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### **Implementation of Non-Verbal Communication in *Dakwah bi al-Hal* towards Orang Asli Community in Malaysia**

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#### **Abstract**

*Non-verbal* communication is a form of communication sign without speech. Examples of this type of communication that takes place between one person and another include facial expressions, body gestures and so on. Whereas *bi al-hal da'wah* is a form of *da'wah* which also depends on its implementation on non-verbal aspects of communication. It refers to situations or circumstances in which a preacher can deliver his preaching in various forms without relying much on verbal communication. These situations can be seen for example through personal behaviour, social works, welfare and others. This article attempts to discuss how *da'wah bi al-hal* is carried out through non-verbal communication. The method used to address this issue is through document analysis related to the subject of the study. Thematic analysis method is used to clarify the issue of discussion related to *da'wah bi al hal* in non-verbal communication. The study found that the *da'wah bi al hal* as a part of non-verbal communication can be implemented through several forms, namely leadership by example, welfare and social service, and economy and entrepreneurship. As for the implementation of *da'wah bi al hal* among Orang Asli communities in Malaysia, several methods are considered to be related and applicable such as education, economy, and welfare.

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**Keywords:** 1. *Communication*, 2. *Non-verbal*, 3. *Dakwah bi al-hal*, 4. *Dakwah bi al-lisan*, 5. *Orang Asli*.

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## Introduction

Da'wah and communication are two fields that are intertwined with each other (Zulkefli & S. Salahudin 2016). Da'wah is also said to be the twin brother to the science of communication considering that through a proper method of da'wah and communication techniques it can strongly influence people to change their thoughts, emotions and behaviour. (Ainurliza et al. 2012). The success of da'wah, among others, is also determined by the effectiveness of communication between preachers and target groups either in verbal or non-verbal form. (WaizulQarni, 2019). In addition, the effectiveness of communication in da'wah is also seen from the point of view of a clear understanding of the message conveyed either verbally or non-verbally. (MaizatulHaizan, Wan Idros & Wan Amizah, 2019).

In fact, both oral and non-verbal messages complement each other and form a catalyst for the continuity of da'wah (AkhmadSaghir 2015). This is partly due to the fact that verbal messages also contain non-verbal elements that perfect and emphasize verbal messages as well as give a deeper meaning than verbal messages. Thus, there is an Arabic proverb that says that *lisan al-halafah min lisan al-maqal*, that is, non-verbal messages (in the form of deeds and behaviors) are more dominant and clear compared to the verbal messages spoken by the tongue (al-Bayanuni, 1995; H. Munzir & H. Harrjani, 2003). However, according to AkhmadSaghir (2015) this does not mean that da'wah delivered using non-verbal elements or *da'wah bi al-hal* against verbal or oral da'wah which are normally delivered through the medium of lectures and talks. Both forms of da'wah have the importance of their own strength in the effort to give a message to the target group.

The study of Zulkefli et al (2018c) found that *da'wah bi al-hal* is a form of persuasive communication on target groups. Persuasive communication is manifested in the form of non-verbal communication through certain behaviours. In this case, when a preacher exhibits a good personality and character while dealing with the target group, he can gain trust and influence them to change their behavior and way of thinking. This coincides with the view of Ali Yaakob (2006) who stated that the personal appearance of the preacher is an effective mechanism in *da'wah bi al-hal* in addition to conducting da'wah activities that meet the needs of individuals and society. Moreover, the use of non-verbal communication elements has differences in interpretation according to the culture of a nation and ethnicity (Knapp, Hall, & Horgan 2014; Muzdalifah, 2011). Disclosure of cultural aspects of races and ethnicity by the preacher is very important. As Zulkiple (1997) remarks, the delivery of messages in a non-verbal context is very valuable to help the preacher identify the background of the target group through the characteristics of appearance and facial ripples, especially at the beginning of the meeting.

Therefore, this article will discuss on how non-verbal communication can be implemented in *dakwah bi al-hal* to a target group in Malaysia particularly among Orang Asli communities through various approaches related to *da'wah bi al-hal*.

