

Analysis of the Muslim preacher's administration for da'wah communication in Sorong City, Southwest Papua, Indonesia

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Received: 10-04-2026

Accepted: 05-05-2026

Published: 12-06-2026

Abstract: The quality of da'wah communication depends not only on the speaking ability of Muslim preachers but also on their administrative preparation before delivering sermons. This study analyses the administrative practices of Friday sermon preachers in Sorong City, Southwest Papua, Indonesia. Using a qualitative approach, in-depth interviews were conducted with seventeen respondents, consisting of thirteen Friday preachers and four mosque administrators. The selected preachers represented diverse educational backgrounds, including two doctoral graduates, two master's degree holders, seven bachelor's degree holders, and two respondents with educational qualifications below undergraduate level. Data were analysed through open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and thematic interpretation. The findings reveal substantial differences in sermon administration. Preachers with higher educational backgrounds generally prepared complete sermon manuscripts, thematic outlines, Qur'anic and Hadith references, and audio-video documentation. Their sermons commonly addressed contemporary topics such as Islamic economic ethics, family resilience, implementation of the pillars of Islam, and social responsibility. In contrast, several respondents relied on spontaneous preaching with limited written preparation, particularly when discussing recurring themes such as Islamic holy days and basic faith teachings. Weaknesses were identified in documentation systems, sermon archiving, citation verification, and thematic coherence. Despite these limitations, strong religious commitment and community engagement remained evident among all respondents. The study recommends preacher training, digital archiving systems, standardized sermon administration, and citation verification mechanisms to strengthen professional da'wah communication. These initiatives may improve sermon quality, accountability, and effectiveness within multicultural Muslim communities.

Keywords: *Da'wah Communication; Friday Sermon Administration; Islamic Preaching; Religious Communication; Southwest Papua*

INTRODUCTION

Religious communication constitutes one of the most influential forms of social interaction within Muslim societies (Sulaeman, 2019; and Hidayat et al., 2024). Through sermons, lectures, religious counselling, and educational activities, Muslim preachers serve as mediators between Islamic teachings and contemporary social realities. Effective da'wah communication enables religious messages to be transmitted clearly, ethically, and persuasively, thereby contributing to individual spiritual development and broader social cohesion (Pengembangan et al., 2018; and Sony Eko Adisaputro et al., 2021).

Globally, scholars have increasingly emphasized the importance of professional communication in religious institutions (Muhammad, 2025). Contemporary religious leaders are expected not only to possess theological competence but also to

demonstrate organizational skills, communication planning, media literacy, and accountability (Hidayat, Muslim; Putri Maulida Dwi Cahyani, 2022; and Hidayat et al., 2024). The rapid expansion of digital communication technologies has further transformed public expectations regarding religious communication. Congregations increasingly demand accurate religious information, transparent documentation, and evidence-based preaching practices (Alhamid et al., 2025).

Within Indonesia, Friday sermons represent one of the most significant forms of Islamic communication. Every week, millions of Muslims gather in mosques to receive religious guidance from preachers. The Friday sermon serves not only as a ritual obligation but also as an educational medium through which religious values, moral principles, and social responsibilities are communicated (Pahlevi et al., 2025).

Despite its importance, many studies have focused primarily on sermon content, preaching methods, rhetoric, and audience reception. Limited attention has been devoted to the administrative aspects of da'wah communication (Bryson et al., 2014; and Ahmad Amir Aziz & Miftahul Huda, 2024). Administrative preparedness includes the development of written sermon concepts, systematic documentation, recording practices, citation management, thematic planning, and evaluation mechanisms. These administrative dimensions contribute significantly to sermon quality, accountability, and sustainability (Butkouskaya et al., 2023; and Mochammad Rozikin; Stephanie Devina Agustin Hake; & Wahyuni Nur Effendi, 2025).

Context of Sorong City

Sorong City, located in Southwest Papua Province, represents one of eastern Indonesia's most culturally diverse urban areas (Muhammad Sidek; Suparto Iribaram; Hasbullah, 2025). The city consists of Muslims originating from various ethnic, linguistic, and educational backgrounds. Such diversity requires preachers to communicate Islamic teachings effectively while maintaining theological accuracy and social sensitivity (Khairifa et al., 2025; and Satir & Akidah, Sri, 2025).

Data from local Islamic institutions indicate that approximately 132 Muslim preachers regularly deliver Friday sermons in Sorong City mosques. Their educational backgrounds vary considerably, ranging from doctoral graduates to individuals with limited formal Islamic education. This diversity creates opportunities for rich religious discourse but may also generate inconsistencies in sermon preparation and administrative practices (Alkadry et al., 2025).

