involved in online gambling activities, consisting of 191,380 adolescents aged 17–19, 4,514 children aged 11–16, and 1,160 children under the age of 11. Furthermore, some other reports indicate that tens of thousands of children under the age of 10 have already been exposed to online gambling. The total transaction value from this age group reached around IDR 293.4 billion within just a few months. This phenomenon demonstrates that online gambling has targeted a generation that should still be in the stage of education and character development. The ease of access, coupled with massive promotion through social media packaged as online entertainment, has made children increasingly vulnerable to being trapped in this activity.

A similar tendency can also be observed at the local level, including in Paya Bakung Village. Based on field observations and statements from village officials in 2024, it was found that dozens of adolescents were actively involved in online gambling, with an estimated circulation of funds reaching hundreds of millions of rupiah annually. This indicates that the issue of online gambling in Paya Bakung Village, Hamparan Perak District, Deli Serdang Regency, cannot be regarded as an isolated local matter, but rather as part of a broader national trend. In this village, online gambling has become a tangible problem within the community. Many adolescents are actively engaged in online gambling practices, particularly through internet cafés (warnet) that remain open until late at night and serve as their favourite places to play freely without supervision. This situation calls for data-based interventions and measurable prevention strategies.

This condition has caused anxiety among the local community and religious leaders. In this context, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Islamic organisation in Indonesia, holds a strategic role in addressing this issue through a da'wah-based approach. As a religious organisation with a strong grassroots network, NU has undertaken various da'wah efforts to raise public awareness, particularly among the younger generation, about the dangers of online gambling [1]. Several da'wah strategies implemented include religious sermons, activities of study circles (majelis taklim), regular Qur'anic study sessions, counselling for parents, as well as the dissemination of moral messages through social media as a means of da'wah. These efforts are expected to reduce adolescents' involvement in online gambling and to strengthen religious values within the community.

The da'wah strategy in this research refers to the concept of Muhammad Ali Aziz (2017) Moh. Ali Aziz, *Ilmu Dakwah: Edisi Revisi*, cet. 6 (Jakarta: Kencana, 2017), 299-304., which emphasises three main approaches: sentimental (emotional), rational (logical), and sensory (experience-based). These three approaches are designed to engage adolescents more holistically, so that the da'wah message not only touches upon the religious aspect but is also relevant to their social realities and everyday needs.

Nevertheless, despite the various forms of da'wah that have been carried out, the phenomenon of online gambling among adolescents has not yet shown a significant decline. This raises major questions regarding the extent to which the da'wah strategies implemented by NU administrators have been effective. Have the approaches employed been in line with the social realities and the current needs of adolescents? Are the da'wah messages delivered able to directly reach adolescents and touch upon aspects of their daily lives? Have the preachers and NU administrators utilised communication methods that are relevant and easily accepted by young people? Discussions on online gambling among adolescents in Paya Bakung Village have so far tended to focus on describing the phenomenon and its general prevention efforts, without an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of the strategies that have been implemented. Reports of activities held by local NU administrators do record various forms of da'wah, such as religious sermons in mosques, weekly Qur'anic study sessions, youth mosque development programmes, counselling for parents, and the use of social media to disseminate moral and religious messages. However, all these activities are only documented in the form of internal records or local news coverage, and have never been studied scientifically through measured and systematic methods.

The absence of such research gives rise to a number of strategic implications that cannot be overlooked. First, the lack of structured quantitative and qualitative data makes it difficult for NU and the community to assess the extent to which the da'wah strategies implemented have genuinely influenced the reduction of adolescent involvement in online gambling. Second, the absence of evidence-based evaluation means that the da'wah strategies applied may continue to be repeated even though their effectiveness cannot be ascertained. Third, the limited scientific documentation hampers the process of knowledge sharing, so that the experiences of successes or obstacles encountered in Paya Bakung Village cannot be utilised by other regions facing similar problems.