## Literature Review

### **a. Non-Verbal Communication**

Scientific research on nonverbal communication on human and animal behaviour began in 1872 with the publication of Charles Darwin's (1899) *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. According to Hess and Thibault (2009), the study influenced numerous studies related to emotion. It is believed to be the first scientific study that discusses the expression of emotions and its relation to communication (emotion communication), although it is actually an extension and reinforcement of the theory of evolution he created.

Studies on non-verbal communication are often associated with fields such as sociology, language, psychology, anthropology (Jung & Yoon, 2011), organizational management and administration (Maizatul& Noor Afzaliza 2017; Noor Afzaliza, MaizatulHaizan& Abdul Latiff 2018; Islam & Kirillova 2020) and education (Nor Suhaila et al 2014; Fatemah& Nasrin 2017). In Islamic studies, studies related to non-verbal communication are integrated with other fields such as Islamic da'wah (Zulkiple 2001; Zulkefli 2000; Erul 2008; Morvati&Shakarbigi 2012; Ainurliza et.al. 2012; WaizulQarni et al 2019), language of the Qur'an (Muhammad 2011; Al-Azzawi, Pandian, & Al-Saaidi 2016; Sopian 2019) and Islamic culture (Muzdalifah 2011; Hochel 2013).

Non-verbal communication is also known as wordless communication (Knapp, Hall & Horgan 2014). According to Hikson (2010), non-verbal communication involves signals sent by the body in a moving or silent state such as standing, a person's distance from others, walking, holding something, frowning, eye contact, and other social behaviors. It is a process that uses non-verbal messages to produce specific meanings that aim to reinforce a statement, affirm, repeat and deny something (Zulkiple, 2001). Non-verbal communication also refers to a process of message creation and exchange between sources and recipients that involves messages that are not spoken, translated or interpreted verbally (Leathers & Eaves, 2016).

This form of communication is considered to be more effective and dominant compared to oral communication. Messages sent through non-verbal cues are more widely received than verbal messages as shown in the Mehrabian (1971) study. It symbolizes the level of confidence in interacting when the word component represents 7%, the tone of voice (tone of voice or vocal expression) represents 38% and facial expression represents 55%. Similarly, the study of Morris (2002) and Danesi (2004) found that a person can convey more than two-thirds of a message to others through his body parts. For example, 250,000 from facial expressions, 5,000 from hand movements or gestures and 1,000 from postures.

Non-verbal communication involves behaviors, signs, symbols and objects that need to be carefully interpreted due to they are difficult to understand outwardly (Khadijah

&MaizatulHaizan, 2017) and have a very deep meaning (Knapp & Hall, 2006) especially in terms of social (Seiler, Beall & Mazer, 2016). Nonverbal cues can also describe the emotions, personality, purpose and social status of an individual (Zulkefli&S.Salahudin2016). Through non-verbal communication, one can take into account the procedures that can meet the subtlety and purity of a language and culture in communication. Among the aspects considered are intimacy and the ability to produce positive responses to each other (Arba'ie, Che Ibrahim & Nik Rafidah, 2007).

In addition, language as a medium of communication is not only limited to verbal forms. Non-verbal statements can also be used as a medium to produce meaning and provide a significant amount of information in understanding feelings and thoughts. Through non-verbal communication, signals that are effectively expressed can give a very positive feedback to a person even if it occurs for the first time during the process of communication between two parties (Nazarko 2009). This indicates that non-verbal communication is responsible for initial perceptions while communicating (Zulkiple, 2001).

Sometimes the message is clear and easy to understand and sometimes it is difficult to understand. Thus, the importance of signals in non-verbal communication serves as repeating, substituting, complementing, deceiving, regulating, accenting, contradicting, moderating, symbolic display and producing communication indicators so that the communication process takes place effectively, especially those involving the delivery of messages orally (Knapp & Hall 2007).

According to Burgoon &Hoobler (2002) there are two positive effects of verbal communication in social interaction, namely if a person can send and receive verbal signals effectively, he is more able and effective in highlighting his physical appearance, popularity, and psychosocial abilities. Second; if a person is able to demonstrate non-verbal communication skills effectively, he is more able to persuade and influence others.