Preliminary observations suggest that many preachers prioritize oral delivery while paying limited attention to sermon administration (Ahmad Amir Aziz & Miftahul Huda, 2024; and Demirkoparan, 2025). Written sermon manuscripts are often unavailable, documentation systems remain weak, and audio-visual recordings are inconsistently maintained. In some cases, sermon topics lack adequate thematic planning or exhibit insufficient integration between arguments and scriptural evidence (Zahir, 2025).

The absence of systematic administration may affect sermon quality, reduce opportunities for evaluation, hinder institutional memory, and weaken the professionalization of da'wah communication (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Moreover, undocumented sermons limit opportunities for future research, training, and theological review.

Existing studies on Islamic preaching generally examine communication strategies, persuasive techniques, audience engagement, and theological discourse (Hidayat et al., 2024). Few investigations specifically analyse the administrative dimensions of Friday sermon communication. Research focusing on sermon documentation systems, written preparation practices, and citation management remains particularly scarce.

Furthermore, studies addressing da'wah communication in Papua and Southwest Papua remain limited compared with research conducted in Java and other major Indonesian regions (Hidayat et al., 2024; Musaddad & Sewang, 2025; and Febrianti & Rahmat, 2025). Consequently, empirical understanding of preacher administration in eastern Indonesia remains insufficient. This study would contribute several novel aspects. First, it introduces administrative preparedness as a central analytical framework for evaluating da'wah communication (Wahyu et al., 2026). Second, it examines the relationship between educational background and sermon administration practices. Third, it investigates documentation systems involving written manuscripts, audio recordings, and video archives. Fourth, it evaluates thematic cohesion and coherence between sermon topics and supporting Qur'anic and Hadith references (Tang et al., 2018). Fifth, it provides evidence from Southwest Papua, an underrepresented geographical context within Islamic communication scholarship.

This study employs Communication Management Theory and Professional Religious Communication Theory. Communication Management Theory emphasizes planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating communication activities. Professional Religious Communication Theory highlights accountability, message accuracy, ethical responsibility, and audience-oriented communication practices (Taufiq, 2026).

Within these frameworks, effective da'wah communication requires systematic planning, credible evidence, coherent messaging, and proper documentation. Administrative preparedness becomes an indicator of communication professionalism because it supports consistency, accountability, and continuous improvement (Nusir et al., 2025; and Subowo, 2026).

Therefore, this study focused on the research questions of how Muslim preachers prepare administrative documents before delivering Friday sermons; what strengths characterize current preacher administrative practices; what weaknesses affect sermon administration and documentation; how preachers maintain thematic cohesion and coherence between topics and scriptural references; and what solutions can improve preacher professionalism and administrative quality.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design using in-depth interviews (Creswell, 2018). The approach was selected because it allows comprehensive exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and administrative practices. The study involved 17 respondents, who consisted of 13 Muslim Preachers, including 2 doctoral graduates, 2 master's degree holders, 7 bachelor's degree holders, 2 respondents below undergraduate educational level, and four mosque administrators responsible for recording, documenting, and organizing Friday sermon activities.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure variation in educational background, preaching experience, and administrative responsibilities.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted individually. Interview questions addressed: written sermon preparation, development of sermon outlines, citation of Qur'anic verses, citation of Hadith, thematic planning, audio documentation, video documentation, archiving practices, evaluation procedures, and training experiences. Each interview lasted approximately 60–90 minutes and was recorded with the participant's consent (Miles, 2014).

Data Analysis

The steps of data analysis in this study are described as follows. *Step 1: Transcription*

Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. *Step 2: Open Coding.* Researchers identified key concepts and statements from interview transcripts. Examples: Preparing written manuscripts. Using spontaneous sermons, "Recording sermons, and Lack of documentation. *Step 3: Axial Coding.* Related codes were grouped into broader categories: administrative preparedness, documentation management, scriptural verification, and communication effectiveness. *Step 4: Selective Coding.* Core themes were identified: professional sermon administration, administrative weaknesses, documentation challenges, and capacity-building needs. *Step 5: Thematic Interpretation.* Themes were interpreted through communication management and professional communication perspectives.

Trustworthiness

Credibility was enhanced through member checking, triangulation between preachers and mosque administrators, prolonged engagement, and peer review.

FINDINGS

The interviews revealed significant differences in administrative preparation among Friday preachers in Sorong City. These differences were closely associated with educational background, preaching experience, and personal perceptions regarding the importance of sermon documentation. Most doctoral and master's degree holders reported preparing written sermon manuscripts before delivering Friday sermons. Their preparation process usually began several days in advance by selecting a topic, collecting Qur'anic verses and Hadith references, preparing supporting arguments, and arranging the sermon into a logical structure. Commonly prepared topics included Islamic economic ethics, halal business practices, anti-corruption values, environmental stewardship, family resilience, youth morality, and the implementation of the pillars of Islam in contemporary society. These respondents emphasized that written preparation enabled them to maintain thematic consistency and avoid inaccurate religious references.