Furthermore, a review of the literature shows that most studies on online gambling in Indonesia tend to focus on legal, economic, or general social aspects. Research that highlights the role of religious organisations, particularly Nahdlatul Ulama, in tackling online gambling remains very limited. Indeed, studies adopting a da'wah perspective and focusing on rural areas with distinctive socio-cultural characteristics, such as Paya Bakung Village, are scarcely found in academic publications. This indicates a clear research gap, namely the absence of

documentation and scholarly studies that comprehensively analyse the effectiveness of NU's da'wah strategies in reducing online gambling practices among adolescents.

International research highlights the relationship between religiosity and the reduction of online addictive behaviours, including gambling. Calado et al. (2023) found that religiosity was negatively associated with gambling involvement among adolescents and young adults in Portugal and the UK, with this relationship mediated by illusion of control and interpretative bias. Similarly, Dossi et al. (2022), through a systematic review of observational studies (cross sectional, cohort, case control) indexed in Scopus and PubMed, concluded that religiosity acts as a protective factor against internet addiction, including online gaming and gambling, with most studies showing an inverse correlation between religiosity and online addictive behaviours. In addition, Gunawan et al. (2024) examined the effectiveness of Islamic education in reducing adolescents' interest in online gambling, and the findings demonstrated that programs based on values of responsibility and integrity significantly decreased both interest and participation in online gambling.

The urgency of this research is evident as online gambling has increasingly targeted the younger generation who should still be in the stage of education and character development. Both national and local data indicate a worrying escalation of adolescent participation in online gambling, as seen in Paya Bakung Village. The absence of rigorous scientific evaluation of Nahdlatul Ulama's da'wah strategies makes it difficult to assess the extent to which sentimental, rational, and sensory approaches are truly effective. Without empirical evidence, such programs risk being continuously repeated without measurable impact, while their success cannot be transferred to other contexts facing similar challenges. This study is therefore essential to provide evidence-based, structured, and contextually relevant da'wah strategies that address the realities of adolescents in the digital era.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study applied a qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences and meanings constructed by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) administrators, adolescents, parents, and religious leaders in addressing online gambling among adolescents in Paya Bakung Village. Phenomenology was chosen because it allows interpretation of subjective experiences and the social realities behind NU's da'wah practices.

Research Location and Time

The study was conducted in Paya Bakung Village, Hamparan Perak District, Deli Serdang Regency, from October to December 2024. This location was selected due to the high incidence of adolescent involvement in online gambling and the active role of NU in preventive da'wah activities.

Research Instruments and Participants

The main instrument used was a semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions, complemented by observation sheets for field notes. Participants were selected using purposive sampling and consisted of 11 individuals: 3 NU administrators, 2 religious leaders, 4 adolescents who had been involved in or affected by online gambling, and 2 parents.

The relatively small number of participants (11 individuals) and the localised focus on Paya Bakung Village limit the generalisability of the findings. However, the study provides rich, context-specific insights that can serve as a valuable reference for similar communities and as a basis for further comparative research.

Data Collection

Data were collected through three techniques: (1) in-depth interviews with all participants, (2) participant observation of da'wah activities such as study circles, Qur'anic sessions, and counselling, and (3) documentation in the form of photos, videos, and written records of activities. These methods enabled the researcher to capture both subjective narratives and contextual dynamics.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was applied, beginning with transcription of interviews and observation notes, followed by coding, categorisation into themes (sentimental, rational, sensory), and interpretation against Muhammad Ali Aziz's da'wah theory and previous studies. The process also adopted the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model, covering data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

Data Validation

Validity was ensured through triangulation. Source triangulation compared perspectives from administrators, adolescents, parents, and religious leaders. Methodological triangulation cross checked interviews, observations, and documentation. Time triangulation involved repeated data collection at different times to check consistency. Member checking was also conducted by sharing interview summaries with participants for confirmation and clarification.

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The findings indicate that the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) administrators in Paya Bakung Village employed three main approaches in their da'wah strategies to address online gambling, namely the sentimental (al-Manhaj al-'Athifi), the rational (al-Manhaj al-'Aqli), and the sensory (al-Manhaj al-Hissi). These approaches were implemented in an integrative manner to reach adolescents from different dimensions: emotional, intellectual, and experiential.