In addition, Sopian (2019) who formulates the researcher's view on the importance of non-verbal language in the context of human interaction is that the non-verbal dimension is more focused in finding understanding in interpersonal communication: feelings and emotions are more easily conveyed through non-verbal messages. Similarly, non-verbal messages are conveyed clearly and unobtrusively; they contain actual communication meta functions that can achieve communication quality, non-verbal messages are a more effective way of conveying messages, and non-verbal communication messages are the most appropriate way to submit specific recommendations. In terms of operations, the dimensions of nonverbal communication can be grouped into four clusters, namely communication situations (space and distance, temperature, light and colour), self-identity (clothing, appearance, touch and time), body language (eye contact, facial expressions, body and hand movements) and paralinguistic (sound quality and characteristics) (Burgoon, Guerrero, & Floyd 2016; Seiler, Beall & Mazer 2016).

b. Dakwah bi *al-Hal*

Etymologically, the term *da'wah bi al-hal* is a combination of two Arabic words, namely *da'wah* with the meaning of calling or invitation and *al-hal* which means a real situation,

situation and certain actions. The combination of these two words carries the meaning of calling with certain situations and actions that suit the background of *mad'u* (those who are called). The basis for the implementation of *da'wah bi al-hal* is based on the Qur'an and hadith (the Prophet Muhammad tradition).

Among the related verses of the Qur'an concerning *da'wah bi al hal* are: Surah al-Ma'idah, verse 2 (Chapter 5:2), Surah al-Tawbah, verse 60 (Chapter 9:60), Surah al-Ra'd, verse 11 (Chapter 13:11), Surah al-Nahl, verse 125 (Chapter 16:125), Surah al-Ahzab, verse 21 (Chapter 33:21), Surah Fussilat, verses 33 (Chapter 41:33) and Surah al-Mumtahanah, verse 8 (Chapter 60:8).

Meanwhile, the relevant hadiths are as follows:

"From Abi Hurairah he said: The Messenger of Allah said: Whoever releases a Believer from the difficulties and hardships, Allah will release him from hardship on the Day of Judgment; Whoever facilitates the hardships of his brother, then Allah will facilitate for him life in this world and in the hereafter; Whoever covers the shame of a Muslim surely Allah covers him in this world and in the hereafter. Allah always helps a servant who always helps his brother"(Hadith narrated by Muslim and Abu Daud).

Previous studies have concluded that *da'wah bi al-halis da'wah* in the form of a social approach. Its main focus is on the example of good role models (*qudwahhasanah*), community service and infrastructure development. The objective of *da'wah bi al hal* is to improve the moral quality and standard of living of the target group in various sectors such as economy, society, education, health and sports.

According to Ali Yaakub (2006), *da'wah bi al-hal* as a social da'wah approach (*manhaj al-amalma'a al-jamaah*) should follow the Prophet Muhammad's guidelines and approaches. There are eight methods of social da'wah applied by the Prophet Muhammad, namely the commitment and identity of the preacher (*thiqah al-dai'iyah*), clear goals and objectives (*tahdid al-hadaf*), understanding the situation and circumstances of society (*al-ta'aruf 'ala tabi'at al-mujtama'*), training for leadership (*tarbiyyahqiyadiyah*), presenting da'wah clearly (*al-'ard al-wadih*), creating excellence and attractiveness of da'wah (*ijadistiqtabhawl al-da'wah*), behaving in line with the principle (*al-suluk al-mutabiq li al-mabadi'*), and patience and perseverance in facing challenges (*al-sabrwa al-tahammul*). These methods are considered as a strong pillar in applying *da'wah bi al-hal*.

Meanwhile, Siti Undriyati (2015) sees *da'wah bi al-hal* in the context of preacher's skills in terms of exemplary conduct displayed during da'wah aimed at improving the standard and quality of life of the target group. It is also a moral perfection in the hope that *mad'u* can emulate and participate in the dakwah activities organized by a preacher. This approach of *da'wah bi al-hal* is also known as *da'wah bi al-qudwah al-hasanah* (Zaydan 1993) by using the medium and technique of da'wah in an implicit (*ma'nawi*) manner which signifies a manifestation of the moral purity of the preacher who does not need oral language to explain it (al-Bayanuni 1995). In addition, the implementation of *da'wah bi al-hal*, according to A. Aziz (2001), includes efforts to apply Islamic values in the practice and way of life of a society. It is also focused on efforts to

build good morals in the community such as unity, tolerance, helping each other and respecting others.

