

Advancing Islamic Knowledge Through The Da'wah of Women in Patriarchal Culture

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to describe the existence of women's da'wah amid the domination of master guru's da'wah in Sasak culture, which is patriarchal in advancing Islamic knowledge. This research was conducted in Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The study used qualitative descriptive methods, with data collection techniques through interviews, observation and documentation. The study found that patriarchal culture, including the religious sphere, influences the Sasak people's lives. The dominance of the Tuan guru in da'wah is seen in almost all contexts of da'wah. Da'wah is carried out routinely and incidentally through religious lectures in prayer rooms, mosques, religious, social organizations, government institutions and private institutions and is carried out by utilizing mass media. While women's da'wah through lectures has limited access, women preachers preach more in the women's community. In terms of quantity, the number of female preachers is very inadequate compared to the number of master teachers. The study also found that there is stigma and stereotypes of women in da'wah and marginalization of women in da'wah, which closes access for women to appear as preachers. Some female preachers seem and preach in the community because they have the support of their families.

Keywords: *Islamic Knowledge, Women's Da'wah, Patriarchal Culture*

A. INTRODUCTION

In fact, in the life of society, especially a patriarchal society, the position of men and women is unequal. This patriarchal culture believes that men are superior to women. The role of men in patriarchal culture is above women and holds control over women. (Yusalia, 2014). Biological differences are considered the starting point for forming this culture (Rokhmansyah, 2016). The view that times men are mightier, stronger and more worthy of occupying important roles has shaped a cultural order that favours men. This construction continues from generation to generation, for centuries, so that society can no longer distinguish between the so-called sex (sex), which is natural and gender, which is a product of human creation (cultural construction) (Susanto, 2015). At the same time, the concept of gender is a trait inherent in men and women who are socially and culturally constructed. Like motherhood, meek, beautiful and emotional for women. While rational, mighty, manly and robust nature for men. Such traits themselves are interchangeable traits between males and females. Men can have emotional, gentle, and maternal traits, while women can have robust, rational and mighty traits (Fakih, 2013).

Gender differences as a social construction have implications for differences in gender roles, and men are considered more suitable to be in public spaces while women are at home (domestic) (Mulyadi, 2014). This division of social roles has brought various forms of injustice to women, such as in the development sector, which aims to prosper everyone. However, gender balance has not received attention. Gender experiences social exclusion so that there is a process of inhibiting individuals and families, groups and resources needed to participate in social, economic and political activities (Hasanah, 2019).

Likewise, in da'wah, gender bias occurs in the da'wah process. Da'wah material is delivered more from the perspective of men, actors and more male da'wah audiences (Hasibuan, 2022). Therefore, gender mainstreaming to realize gender equality is carried out. The view is that there is a need for da'wah activities packaged in women's empowerment programs (Niswah, 2021; Nurmahyanti, 1978; Sholehah, 2019). In the field of da'wah, in many regions in Indonesia, women form ta'lim assemblies (da'wah communities), which have programs to increase religious understanding for women. (Marzuki & Pdi, 2016), Improving education (Helmawati, 2018), even as a means of counselling activities (Rozi, 2022). This research focuses on aspects of women preachers (*da'iyah*), identifying gender injustice that occurs and identifying factors that cause the emergence of injustice that hinders the emergence of women preachers, which in studies on da'wah have not received serious attention and have not been specifically studied. This research is expected to provide recommendations for realizing gender equality in Da'wah.

The influence of master teachers in Lombok has a very long history. The rapid development of Islam on the island of Lombok cannot be separated from the role of master teachers. The masters continued the Islamic da'wah that had been started by early Islamic disseminators since the 17th century (Basarudin, 2019). Around the 18th century, or 1740-1935 AD, the term *tuan guru* began to be known. The Sasak Muslim community understood the “*tuan guru*” as those who socially and religiously mastered the yellow, had studied in the Middle East and were male (Putrawan, 2012).

In the life of the Sasak community, the master teacher is not only a figure who provides religious guidance, but the master teacher is a figure to whom Sasak Muslims consult to obtain solutions to their problems—from naming a newborn child, setting the day and date of marriage to mediating conflicts in society. Suprpto quoted the results of Jeremy Kingsley's research describing that master teachers have an essential role in mediating tensions and conflicts in the community, including political tensions and conflicts. In conflict management, the part of *Tuan Guru* is even more effective than state officials such as police, prosecutors, and formal leaders (Suprpto, 2020).