Sentimental Strategy (al-Manhaj al-'Athifi)

The sentimental approach in da'wah is an effort to touch the hearts and emotions of the da'wah targets [2]. From the interviews, the ustadz stated that in his sermons he used sorrowful or touching stories aimed at raising adolescents' awareness of the dangers of online gambling. The purpose was not to frighten or blame, but rather to awaken through empathy, particularly by evoking a sense of love towards parents and family. Da'wah delivered in a gentle manner without exposing one's flaws was considered more effective in reaching the audience's emotions. This is in line with the Prophet's saying which teaches that da'wah should be carried out with compassion and gentleness [3].

The sorrowful stories conveyed in sermons functioned as a mirror for adolescents to reflect and recognise their mistakes. They were more easily moved when the stories were related to family, such as parents suffering because of their child's involvement in gambling. In addition, this strategy strengthened the emotional bond between the preacher and the congregation. The ustadz also emphasised that da'wah which awakens the potential of adolescents is far more effective than sermons that corner or judge them. He motivated them by stating that every adolescent is a great individual who can change and return to the right path. This strategy instilled hope rather than fear [4].

This strategy was reinforced by the principle of the Prophet's da'wah, which was known never to convey Islamic teachings with anger or harshness. He always prioritised compassion. Therefore, this method is regarded as a manifestation of the "pearl of the heart" that must be possessed by a preacher, namely positive energy in the form of gentleness, humility, and love for the ummah.

Overall, the sentimental strategy employed by NU administrators in Paya Bakung Village represents an approach that prioritises emotional values to create inner awareness. Sermons were delivered with compassion, the building of hope, and an emphasis on family aspects that are closely connected to the realities of adolescents.

Rational Strategy (al-Manhaj al-'Aqli)

The rational strategy is a method that places emphasis on the use of reason and thought [2]. This approach aims to encourage the da'wah recipients to think, reflect, understand, and draw lessons from the message delivered. Several methods used in this strategy include the application of logical reasoning, discussions, as well as references to historical examples and evidence. Da'wah employing a rational strategy must be able to convince its recipients, not merely inviting them to accept the message passively, but also motivating them to practise it with full awareness and profound understanding. Therefore, da'wah material must be conveyed in a clear and easily comprehensible manner, requiring the preacher to engage the thoughts of the recipients so that the message appears reasonable and acceptable to society. Da'wah must be logical and persuasive, thereby moving people to practise the teachings conveyed.

In the modern context, the rational strategy can also be applied to address the increasingly concerning phenomenon of online gambling. Many people fall into online gambling because they are lured by promises of instant profit without understanding its long-term consequences. Through the rational approach, preachers can logically explain the negative impacts of online gambling, such as financial loss, addiction, and the destruction of family life and morality. Providing understanding based on data, facts, and Islamic law can help the community comprehend the dangers of online gambling and encourage them to avoid it with full awareness.

The rational strategy in da'wah concerning online gambling refers to the delivery of information based on facts, data, and logic. This is in line with persuasion theory, which emphasises that information supported by concrete evidence can enhance audience understanding. In the context of the dangers of online gambling, ustadz often presented statistical data on the number of victims of online gambling, the financial impacts incurred, as well as real cases illustrating destruction caused by gambling addiction. In addition, the use of religious arguments further reinforced the legitimacy of the message delivered. In Islam, gambling is categorised as a prohibited act (haram) because it brings more harm than benefit. By quoting verses from the Qur'an and the Prophet's hadith, the ustadz provided a clear legal foundation so that the congregation understood that the prohibition of gambling is not merely a social regulation, but also a religious injunction that must be obeyed.

The rational strategy is a da'wah approach that relies on logic, data, and systematic reasoning. In interviews, the ustadz stated that he often gave sermons using logical data and facts about the dangers of online gambling.

For instance, he mentioned that no gambler ever truly becomes wealthy. He explained that all the profits from gambling are illusory and short-term, whereas the losses are real and long-lasting.