Meanwhile, AzizulAzra and Mohd. Hisyam (2017, 2018) are of the view that *da'wah bi al-hal* is a da'wah process that takes place when the preacher provides self-development services through activities directed to improve the well-being and happiness of the ummah, whether physically or spiritually. It is also a da'wah approach implemented through charitable activities and appropriate activities through the field of education, politics, leadership and social individually or in groups by highlighting, appreciating, introducing and building the personality and practising Islamic lifestyle.

AkhmadSagir (2015) and Rahmad (2017) refer to *da'wah bi al-halas* the best service offered by the preacher to the community so that each member of the community involved is able to develop their talents and roles and get inspiration from the preacher. At the same time, they can solve problems in their lives such as poverty and backwardness in economics and education. This requires the preacher to take a practical approach, instead of mere rhetoric. The preacher in this context can act as a change agent in helping the poor members of society by helping to create employment opportunities and skills to face the demands of life (AkhmadSagir 2015).

Meanwhile, Mohd. Yusof (2009) relates the *da'wah bi al-hal* with the development communication process. He is of the view that *da'wah bi al-hal* is also known as *al-da'wah bi al-'amal* (da'wah through practice), *al-da'wah bi al-fi'il* (da'wah by action) and *al-da'wah bi al-tanmiyyah al-mujtama'* (da'wah through community development) performed in the approach of implementing programs for community development. Through these approaches, the target group is believed to be easily influenced when they are more focused on what the preacher is doing practically than what they hear from a series of talks or explanations. However, the preachers who carry out the mission of *da'wah bi al-hal* normally will face more challenges than those of verbal da'wah (*da'wah bi al-lisan*).

The duty of a preacher is not merely to convey the message of Islam to the target group, but also to help people to improve the quality of life. They should also act as community agents of change and community development workers, to identify the people's needs, to get support from community leaders and members as well as local organizations in the planned da'wah projects, to help the community to develop their projects, to provide certain skills to community members, to motivate community members, be a source of reference, to ensure the planned dakwah project runs well, and to make an assessment of the completed project (Mohd. Yusof, 2009).

In terms of da'wah operations in the field, the forms of *da'wah bi al-hal* are not limited in scope (MohdZairul& Abdul Ghafar 2018). It includes a visit programs and to target groups such as Indigenous people, new converts, hospital patients, people with disabilities, the elderly, trainees at the rehabilitation centre and detainee in prisons as well as understanding non-Muslim culture, training and skills programs such as computers and culinary (Fadri 2017), programs that

meet basic needs of the people such as economic and programs that can improve the quality of religious, intellectual and social practices, building facilities and infrastructure in communities such as community halls and clinics (AkhmadSagir 2015 ).

**c. Da'wahto OrangAsli Community**

In general, the study regarding da'wah to the Orang Asli can be divided into four scopes, namely the development of da'wah to the Orang Asli, the role and function of the preacher who preached to the Orang Asli, the da'wah approach used and the response of the Orang Asli to the dakwah.

According to Syed Abdurahman (2003) the study of da'wah efforts to the Orang Asli began in the mid-70s or early 80s with the establishment of the Faculty of Islamic Studies, UniversitiKebangsaan Malaysia and the Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya. Although the government had established certain divisions and units related to Orang Aslidakwah, detailed studies on Orang Aslida'wah had not been taken seriously .

In the context of the role and function of the preacher to the Orang Asli community, the discussion is more focused on the preacher in the form of groups through stakeholders related to the Orang Aslida'wah such as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), State Islamic Religious Council, State Islamic Religious Department, Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The preacher is known through certain appointmentslike Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli (PMOA) by JAKIM, Panel PendakwahMuallaf by the Selangor Islamic Religious Council (MAIS), Guru Agama Orang Asli by Council of Islamic Religion and Malay Custom, Kelantan (MAIK) and Muballighby of the Islamic Religious Council and Malay Custom Perak (MAIPK).