Within the scope of patriarchal culture and the domination of the influence of master teachers, some female preachers are present in society. The presence of women in the context of da'wah as *da'iyah* has a vital meaning considering many specific problems in Islam related to women, such as marriage (husband and wife relationship), *talaq*, childcare, menstruation, breath, and so on, which are more appropriate when conveyed by fellow women (*da'iyah*). In the context of communication, one factor that determines communication's effectiveness is the similarity of perception and experience between communicants and communicators. The more similarities between communicants and communicators, the more effective the communication will be (Rustan, 2019). The similarity of *da'iyah*'s experience with women's problems allows *da'iyah* to explain religious issues in detail and transparently, which can lead to a more comprehensive understanding. Women are often subjected to harassment because of their inferior status (Mshweshwe, 2020). In addition to violence against women, gender injustice is manifested *first*. Stereotypes, that is generalizations and negative labelling towards certain genders. *Subordination*, i.e. giving social status or position to a specific gender, where one is considered inferior. *Third*, marginalization limits and distorts access from one particular group or gender. *Fourth*, the double burden is giving more work to specific groups, which is beyond their ability (Yusalia, 2014).

B. METHOD

Qualitative research is a technique that describes data in the form of written or spoken words and observes people's behaviour. Qualitative research is method-based and understanding-based research that examines human social problems and phenomena. This approach allows researchers to build complex pictures, analyze words, report in detail on informants' views, and conduct research in natural contexts. Qualitative research can also be seen as research whose results are not obtained through calculations and statistical procedures (Masrukhin, 2014). Data collection was conducted through unstructured interviews, non-participant observation and documentation. Informants consisted of teachers and women who were preachers in the city of Mataram, who were domiciled in the city of Mataram and who were domiciled outside the city of Mataram. The masters, teachers and preachers are women who come from the Sasak tribe and those who are not from the Sasak tribe. *Second*, male and female community members come from the Sasak tribe. Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman model consisting of data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing (Majid, 2017).

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gender is a trait and behaviour attached to men and women resulting from social and cultural construction (Rokhimah, 2014). In Sasak society, men are constructed as mighty, strong, rational beings. Women are perceived as emotional, gentle, and maternal human beings. This gender construction has implications for the division of roles between the two, men are in the public sphere, and women are more appropriate in the domestic area. This division of roles is seen in domestic life, where men are constructed as the head of the family who earns a living outside the home. In contrast, women are built as people in the house who serve their husbands, take care of children, cook, wash and do other household chores. Although, in recent years, there has been a shift in roles where many women have worked in public spaces, the appreciation of them is not as good as the respect for male workers. Generally, women who work are still considered "helping men" because, in Sasak culture, they have placed men as breadwinners. In addition, a woman who works outside her domestic territory must adjust work to her nature as a woman (Israpil, 2017).

Boys in Sasak society have a critical position, many phenomena where a mother is expected to give birth to sons even though they have already given birth to daughters. Siti Azizah, one of the informants, said: "*Laek sedemanku bedoe anak mame, mentoakku tell me nganak malik andekn sak bedo'e bae anak mame, anak mame erak jari tetunjang unin, but anak nine jak tekeberan jok balen semamen*" ("In the past, before I had a son, my in-laws always

encouraged me to have another child, to give birth to a son. She said that the boy would one day be a "stick" while the girl would be flown away, taken to the husband's house") (interview, Siti Azizah, October 30, 2022)

Tetunjang in Sasak society means stick, where one holds on when old. There is hope in parents when they are old, economically unproductive, and physically weak, and there are sons who will stay to care for them. This is also why traditionally, when a parent dies, and their inheritance is divided (*afraid*), men always inherit the house and residence. The influence of patriarchal culture is also seen in society's social and cultural life, such as marriage, where almost all processions are carried out in men's homes. In traditional ceremonies such as the commemoration of birth (*ngurisan*), death (*nelung, mitu', nyiwa'*) and other traditional ceremonies, men organize events, joint prayers, and *slakaran*. At the same time, women always play a role in preparing banquets.

In the aspect of education, men get better educational opportunities than women. Literacy is a measure to assess the community's academic success level. Based on data from the city of Mataram, it was found that women aged ten years and over are petite compared to men. Data shows that women are more illiterate when compared to men, namely 19% compared to 10% (*Mataram City Archives*, 2022). Likewise, other aspects, such as economics and politics, are seen as dominating the role of men. The solid patriarchal culture in society does not trigger shifts in parts, especially in urban communities that have relatively high education.