For example, when discussing Islamic trade and economic practices, respondents commonly prepared Qur'anic references concerning honesty in business transactions, prohibition of *riba*, and social responsibility toward disadvantaged groups. They also consulted classical and contemporary Islamic literature to strengthen their arguments. Similarly, sermons concerning the pillars of Islam and the pillars of faith were usually supported by carefully selected scriptural references and

practical examples relevant to daily life in Sorong City.

In contrast, several bachelor's degree holders and respondents with lower educational backgrounds tended to rely on experience and memory rather than complete written manuscripts. These respondents frequently prepared short notes containing sermon titles, selected Qur'anic verses, and a few key messages. They explained that years of preaching experience had enabled them to speak without extensive preparation.

Interestingly, topics related to Islamic holy days such as Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, Islamic New Year, Isra' Mi'raj, and the Prophet's birthday were often delivered without comprehensive written preparation. Many respondents considered these themes familiar because they were repeated annually. Consequently, some preachers relied on previous sermon experiences instead of developing new written materials. While this approach facilitated efficient preparation, mosque administrators observed that repeated sermons occasionally lacked fresh perspectives and systematic organization.

The findings also reveal weaknesses in sermon documentation. Among the thirteen preachers interviewed, only a small number maintained organized collections of sermon manuscripts. Most written materials were stored informally or discarded after delivery. Audio and video recordings were similarly inconsistent. Although some mosques recorded sermons using smartphones or digital devices, the recordings were rarely archived systematically.

Mosque administrators acknowledged that documentation systems remained underdeveloped (Alhamid et al., 2025). They reported difficulties retrieving previous sermon materials when needed for educational activities, preacher evaluations, or community references. One administrator noted that valuable religious knowledge was often lost because sermons were not preserved beyond their initial delivery.

Another important finding concerns thematic cohesion and coherence. Respondents with systematic preparation generally demonstrated strong relationships between sermon titles, supporting arguments, Qur'anic verses, Hadith references, and practical recommendations. For example, sermons on Islamic business ethics integrated theological teachings with contemporary economic challenges faced by local Muslim entrepreneurs.

However, several respondents admitted that they occasionally selected scriptural references after determining the sermon topic without thoroughly examining the contextual relevance of the verses or Hadith. Mosque administrators confirmed that some sermons shifted between unrelated themes, reducing message clarity and audience comprehension.

Despite these weaknesses, all respondents demonstrated strong commitment to da'wah activities and community guidance. Many actively addressed local social issues, promoted inter-community harmony, and encouraged religious observance. The findings, therefore, indicate that administrative shortcomings do not necessarily reflect weak religious commitment but rather limitations in professional communication management.

Most respondents agreed that the improvements could be achieved through

preacher training, standardized sermon administration guidelines, digital archiving systems, and collaborative peer-review mechanisms among local Islamic scholars.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that administrative preparation significantly influences the effectiveness of da'wah communication. Preachers who prepared complete sermon manuscripts demonstrated stronger thematic organization, more accurate scriptural integration, and greater coherence between religious teachings and contemporary social issues. These findings support Communication Management Theory, which emphasizes planning and organization as essential components of effective communication.

The contrast between prepared and unprepared sermons is particularly visible in recurring religious topics. Themes related to Islamic holy days, including Ramadan and Isra' Mi'raj were frequently delivered without extensive preparation because many preachers considered them familiar subjects. While such familiarity may enhance speaking confidence, excessive reliance on memory can reduce innovation and limit contextual relevance. Congregations may repeatedly receive similar messages without exposure to deeper theological reflection or contemporary applications.

Conversely, topics related to trade, economic ethics, corruption prevention, and the implementation of Islamic principles in modern society generally require more extensive preparation. These subjects involve complex social realities and, therefore, encourage preachers to consult multiple references. The resulting sermons exhibited stronger analytical depth and clearer connections between Islamic teachings and everyday challenges.

The findings further suggest that educational background affects administrative preparedness. Respondents possessing postgraduate qualifications generally demonstrated greater commitment to documentation, reference verification, and sermon archiving. Nevertheless, educational attainment alone cannot fully explain sermon effectiveness. Several bachelor's degree holders displayed excellent communication skills and strong community engagement despite limited administrative practices. This finding indicates that experience and social credibility remain important factors in religious communication.

Weak documentation practices emerged as one of the most significant challenges. Contemporary religious communication increasingly requires accountability and institutional memory. Without written manuscripts, audio recordings, and video archives, opportunities for evaluation, training, and scholarly review become limited. Digital documentation can preserve valuable religious knowledge while supporting future preacher development.