Studies conducted by researchers such as Ab. Aziz and Ahmad Redzuwan (2006), Che Musa (2011), Razaleigh, Abd Ghafar and Abu Dardaa (2012), JamilahMohd. Zain and Engku Ahmad Zaki Engku Alwi (2017), and Abdurahman and Abdul Ghafar (2018), for example, found that preachers who are kind to the Orang Asli community have a high commitment in conveying the message of da'wah and guiding them to be in the environment as Muslims. They also play a role in running programs in the form of social works, health and economy to create a developmentecosytem in the Orang Asli community.

According to Abdul Ghafar et.al. (2019), academics in IHL also play a role in the development of the Orang Asli community focused on four main areas, namely teaching, research, publishing and community service. The role is further highlighted through teaching and learning activities that include aspects of supervising practical training, research activities and specialist consultancy services. The mission of developing the Orang Asli community is more meaningful and effective when there is active collaboration between agencies that are directly involved in the development of the Orang Asli community with academics in IHL.

The discussion regarding the form and approach of da'wah to the Orang Asli can be categorized into several components, among them are the form of programs and activities carried out, and the ways and approaches of the programs implemented.

Dakwah to Orang Asli can be implemented through community service approach or social services method (Abdul Ghafar et.al. 2012). Through this approach, several programs are organized such as providing meals, house-to-house visit, telematch, and *gotong royong*. The approach of da'wah to the Orang Asli community can also be implemented through oral and non-verbal da'wah including what is termed by MohdZairul and Abdul Ghafar (2018) as *da'wah bi al-hal*. Verbal da'wah approaches such as explaining the teachings of Islam to them through farduain classes which focused on the basic topics of tawhid, fiqh and morality (Zulkefli& Nur Uswah 2020), as well as explaining the aspects of community life in general such as health, family, economy and security. On the other hand, the non-verbal dakwah approach in the form of *da'wah bi-al-hal* emphasizes the development aspects of the Orang Asli community in terms of education, economy and welfare (MohdZairul and Abdul Ghafar, 2018). Such an approach has a great impact on the lives of the Orang Asli. According to Abdul Ghafar (2014) the understanding and appreciation of Islam will be more easily applied and implemented in their lives when the preacher can help to improve their quality of life.

The study of da'wah to Orang Asli through communication approach is also discussed by researchers (Muhamad Faisal et al., 2014). Studies on this particular theme show the dynamic of da'wah to the Orang Asli community when preachers use certain forms of communication as a strategy to convey the message of da'wah to the target group. It is used in interpersonal communications such as casual conversation, population census and concern on problem solving in terms of social and economic point of view, forming group through farduain classes (Zulkefli et al., 2018b; Zulkefli, Faiz& Nur Damia 2018c; Zulkefli et. al., 2019a) in *da'wah bi al hal* manner such as organizing community activities and programs (MohdZairulRidzuan& Abdul Ghafar, 2018) as well as the use of social media (Zulkefli et. al., 2018b).

In the process of da'wah to the Orang Asli there is an element of feedback received from them either positively or negatively. Syed Abdurrahman (2008), for example, views that there are three main obstacles lead to slow acceptance of da'wah by Orang Asli conveyed to them, namely obstacles from the preachers, obstacles from their own communities and obstacles coming from outsiders.

In the context of the obstacle that come from their own communities, it is because they hold fast to their customs and beliefs such as animism and ancestral traditions which makes it difficult for them to accept Islam as a new religion and way of life. This is compounded by the way of life and the environment they live in which depends on nature to survive. In addition, they have a certain attitude towards the preachers who come to them. Thus, according to Zulkefli, Faiz& Nur Damia (2018c) Orang Asli are more inclined and like preachers who come from their own tribe who are better understand their lives including their thoughts, culture and language.