The ustadz also linked his da'wah to Islamic law. Gambling in Islam is a prohibited act (haram) because it causes harm to oneself and others. He emphasised that the income brought home to the family must be lawful and blessed. This serves as a strong justification, both religiously and rationally, for avoiding gambling practices [5].

Moreover, in his da'wah the ustadz encouraged the audience to analyse their own economic conditions. He urged the congregation to reflect on how much money, property, and even family harmony had been lost due to online gambling. This was done to help the audience realise that they were on the wrong path and needed to return.

The rational approach was also applied by presenting real-life examples that had occurred. For example, stories about individuals who lost all their assets or children who dropped out of school because their parents were gambling. Although no names were mentioned, such stories were powerful enough to raise awareness.

Rational da'wah delivered in a straightforward and argumentative manner was considered effective because it was able to build intellectual awareness, not merely emotional awareness. This is highly significant since today's younger generation is more easily convinced by logic and concrete evidence rather than mere threats or prohibitions.

Sensory Strategy (Al-Manhaj Al-Hissi)

The sensory strategy, also known as the experimental or scientific strategy, refers to a da'wah method that focuses on the five senses and is based on research findings and experimentation [2]. The sensory strategy, or al-Manhaj al-Hissi, involves religious practices and exemplary conduct demonstrated by the preacher. In addressing emerging social problems such as online gambling, this strategy can be applied to illustrate the tangible impacts of such activities. With concrete evidence in the form of statistics or testimonies from those entrapped in online gambling, da'wah becomes more impactful for those involved. Preachers may show how online gambling damages life financially, socially, and mentally through real-life experiences that can be perceived by individuals. This helps to raise awareness and motivates people to abandon such behaviour.

From an ethical perspective, NU's choice aligns with Islamic teachings that forbid shaming or exposing the flaws of others. Da'wah is still delivered in a way that maintains the dignity of individuals and avoids creating social stigma. However, in terms of effectiveness, this strategy becomes less optimal, particularly for adolescents who tend to grasp messages more easily through visual media or direct simulations. This creates a dilemma between maintaining the ethics of da'wah and maximising the effectiveness of the message. Thus, although the sensory strategy succeeds in fostering awareness through real-life narratives, the potential to strengthen the message remains limited due to the constraints of da'wah ethics [6].

The sensory or experiential approach was also applied in da'wah on online gambling. This approach draws upon experiential learning theory, which posits that a person more easily understands a concept when they experience or feel it directly. In the context of da'wah, ustadz may use simulations or interactive activities to demonstrate the harmful effects of online gambling. For instance, by inviting the congregation to calculate how much money could be lost in a short period if someone continues gambling, or by showing a documentary depicting the suffering of gambling victims. In this way, the congregation not only receives theoretical information but can also feel how serious the threat of online gambling is [7].

The sensory strategy in da'wah generally relies on experience or tangible evidence. However, from the interviews, the ustadz explained that he never presented videos or visual evidence of gambling victims because he did not wish to expose the flaws of fellow Muslims. He stated that revealing someone's disgrace in public is not in line with Islamic da'wah ethics [8]. Nevertheless, the sensory approach was still applied indirectly through the explanation of real experiences. The ustadz often described social impacts such as divorce, neglected children, and even stress and mental disorders suffered by gamblers. These explanations made the community feel that the dangers were real and present around them. Direct simulations or activities were also never used, for the same reason upholding the ethics of da'wah by not humiliating individuals in public. Yet, the ustadz acknowledged that people are more easily moved when they see or directly experience the negative consequences of online gambling.

In this regard, the sensory strategy was implemented in the form of grounded observations and experiential narratives, rather than through visual or direct experimental means. This was carried out to ensure the preservation of sharia values and the ethics of Islamic communication.