In the field of da'wah, the master teacher who is *nota bene* is a man who dominates almost all aspects of da'wah. The preaching of master teachers in Mataram does not only occur in mosques and prayer rooms. Da'wah is also rife in government, private, and religious social organizations. Da'wah, through lectures, is carried out in prayer rooms and mosques after Fajr or Maghrib prayers. Each mosque community in the village has its master teacher who regularly gives recitations and is highly respected. The da'wah material presented includes Islamic teachings of *aqidah*, sharia and morals (Mistarija, 2018). Some master teachers have reference books read in front of worshippers.

Male and female audiences attended the study in the prayer room and mosque, but generally, the study was more attended by female audiences. Several master teachers who were resource persons in this study revealed the same thing about their involvement in da'wah in the community carried out in mosques regularly and incidentally, such as at the celebration of Islamic holidays, the Prophet's birthday, death anniversaries and others. The context of their da'wah is not only lectures in front of the general public but also in religious and social

institutions such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdatul Ulama and Nahdatul Wathan, government institutions such as the provincial government, agencies under the local government and private institutions such as private banks. (Interview Fahrurrozi Dahlan, Subhan Acim, November 9, 2022)

In addition to da'wah activities in mosques in villages, da'wah activities at the Hubbul Wathan Islamic Centre are a barometer of da'wah activities and the development of Islam in Mataram, even this mosque has become the centre of Islamic da'wah in West Nusa Tenggara. Like da'wah in Musholla and in mosques in the city of Mataram, da'wah in Islamic centres is dominated by men. From documents released by the Islamic centre, researchers identified 43 master teachers who routinely conduct studies at the Islamic centre through systematic studies such as after-prayer, Ramadan, and incidental studies. While those who regularly give lectures daily, as many as 28 people study morning, afternoon and night. They come from several religious organizations in West Nusa Tenggara, such as Nahdatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and Nahdatul Wathan. Also, they come from several Islamic universities in Mataram. Women's da'wah activities at the Islamic centre are filled by the Salim al-Hidayah assembly once a month. However, even though the audience and administrators of the *ta'lim* assembly are women, men still dominate the speakers, and few female speakers are involved.

The absence of a term commensurate with a master teacher makes women with religious knowledge engaged in da'wah in Mataram, known as *ustadzah* (female teachers). The title *tuan guru* in Sasak society is only given to men. Hence the term "tuan guru perempuan" is not well known in Sasak society. *Tuan guru* itself is a term for male scholars, the same as *Kyai* for Javanese, *Bendere* for Madurese, *Ajengan* for Sundanese, *Buya* for Sumatrans, *Guru mursyid* for Mainland Malays, *Topanrita* for South Sulawesi people, *Anrong gurunta* for Makassar, *Anre gurutta* for Bugis people (Wathoni, 2021), while *ustaz* which means a teacher is a person who teaches religious knowledge but scientifically, authority and charisma are under the master teacher. Thus, even though a woman has a high level of scholarship, having studied in the Middle East, they will never be known as a master teacher. For women, holding the status of a cleric in a patriarchal society is not easy (Fauziyah, 2010).

In quantity, the number of female preachers is not comparable to male preachers (master teachers). Researchers noted that only six (6) female preachers routinely conduct studies in the Mataram community. These studies conducted by women are more limited and are carried out in women's gatherings, around their homes and in religious organizations. The very minimal number of *da'iyah* shows the dominance of men over women in this field. Some women who are chairmen of the *ta'lim* assembly also seem unable to give lectures, and they

are only in charge of managing the *ta'lim* crowd and bringing in speakers from outside the *ta'lim* assembly, both men and women. (Sri Lathifa interview, October 20 2022)

Considerable opportunities for women's involvement are seen in religious organizations and academic circles. In religious organizations, the possibilities for expression are endless. The cadres of the organization get support from the leadership to be active. This phenomenon is seen in three major religious organizations in Mataram: Nahdatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah and Nahdatul Wathan. Nahdatul Ulama with Muslimat Nahdatul Ulama and Fatayat, Muhammadiyah with Nasi'atul Aisyiah and Nahdatul Wathan with Muslimat Nahdatul Wathan became a space for women to be actively involved in the field of da'wah. Some female preachers who appear in public spaces have the basis of religious organizations, such as *Ustadzah* Sri Latifah, a member of Muslim NU, *Ustadzah* Sofia Rawina, and *Ustadzah* Alfiatun from the Muhammadiyah organization. These three organizations develop gender equality where Muhammadiyah emphasizes the concept of a more rational and modern Islamic religion, Nahdatul Ulama emphasizes women's participation in religious affairs, and Nahtaul Wathan emphasizes the idea of women's leadership in organizations (Nasip, 2017).