Ramle (2015) in his study noted that Indigenous people found it difficult to accept and practice Islam because they believe that converting to Islam equalsturning them into Malays and therefore, their identity as Orang Asli will be eroded. Islam has been regarded to have many



prohibitions or "don't" thinking that being a Muslim will prevent them to eat their favourite food like pigs. They are also of the opinion that it is difficult to practice Islamic teachings such as prayer because they need to change clothes and so on which in their view is troublesome to them.

Similarly, the study of Halim (2002) found that some Orang Asli still have a negative attitude towards Islam due to their low educational background which prevents them from current developments and less exposure to Islamic teachings. In addition, some of them are affected by the views of their seniors who have bitter experience with the Malays. They think that the Malays who are Muslims have been dishonest when conducting business transactions and morally corrupt.

From the point of view of their acceptance of dakwah programs, it depends on the form or type the program. If the organizers carry an Islamic brand, they take the attitude of "wait and see" worrying that the program is aimed at forcing them to convert to Islam. To make the situation worse, they are of the view that some organizers who came to their villages without consulting with local leaders such as Batin.

### [The Practice Of Non-Verbal Communication In Da'wah Bi Al-Hal To The Orang Asli](#)

The approach of da'wah to the Orang Asli community focuses more on *da'wah bi al-hal* to develop them in terms of education, economy and welfare (Mohd. Zairul and Abd. Ghafar 2018). According to Abd. Ghafar (2014) such an approach has an impact in conveying the message of da'wah to Orang Asli. This kind of approach gives the opportunity for the preachers to promote and inculcate the message of Islam more easily. Meanwhile, Che Yusuff, Ahmad Redzuwan and Anuar (2004) suggest that da'wah bi al-hal is also known as indirect da'wah.

The delivery of oral or verbal messages in the form of talks and lectures is not so practical in the context of da'wah to the Orang Asli except in certain matters such as religious classes. Thus, da'wah bi al-hal is seen as more practical. Among the forms of *da'wah bi al-hal* that are suitable to be implemented are visit programs, foster families, arts and video shows, gotong royong, sport events, health services and education. While Azizul and Mohd. Hasyim (2018) is of the view that the dakwah approach of *bi al-hal* can be implemented in the framework of exhibiting noble morals, offering the best services and providing infrastructure for the convenience of community. It not only involves the sharing and delivery of verbal messages to the target group but more importantly provides service to the community and develops them in the aspects of physical, spiritual, emotional and social.

According to H. Munzier & H. Harjani (2009) da'wah bi al-hal approach focuses more on the true and honest preachers. This includes how to speak, behave and interact with the target group. Mohd Zairul and Abd. Ghafar (2018) are of the view that da'wah bi al-hal approach is closely related to the morals and example shown by the preacher. In certain situations, when it is quite difficult to convey a message through words, emotions or personalities non-verbal signals can be applied. Such communication is vital especially in dealing with sensitive groups such as the Orang Asli community (Zulkiple, 2001). This situation occurs when preachers who try to

convey the message of Islam need to be very careful as not to use words that may hurt the Orang Asli.

According to Zulkefli et al (2017) in the context of the practice of non-verbal communication elements, preachers need to use clear and orderly dakwah language when communicating with Orang Asli. Clear and orderly language refers to the situation of a preacher who does not use phrases that are too long and does not speak too fast when interacting with the Orang Asli community. The study found that preachers are advised to use simple, concise and concise words to facilitate the understanding of the Orang Asli community on the message of da'wah.

Studies also show that the Orang Asli community does not like to hear words and sentences that are too long. The preacher who speaks with a long period of time will cause Orang Asli to feel bored. In addition, rhetoric or the art of using language whether verbal or non-verbal should be utilized by preachers when conveying messages to the target groups (Azlina, 2017). Preachers should also use convincing language and contain elements of persuasion when meeting with village leaders such as Batin who have influence and authority among the Orang Asli so that their arrival is easily accepted by the Orang Asli (Zulkefli et al 2018b). This can be done when the preacher utilizes functions in the process of non-verbal communication such as repetition, refinement and emphasis on specific messages as well as non-verbal elements such as facial expressions.