Table 1. NU's Da'wah Strategies in Tackling Online Gambling

No	Approach	Descriptive	Example of Implementation	Adolescents' Response	Effectiveness
1	Sentimental	Touching the hearts and emotions of the audience.	Real-life stories of families suffering due to online gambling victims	Adolescents are more easily moved, feel guilty, and become motivated to change.	Fairly effective, as it appeals to the emotional side but the impact does not always last long.
2	Rational	Using logic, data, and religious arguments.	Financial loss and statistics and Qur'anic verses on the prohibition of gambling	Adolescents gain a more logical understanding that gambling is harmful.	Effective, particularly for adolescents who are critical and require logical explanations.
3	Sensory	Based on real-life experiences without exposing flaws.	Narratives of local cases and their impact on social relations	Adolescents become aware of the real dangers, though not all directly experience them.	Less optimal, as visual media/simulations are avoided. NU prefers ethics of not exposing flaws over full effectiveness of visual/simulation methods.

This approach is effective because the community in Paya Bakung Village is more deeply moved when they are able to compare it with the realities around them, such as seeing neighbours whose families have been destroyed by online gambling. Such experiences leave a stronger impression on both the mind and heart, thereby encouraging more consistent changes in attitude.

These three strategies are used simultaneously so that the da'wah message becomes more effective in raising public awareness of the dangers of online gambling [9]. The interview findings show that in delivering da'wah on the dangers of online gambling, the ustadz employed a combination of sentimental, rational, and sensory strategies [10]. This combined approach proved to be more effective in changing the mindset and behaviour of the congregation compared to using only one method. The integration of these three strategies created a da'wah method that was more effective and comprehensive than relying on a single approach. If da'wah were to rely solely on rationality, the message delivered might feel dry and less able to touch the hearts of the congregation. Conversely, if it were to focus only on the sentimental approach without logical grounding, the message might be considered excessive or insufficiently strong to convince the audience. Therefore, Islam teaches its followers to continuously engage in da'wah, to invite and to convey its values, so that the religious message can be spread to all corners of the world [11]. Meanwhile, the sensory approach further strengthens the message by providing real experiences that leave a lasting impression on the congregation.

Therefore, in efforts to eradicate online gambling within society, a holistic and comprehensive da'wah method is required. By combining rational, sentimental, and sensory strategies, da'wah on the dangers of online gambling becomes stronger, more effective, and capable of exerting a greater impact in changing the mindset and behaviour of the community so that they refrain from this prohibited practice. Although various strategies have been applied in Islamic da'wah whether through the rational approach emphasising logic and reasoning, the sentimental approach that appeals to emotions and religious feelings, or the sensory approach involving direct experiences and religious symbols the challenge of eradicating online gambling practices remains immense. The da'wah efforts undertaken thus far, particularly through sermons, counselling, and Qur'anic study sessions, have indeed made a positive contribution to raising public awareness regarding the dangers and prohibition of gambling. However, field realities reveal that these measures have not been fully able to stem the proliferation of online gambling, especially among adolescents and other productive age groups [12].

This indicates that in order to truly eliminate the habit of gambling from societal life, a more comprehensive and integrative strategy is needed. Merely relying on the delivery of religious information is insufficient to change behaviour, especially when the individuals targeted by da'wah are situated in difficult social and economic circumstances. Numerous complex factors influence a person to remain engaged in online gambling, ranging from economic pressures, social environmental influences, lack of family control, weak technological monitoring, to the mistaken belief that online gambling is a shortcut to income. Even though they are aware that gambling is prohibited in religion and has negative economic, psychological, and social consequences, situational pressures and weak self control often drive them to continue [13].

Hence, the eradication of online gambling cannot be carried out partially. Cross-sectoral collaboration involving religious leaders, educational institutions, local government, law enforcement, and civil society organisations is required. Da'wah must be reinforced with concrete actions in the form of continuous community

development, so that the message can be delivered in ways that are acceptable to all groups, from the affluent to the less privileged, and from children to the elderly [14]. The provision of spaces for productive activities for the community, wise digital education, and cultural approaches suited to local characteristics are also required. In addition, firm regulations and consistent law enforcement are necessary to close access to online gambling sites that remain easily accessible. With synergy between religious approaches and structural measures, it is hoped that online gambling practices within society can gradually and sustainably be eradicated [9].

