
AN EXPLORATION OF MEDIA WORK OF A CONVERT DA'I: SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO IMAM SUHAIB WEBB*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the roles of traditional media and social media in spreading da'wah (Islamic propagation) through the media work of an American Muslim convert, Imam Suhaib Webb, who is active in doing da'wah on television (traditional media) as well as on social media. This study also investigates the impact both traditional and social media have on the audience. His media work was chosen because he uses English in spreading da'wah and it is essential especially to the non-Malay speaking communities in Malaysia. The data was collected through a method of observation on TV Al-Hijrah (Malaysian Islamic television) where Imam Suhaib Webb has his own segment, and on social media namely Facebook. The data were then analysed using thematic approach and the themes related to the roles of media in spreading da'wah were established after the observation. The findings reveal that traditional media (television) has an important role in spreading da'wah. However, it is found that social media (Facebook) has a more significant role in spreading da'wah as social media has extensive roles and gives more impact on the audience than traditional media.

Keywords: *da'wah, media, roles and impacts, television, Facebook.*

INTRODUCTION

To begin with, below are some definitions of terms used in this paper:

- Islamic da'wah @ da'wah
A duty of calling or inviting Non-Muslims to Islam; by words, actions as well as lifestyles. It can also mean reminders and motivations for those who are already Muslims.
- Da'i
A preacher, a person who carries out da'wah. Any Muslims can be da'i and it is not only the responsibility of the religious authorities or religious institutions (Abdullah Muhammad Zin, 1991, p. 28)
- Traditional media
Media which have existed before the arrival of the internet. This paper will only concentrate on television as traditional media.