Another important issue concerns theological accuracy. Effective sermons require coherence between sermon themes and scriptural evidence. When Qur'anic verses and Hadith references are selected carefully, they strengthen message credibility and facilitate audience understanding. Conversely, weak source verification may reduce sermon quality and increase the risk of interpretive errors.

The multicultural context of Sorong City further highlights the importance of

professional sermon administration. As a city characterized by ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity, Sorong requires religious leaders capable of delivering accurate, contextual, and socially responsible messages. Administrative preparation supports this objective by encouraging thoughtful planning and systematic communication.

The study, therefore, demonstrates that professional da'wah communication extends beyond public speaking skills. Effective preaching requires preparation, documentation, verification, and evaluation. These elements collectively contribute to communication quality, organizational accountability, and long-term religious education.

The findings demonstrate that administrative preparedness significantly influences the quality of da'wah communication. Consistent with Communication Management Theory, effective communication requires systematic planning and documentation. Preachers who prepared written manuscripts exhibited stronger message organization, greater thematic coherence, and more reliable scriptural integration.

Educational background emerged as an important factor affecting administrative quality. Doctoral and master's degree holders generally demonstrated higher levels of planning and documentation. However, educational attainment alone did not guarantee communication effectiveness. Several bachelor's degree holders displayed excellent community engagement and contextual understanding despite limited documentation practices.

The study also highlights the continuing dominance of oral traditions within Indonesian Islamic preaching. While oral communication remains culturally significant, contemporary religious communication increasingly requires documentary evidence and institutional accountability. Written records facilitate sermon evaluation, scholarly review, and organizational learning.

Weaknesses in audio-visual documentation reveal a broader institutional challenge. Without systematic archives, valuable religious knowledge may be lost. Digital archiving can preserve sermons, support future training, and increase transparency.

Thematic cohesion and coherence emerged as critical dimensions of sermon quality. Effective sermons demonstrated clear relationships among topics, Qur'anic verses, Hadith references, and practical recommendations. Conversely, weak coherence reduced message effectiveness and audience comprehension.

The findings further support Professional Religious Communication Theory, which emphasizes accountability and credibility. Citation verification contributes to theological reliability and protects congregations from misinformation. The establishment of verification procedures could strengthen public trust in religious institutions.

Another important finding concerns organizational support. Mosque administrators play a crucial role in facilitating documentation and record management. Collaboration between preachers and administrators can create more sustainable communication systems.

The multicultural context of Sorong City also influences the preacher's

responsibilities. Religious leaders must communicate Islamic teachings while promoting social harmony within a diverse environment. Administrative preparedness supports this objective by encouraging thoughtful planning and careful message construction.

The proposed solutions demonstrate practical pathways toward professionalization. Training programs can enhance communication skills and administrative competence. Digital repositories can strengthen institutional memory. Standardized guidelines can promote consistency while respecting local diversity.

Ultimately, the study suggests that effective da'wah communication extends beyond eloquent speech. Professional administration, documentation, and evaluation constitute essential components of contemporary Islamic communication. Strengthening these dimensions may improve sermon quality, accountability, and long-term organizational effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that administrative preparedness remains a significant determinant of effective da'wah communication among Muslim preachers in Sorong City. Although many preachers demonstrate strong religious commitment, contextual awareness, and scriptural orientation, substantial weaknesses persist in written preparation, documentation systems, citation verification, and evaluation mechanisms. Educational background influences administrative quality, yet institutional support also plays a critical role.

The findings indicate that professionalization of da'wah communication requires integrated efforts involving preacher training, standardized administrative procedures, digital archiving systems, and theological verification processes. Strengthening these dimensions can improve sermon quality, increase accountability, preserve religious knowledge, and enhance public trust. In multicultural contexts such as Southwest Papua, professionally administered preaching contributes not only to religious education but also to social cohesion and community development. Preachers with systematic written preparation generally produce sermons with stronger thematic coherence, better integration of Qur'anic and Hadith references, and greater relevance to contemporary social issues.

Topics such as Islamic economic ethics, family resilience, and implementation of Islamic teachings were often carefully prepared, whereas recurring themes related to Islamic holy days were frequently delivered with limited documentation. Weaknesses were identified in sermon archiving, audio-video recording, citation verification, and evaluation procedures. Nevertheless, the findings reveal significant potential for improving professional da'wah communication through training programs, standardized sermon administration, digital archiving systems, and peer-review mechanisms. Strengthening these areas will enhance the quality, credibility, and sustainability of Friday sermons while supporting the broader role of Islamic communication in multicultural societies such as Southwest Papua.

SUGGESTION

Local Islamic institutions should establish continuous preacher training, digital sermon archives, standardized sermon templates, and periodic evaluations to improve

professional da'wah communication.

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