Like religious organizations, women's work in educational institutions, especially religious higher education, is also significant. Some have higher education qualifications, hold doctoral degrees, are professors and receive foreign education. They are active in seminar rooms conveying their religious thoughts. However, they are not involved in da'wah (lectures) conducted among the general public. This phenomenon becomes interesting when the involvement of women as speakers in religious organizations, religious higher education institutions is quite a lot. At the same time, the participation of women speaking in the community is minimal. Seeing the scientific capacity of women as expressed above, they will have no difficulty delivering da'wah (*lectures*) in the community. Mainly, what is conveyed are basic teachings such as worship procedures, morals, etc. While society is scientifically religious, not many have higher education. From the data in the field, there is stigma and stereotypes against women, which are the influence of a patriarchal culture that positions men better and higher in degree, which then has implications for marginalization (marginalization of women) by not giving them access (opportunities) in the field of da'wah.

Sigma and Stereotypes in Society

The community as a da'wah audience (*mad'u*) is an essential element in da'wah activities, in addition to *da'i*, da'wah materials, da'wah methods, da'wah media and da'wah effects. The society in which da'wah is carried out is not static and value-free. In the community, cultural values and norms that have been rooted for generations develop. Sociologically, society as an object of da'wah is classified into several categories: alienated communities, rural, large and small cities, and people in marginal areas of big cities (Aminudin, 2018). When viewed from the division of society, the research area can be categorized as urban areas (small towns), and some parts of the community are still classified as rural. The relationship between residents is very close, and the residents adhere to traditions, customary norms, and religious norms taught by the master teachers. Gender roles constructed by Sasak society for generations have given rise to stigmas against women and men. Field data shows some stigmas that arise in the context of da'wah as follows:

A Sasak society, like other patriarchal societies, has positioned men to have the role of leaders and breadwinners, so men should be in public spaces while women in the home as mothers, who are in charge of handling all household affairs, educating and nurturing (Israpil, 2017). So in this perspective, lecturing to the general public in mosques, prayer rooms, institutions, and lectures through social media is more feasible for men. At the same time, women who have domestic areas are better at home and take care of the household. Women's obligations in da'wah must be adjusted to their nature as women with domestic territory. So if a woman preaches outside of her domestic environment in front of an audience, it is considered taboo, customary and unusual.

Cultural construction implies that, at times, men are leaders and women are led, and then men in da'wah forums are not worthy of listening to lectures (advice) from women. Because women are human beings who are instructed and directed, men should give classes (guidance) to women, not vice versa. In the context of da'wah, of course, this stigma is not by Islamic values because, from the Islamic perspective, men and women have an equal position before God. Men and women can be guilty and sin, just as they can become chosen human beings because of their devotion. QS. Al-Hujurat:13 explains only faith that distinguishes them. Islam has also outlined that mortal men and women advise each other in kindness and prevent each other from evil deeds. All words that have the meaning of da'wah and the command to preach and *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* are intended generally for men and women.

Lectures in the context of communication are known as public communication. This communication requires expertise. In addition to communication skills, mastery of the material

is also needed. Some scholars affirm the ability of religious sciences such as the Qur'an or its tafsir, hadith, and other spiritual sciences is a condition to become a da'i (preacher) (Aliyudin, 2015). In the scientific aspect or mastery of the material, stereotypes about women not being good at preaching seem not fundamental. This can be observed in several ways; *First*, some women have sufficient religious knowledge and are involved in da'wah in the community even though their da'wah is limited to the da'wah of the women's community. *Second*, some women have adequate religious knowledge, graduated from pesantren (with mastery of the yellow book), have a Middle Eastern educational background, have academic degrees of Doctorate and Professor even though they are not involved in oral da'wah bills in the community, scientifically, and they are good at communicating in the seminar room. Thus, as previously reviewed, stereotypes that develop are more due to a culture that positions women as lower than men and women are less important than men.