Such an approach is a form of persuasive communication that focuses on the essence of the message conveyed (Suranto AW, 2019). In this way, the preacher can create good, meaningful and continuous social interaction so that programs oriented towards physical and social development as well as religious appreciation can be implemented well. A preacher who has a good relationship with Batin will have an influence in the delivery of his da'wah.

According to Zulkefli and Damia Husna (2017), preachers need to show a pleasant personality by showing a smile when coming to meet or visit the Orang Asli. Preachers who interact with the Orang Asli community need to smile so that the Orang Asli would feel comfortable with his presence. Similarly, it should be followed by saying greetings or good morning while shaking hands with those of the same gender. This is important to build relationships and early impressions in communication in order to deliver the message more easily.

The preacher must also exhibit an effective communication style whenever interacting with the target group verbally and non-verbally so that the message conveyed have the meaning and could be interpreted well (Fauziah & Bahiyah, 2018). According to Mc Auley (1992), the elements of facial expression and touch can affect the effectiveness of message delivery even if it is the first action when meeting the target group. This will help the next communication process or another meeting.

During the visit to the Orang Asli village, it is highly encouraged for the preachers to bring with them certain gifts and basic needs such as food, sugar, salt and rice to be given to Orang Asli. This kind of non-verbal message will establish good relationship with the Orang Asli. Normally, Orang Asli do not care about the value of the gift given to them, but it is quite meaningful and certainly can bridging the communication gap regardless of age. Giving gifts and basic needs can build the relationship between preachers and Orang Asli who are known for their

shy and humble nature. They can also create a cheerful atmosphere, especially in programs held such as sports, cooking competitions, Islamic charity competitions and so on.

The preachers dress are also important when performing visiting activities so as not to cause discomfort among the Orang Asli. A study by Zulkefli and Damia Husna (2017) found that male preachers were not encouraged to wear robes when entering Orang Asli villages. They think that preachers who wear such clothes want to force them to embrace Islam or force them to practice the teachings of Islam (Zulkefli and Damia Husna, 2017). In the study of non-verbal communication, the way of dressing worn by preachers is also known as Islamic artifact communication which is regarded a method of conveying messages and notifications about oneself (Nasrin, Hanif, Amani 2017).

Every Orang Asli tribe in Malaysia is known for certain customs and taboos related to life such as birth, marriage, death, food and drink, employment and so on. In this regard, preachers need to know the basics related to the customs and taboos of the Orang Asli community. Understanding Orang Asli cultures and customs will make it easier for preachers to interact with the Orang Asli without touching things that violates their customs and taboos. In the context of non-verbal communication elements, the use of space or proxemics can influence the effectiveness of da'wah (Zulkiple 2001).

For example, personal space, for example, is very important to pay attention to, especially when preachers visit Orang Asli house. Preachers cannot continue to enter the Orang Asli house unless invited and allowed. In addition, preachers need to be sensitive to certain symbols and signals placed on certain parts of the house or around the yard that are associated with certain taboos such as death.

## Conclusion

Da'wah needs to be conveyed in certain ways and methods so that it can be well received by the *mad'u* (target). Among the mediums and forms of da'wah delivery that was practiced by the messenger is through the approach of non-verbal or non-verbal communication which is the discipline of da'wah is known as *da'wah bi al-hal*. Islamic scholars are of the view that non-verbal preaching is more effective than oral preaching. Orang Asli communities as a minority in Malaysia are also part of the dakwah agenda that needs to be addressed with a relevant approach and appropriate to the background of their lives. *Da'wah bi al-hal* can be considered as a form or medium of dakwah that is relevant, appropriate and can be implemented in the context of Indigenous society. Educational programs, social welfare, entrepreneur development programs, the appearance of good moral examples and role models are among the non-verbal communication approaches through *da'wah bi al-hal* that can be applied in the context of da'wah to the Orang Asli community in this country. In fact, it will have more impact on the acceptance of da'wah among the Orang Asli community than the approach of oral communication or *da'wah bi al-lisan*.

*This paper is part of Research Grant awarded by Department of Islamic Religious Affairs Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia: PP-2020-010*

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