One of the main reasons is the economic factor, as some choose online gambling as a primary occupation while others engage in it seasonally. Many people fall into online gambling not only due to a lack of religious understanding but also because of the pressure of livelihood needs. In difficult circumstances, they seek quick ways to earn money, and online gambling is often perceived as a shortcut. Although ustadz logically explained the adverse effects of gambling on finances and family, the reality is that when people are under duress, they may still be tempted to gamble. Therefore, beyond sermons, there must be practical solutions such as job training or economic empowerment programmes so that individuals have more secure and lawful sources of income.

Furthermore, online gambling is very easy to access. Unlike conventional gambling, which must be conducted in certain places, online gambling can be played anytime simply through a mobile phone. Even when someone has received advice and recognises the dangers, the temptation to return remains because of its ease of access. This is why da'wah alone is insufficient. Government action is required to block gambling sites and strictly punish those who continue to promote gambling online. If access to online gambling remains open, no matter how many sermons are delivered, it will still be difficult to stop this practice [15].

Another problem is addiction. Online gambling is not merely a game but can become addictive, similar to drugs. When someone wins, they feel elated and want to play again. When they lose, they feel compelled to continue playing to recover their lost money. This cycle repeats, making it difficult for a person to stop, even when they know gambling is harmful. Touching stories about lives destroyed by gambling may raise awareness, but for those already addicted, hearing sermons alone is not sufficient. They require further assistance, such as counselling or rehabilitation, in order to truly escape the cycle of gambling addiction [16]. Moreover, after da'wah sessions, there is often no follow-up. Many people may feel touched and wish to stop gambling after hearing a sermon, but without support or a community to accompany them, they may relapse into old habits. Over time, the fear or awareness sparked by sermons may fade, especially if they lack an environment that supports such change. Therefore, da'wah must be followed by mentoring programmes, job training, as well as moral and social support so that individuals can permanently leave gambling behind.

The implementation of NU's da'wah strategies brought about several observable changes in adolescent behaviour in Paya Bakung Village. Based on interviews and field observations, a number of adolescents reported reducing their visits to internet cafés, which were previously common places for online gambling. Some parents also testified that their children began to allocate their pocket money more responsibly, showing a decline in expenditures associated with gambling activities. These changes suggest that the sentimental approach, through emotionally engaging sermons, was able to evoke immediate awareness and prompt adolescents to reconsider their habits. In addition, the rational strategy produced a more lasting impact on adolescents who were able to connect logical arguments with their personal situations. For instance, several adolescents admitted that after attending study circles where statistical data and Qur'anic verses were presented, they consciously avoided gambling applications on their mobile phones. This demonstrates that da'wah grounded in both religious injunctions and logical reasoning can enhance cognitive awareness and self-regulation. While the sensory strategy was less optimally applied due to ethical constraints, narratives of local gambling-related hardships still resonated with adolescents, motivating them to reflect on the consequences of gambling within their community.

Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that the essence of da'wah is to call society to pursue the path of goodness and abandon wrongdoing in accordance with sharia guidance. It may thus be understood that da'wah plays an important role in providing understanding to the community, yet it cannot serve as the sole solution. As long as economic pressures, ease of access, addiction, and the absence of follow-up persist, online gambling will remain difficult to eradicate. Therefore, a broader approach is required, including stricter regulation, financial education, and rehabilitation programmes for those already addicted. Da'wah must continue, but it must be accompanied by concrete actions in order to achieve more effective and sustainable impact.

Analysis and Discussion

The research findings indicate that NU's da'wah strategies in Paya Bakung Village have applied sentimental, rational, and sensory approaches in an integrative manner. This aligns with Muhammad Ali Aziz's (2016) theory, which emphasises the importance of combining the three approaches to make da'wah more effective. However, this study also found that the sensory strategy has not been fully optimised, as NU tends to avoid the use of visual media or direct simulations [17]. This is based on the ethics of Islamic da'wah, namely not exposing the flaws of

fellow Muslims. While ethical, this limitation reduces the potential effectiveness of da'wah, particularly for adolescents who are more likely to grasp messages through visual and interactive experiences.