Stigma and stereotypes against women that are rooted in the customs and culture of the Sasak people cannot be separated from religious problems, in this case, the interpretation of sacred texts. Talking about Sasak culture cannot escape the conversation about Islam. Islam entered Lombok in the 13th century AD. Three theories explain the entry of Islam into Lombok, *First*, In the 13th century AD, Islam entered Lombok brought by Gujarati traders to Perlak, Samudra Pasai. *Second*, Sunan Prapen, son of Sunan Giri from Java, brought Islam into Lombok. *Third*, Islam entered Lombok through the eastern route from Sumbawa, then spread by Makassar traders and sailors in the 16th century (Basarudin, 2019).

Several factors support the relatively fast process of spreading Islam in Indonesia. *First*, the divine system in Islam adheres to the principle of monotheism. Islam also teaches equality and justice in public relations. Thus, choosing Islam has placed one on the principle of equality, freedom and justice. *Second*, the teachings of Islam contain universal values. *Third*, Indonesian society sees Islam as a powerful institution to face and resist the expansion of Western influence by the Portuguese and then the Dutch, who nourished colonialism and spread Christianity (Nasrullah, 2019). This flexibility and flexibility makes Islam a readily accepted teaching. Islam can interact with local religions and cultures.

Islam as a religion has been internalized into the values that exist in society, so the term culture jointed *syara'*, *syara'* jointed *kitabullah*, which is the cultural philosophy of some Indonesian people, is also happening in the context of Sasak Muslims. Some stigmas that develop in the community get justified or come from religious interpretations that the community understands rigidly and fanatically. In patriarchal culture, spiritual teachings shape, socialize, strengthen, and even construct gender differences (Rokhimah, 2014).

In its verses, the Qur'an explains the values of equality and equality of men and women, and there is no superiority of one over the other. They were created from the same elements and had the same responsibility and obligation to obey God. It is the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an that plays a role in legitimizing domination over women (Fakih, 2008), such as some understanding of the Qur'an about women, which is also the basis of cultural construction. *First*, women are created to complement the needs of men (*Adam*) in heaven. *Secondly*, females are made from male ribs. *Third*, women as the cause of Adam's exit from heaven. This understanding shapes perceptions of women (Mulyadi, 2014).

Understanding of QS. An-Nisa's verse 34 is also considered to be a justification for domination over women. The word *arrijalu qowwamuna ala nisa* in QS. An-Nisa's verse 34 is often understood that men are absolute female leaders, in the family and the social life of society, in domestic and public contexts (Novianti, 2008). From a feminist perspective, Qur'anic verses and hadiths are static, and their interpretation is dynamic. This allows interpreters of gender equality to create principles of equality by referring to Qur'anic verses, which can be used as a basis for gender-based interpretations of gender equality. It is based on the view that the Qur'an was revealed to uphold justice and avoid discrimination (Nasution & Mohd Saad, 2020).

Marginalization of Women in Da'wah

One of the implications of patriarchal culture is the lack of opportunities given to women in the fields of education, economics and the field of da'wah carried out in the public sphere. When women become preachers in unexpected events such as *Maulid Nabi*, Nuzulul Qur'an, or regular lectures attended by men and women, they are considered to violate customs and religion. Men are thought leaders who are more appropriate to "da'wah (give advice)", so women who give *tausiah* (religious advice) to male audiences are considered inappropriate. Women are also considered not good at delivering da'wah.

To determine the resource persons to be invited to religious studies (da'wah), which are routine and incidental and held primarily in the community, carried out by deliberation of the chairman and members of the *ta'lim* assembly, community leaders, and local pilgrims. They consider the material to be delivered, and the master teachers liked by the local community, and other things such as applicable customs (Hermansyah interview, October 10, 2022). At this level, women do not have the opportunity to be invited as speakers (resource persons).

Generally, the *ta'lim* assembly or administrators of mosques and prayer rooms in the city of Mataram are dominated by men who are local community leaders. In this context, women can rarely be study speakers. Male members of society do not only carry out this

process of marginalization but are also carried out by women. Women provide more opportunities for master teachers to appear in da'wah when compared to female preachers. (interview with Warni Djuwita, October 15, 2022). This marginalization process harms women (Zubaedah, 2010). The assumption that women's activities are unproductive and of low value causes women's marginalization (Muslikhati, 2004). One dimension of women's marginalization is the marginalization of women from productive work that generates wages (Aisyah, 2013). In the context of da'wah, wages (honour) are not the main thing, da'wah is more based on the sincerity factor because of Allah SWT, but it is undeniable that da'wah activities also produce material and prestige in the community.

Marginalization in da'wah in the Mataram community has been going on for a long time. The influence of culture and understanding of religious texts that construct people's thoughts gives birth to various stigmas and stereotypes that have implications for the lack of opportunities offered to women in da'wah. So that today it can be seen that the number of *da'iyah* who appear as preachers in religious studies is not comparable to master teachers who have the same profession. The flow of the process of marginalization of women in da'wah:

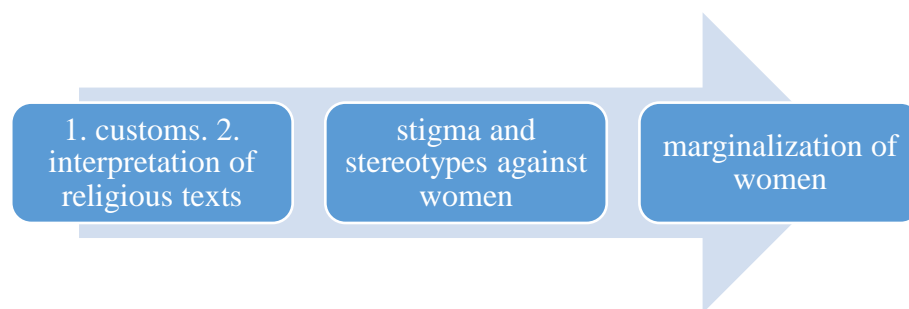


Figure 1. The flow of the process of marginalization of women in da'wah

Sasak cultural customs are patriarchal, and understanding the interpretation of religious texts creates stigmas and stereotypes in society that lead to the marginalization of women. Some *da'iyah* who emerged amid the existing marginalization process said that their emergence into the public sphere was more due to "opportunities created" by those closest to them. Ustadzah Rabiatal Adawiyah, for example, entered the public sphere because she was encouraged and given the opportunity by her husband, who was a master teacher, to replace the study she delivered, ustazah Sri Lathifa debuted in the realm of public da'wah because she was given the opportunity of her father by including Sri Lathifa's name in one of RRI's speakers. Likewise, several other *da'iyah* that appear in the public sphere is generally influenced by the

support system from the closest family that opens opportunities, motivates and encourages them so that they have the confidence to appear as preachers.

Advancing Islamic Knowledge Through Women's Da'wah in a Patriarchal Culture

In this case, women occupy a vital role, especially as mothers, in family formation, including the education obtained by children. Therefore, this is closely related to the knowledge that parents have, especially mothers, because based on the fact that mothers are the first madrassas for their children, even before they are born in the world. To advance Islamic religious knowledge against. The mother's child has a significant role. Because basically, the education and learning that a child has are not only obtained from formal institutions such as schools, TPQ, and others.

Education and knowledge can also be obtained from non-formal institutions, even in formal ones, such as; family, social environment, and even from nature. But there are still many women who do not care and are even indifferent to the development of their children because of the lack of knowledge that the woman has. To provide knowledge about religion to children, it is natural for women, especially mothers, to gain knowledge about religion more deeply to provide good knowledge to their children. Therefore, a woman must educate her children well, especially in the field of faith, so that one day a sound generation will be created for the next generation.

D. CONCLUSION

Mataram is one of the areas in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. Sasak culture with patriarchal lines colours the life of the people of Mataram in the context of family and community life. Most of Mataram's population is Muslim, and the observance of its adherents is reflected in the rampant religious life and da'wah. Master teachers dominate Da'wah in Mataram as resource persons (lecturers), da'wah bil oral carried out musholla, mosques, religious organizations, government and private institutions. Women's proselytizing is limited and carried out within women's communities. In quantity, the number of *da'iyah* is also minimal compared to the number of existing master teachers.

Some stigmas and stereotypes arise in the context of da'wah as an implication of patriarchal culture, such as men are not worthy of listening to da'wah/tausiyah (advice from) women, taboo and illegal customs for women to preach in public, as *mad'u* men must sit in front. Women must be behind men, and women do not have expertise in preaching. The implication of this stigma is marginalization in the form of women not being allowed to become lecturers in the community. In some women, there is a lack of confidence to appear in front of the public, but women who get support from the closest people have the confidence to preach.

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