The factors hindering the effectiveness of da'wah include:

1. **Economic:** Pressures of livelihood drive some adolescents and their families to seek a "shortcut" through online gambling.
2. **Easy Access:** Online gambling is available 24 hours a day via mobile phones, making the temptation high even after advice has been given.
3. **Addiction:** Patterns of addiction make it difficult for perpetrators to stop, even when they are aware of the risks.
4. **Lack of Follow-up:** After sermons end, there is no intensive mentoring for adolescents who wish to stop gambling.

Therefore, NU's da'wah strategies need to be synergised with economic empowerment programmes, digital literacy education, government regulations to block gambling sites, as well as rehabilitation programmes for those already addicted.

The findings of this study revealed that one of the strongest challenges facing NU's da'wah strategies was the problem of economic hardship among families in Paya Bakung Village. Adolescents from low-income households were especially vulnerable to online gambling because it was perceived as an immediate solution to financial struggles. Although religious sermons highlighted the prohibition of gambling in Islam and its destructive impact on household finances, these moral considerations often lost their influence in the face of pressing livelihood needs. The reality that gambling was seen as a shortcut to income meant that adolescents continued to be exposed to strong economic temptations, suggesting that da'wah alone cannot resolve such deeply rooted structural conditions without being combined with economic empowerment initiatives. Alongside economic pressures, the easy availability of online gambling further complicated NU's preventive efforts. Unlike conventional gambling that requires physical spaces, online gambling can be accessed anywhere and at any time through mobile phones, with the added force of aggressive promotions via social media platforms. Even after being exposed to repeated da'wah messages warning about the dangers of gambling, adolescents admitted that the temptation remained difficult to resist because the digital environment constantly reinforced it. This illustrates the necessity of complementing religious da'wah with structural measures such as stricter state regulation, consistent law enforcement, and technological interventions to block access to gambling platforms that continue to operate openly.

Another factor that undermined the effectiveness of da'wah was the addictive nature of online gambling, which produced patterns of psychological dependence resembling substance abuse. Adolescents frequently described feelings of excitement after small wins and a compulsion to continue gambling to recover losses, creating a destructive cycle that was extremely difficult to break. While sentimental and rational da'wah messages could trigger temporary awareness, those already caught in addictive behaviour found it much harder to disengage. This indicates that counselling and rehabilitation must accompany da'wah so that gambling is addressed not only as a religious or social problem but also as a serious psychological condition requiring professional treatment. Finally, the study found that NU's da'wah strategies lacked systematic follow-up and long-term mentoring for adolescents who expressed willingness to change. Many youths reported feeling motivated or guilty after listening to sermons, but these effects gradually diminished in the absence of continuous support structures. Without consistent mentoring programmes, parental involvement, or youth-based peer groups, behavioural changes could not be sustained and relapses often occurred.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the da'wah strategies of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) administrators in Paya Bakung Village to address online gambling among adolescents were carried out through sentimental, rational, and sensory approaches in an integrative manner. These strategies successfully raised awareness among adolescents regarding the dangers of online gambling, yet their effectiveness was constrained by economic hardship, the ease of access to gambling platforms, patterns of addiction, and the absence of systematic follow-up. Therefore, while NU's da'wah has contributed positively to shaping awareness and encouraging behavioural change, da'wah alone cannot completely eradicate online gambling without the support of broader structural and social interventions. Future research is recommended to complement phenomenological findings with positivistic and quantitative approaches in order to provide deeper measurement and more generalisable evidence regarding the effectiveness of NU's da'wah strategies. Employing surveys or statistical models could capture the extent of behavioural changes among adolescents and allow for broader comparisons across different contexts. This combination of qualitative depth and quantitative breadth would yield more comprehensive insights to guide both policy formulation and practical interventions in tackling online gambling.

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