

## QUALITY IN THE PRACTICAL TRAINING OF DA'WAH: THE EXPERIENCE OF DEPARTMENT OF DA'WAH AND LEADERSHIP STUDIES

<sup>1</sup>Badlihisam Mohd Nasir, <sup>2</sup>Fariza Md Sham, <sup>3</sup>Siti Rugayah Tibek, <sup>4</sup>Irdha Mokhtar, <sup>5</sup>Muhamad Faisal Asha'ari, <sup>6</sup>Nur 'Athiroh Masya'il Tan Abdullah

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Islamic Civilization, University of Technology Malaysia (UTM)

<sup>2,3,4,5,6</sup> Faculty of Islamic Studies, National University of Malaysia (UKM)

**ABSTRACT:** A mission to promote Islam as a religion made student to involve deeply in a practical engagement on the ground. This made student to expose in da'wah during practical training. On campus, student is taught for conceptual aspect and also asked to practice it among the Muslim as well as non-Muslim community in the country. As an Academic Institution for higher learning institution in Islamic Mission, the Department of Da'wah and Leadership Studies at National University of Malaysia has offered several courses to achieve this objective. This paper seeks to examine the quality of the student who is involved in Practical Training in Da'wah for Muslims (*Latihan Amali Dakwah Kepada Muslim*). This study is using a quantitative methodology that evaluates the perceptions of local community on the effectiveness and the problems that are related to the programme. The result of the study shows that the quality of student is good although there are some weaknesses, but they are still some space for improvement for the betterment of higher education in mission of studies

**Keywords;** *Islam, mission, education and social work*

*Paperwork for International Conference on Quality in Higher Education, 12-14.12 2013 at Sakarya University, Turki.*

### Introduction

A prominent feature of da'wah as an academic discipline is emphasizes in the practical aspect of its method of delivery. As such da'wah activities are not just verbal in nature, but they also involve both interactions and exemplary behaviour that is portrayed in the best possible way to achieve the target community so that the da'wah messages will have a deep effect to people. Practical da'wah, also known as *da'wah bi al-hal*, must be well-planned and carried out systematically with an orientation towards practical training as being very crucial. The programme called Practical Training in Da'wah for Muslims or *Latihan Amali Dakwah Kepada Muslim* (LADM) has been made compulsory for the third year undergraduate students, with the main objective of producing graduates that are capable of doing da'wah works in a systematic and integrated manner in various Muslim locations. Even if students have acquired an academic skills through lectures, they still can enhance their capability through practical training under the guidance of those who have experience and interest in the field of da'wah.

Nevertheless, the quality of practical training is not perfect without its own problems and its effectiveness can be questionable at times. However, the target community can normally be asked to evaluate on the effectiveness of practical training, and their perceptions solicited especially with regard to some critical aspects covering management and organization of the programme, the availability of infrastructures and supporting facilities, academic staff that is involved and students that being sent to the field for the practical training proses.

This paper will first explain briefly about the background of LADM, followed by an analysis of the perceptions of the local community on the effectiveness and problems that is related to the programme.

### Research Methodology

The methodology of the study is quantitative that has examined the perceptions of the local community on the effectiveness and problems related to the programme. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to members of the target community, in particular to students' foster parents. The respondents were under the review of The Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) Community Tersang, Pahang. FELDA community is a community under the Ninth Malaysia Development in Malaysia. FELDA was established on 1 of July 1956 under the Land Development Act 1956 as a result of the recommendation of the Executive Committee of the Government. The rural areas are the large part of the area that led to development in economics and social development. FELDA has helped to improve the living

standards of rural communities as well as to bridge the gap between the quality of life of rural and urban population. The data were analysed using the SPSS package

### Practical Training in Da'wah for Muslims

LADM, being a requirement for a course called PM3012 Da'wah Methodology for Muslims, is made compulsory for all third year students in the Department of Da'wah and Leadership Studies in the Faculty of Islamic Studies, UKM. The practical training is in line with the objective of the department to produce a graduate who is well trained in terms of soft skill and abilities to inculcate with Islamic values and able to contribute to the Islamic mission in terms of spiritual and moral need of the society. The field trip has been made an annual activity during the first semester for the group of students. The support and financial sponsorship of outside organisations have also been crucial in ensuring the success of the programme. Others who are interested in da'wah activities have also asked to join hands with the students by giving them moral support and guidance.

The practical training is geared towards understanding the fact that da'wah is a branch of knowledge that centres around practice and professionalism that form part and parcel of da'wah activities. Da'wah methodology has been set out in the Quran and Sunnah which specifically mention certain types of approach that are suitable and effective in the target communities whether they are in-group or out-group.

For LADM programme students were organised into various teams under the supervision of the department. The field training also takes into account social and religious works as an integrated activity. All these were done under the supervision of lecturers appointed by the department. At the same time, surveys were conducted on the profile of selected sample between the member of the target community. Students also involved in this analysis of the result of the survey so that they could use the findings to plan for a more effective strategy in future Da'wah activities apart from equipping themselves with suitable and appropriate Da'wah materials. At the end of the training they were expected to have a post-mortem to self-evaluate the problems and effectiveness of the programme.

On the whole LADM has the following objectives (Badlihasham Mohd Nasir, 2009):

- i. To expose the practical aspect of da'wah for Muslims to students of the department specifically to build up their capability and leadership potential
- ii. To understand the problems related to Da'wah activities, especially in dealing with social and moral problems among the younger generation and the neighbouring non-Muslim communities
- iii. To carry out studies on issues involving the Muslims community and to analyse the findings from da'wah perspective
- iv. To contribute ideas and efforts to da'wah activities among the community and to make full use of the co-operation given by other organisations involved in da'wah activities.

LADM is a programme organised by the Department of Da'wah and Leadership Studies, Faculty of Islamic Studies, UKM, in collaboration with Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) and Department of Orang Asli Development (JAKOA). Usually Malay villages are located near non-Muslim Orang Asli settlements. This location is chosen for practical training, apart from villages inhabited by Orang Asli who are Muslims. The choice of these twin villages is made as a follow-up to Da'wah programme for non-Muslims (LAD for non-Muslims) which were conducted previously. As such the target groups of LADM are Muslim communities which include Orang Asli villages as their immediate neighbour as well new converts and non-Muslims who live in the vicinity.

The training was scheduled to take place for one week. The activities consisted of general and specialised talks on religion, motivational sessions and team work projects. The participants were also exposed to *tazkirah* sessions, *fardhu ain* classes and *qiamullail*. Activities that are not related to religion came form of voluntary services to the community, which help expose to Islamic culture and arts, sports and organised visits to other villages and places of interest.

To support all these activities an amount between RM15, 000 to RM20, 000 was needed, with the help of UKM a large proportion was collected and the rest was contributed by various agencies that have shown their interests in the project such as..... . These agencies also helped in the coordination the activities together with students from the Department of Da'wah and Leadership Studies. Altogether they were 100 undergraduates involved apart from masters

students and lecturers.

### Perceptions of the Local Community on LADM

A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to members of the target community, in particular to students' foster parents. The data were analysed using the SPSS package. The findings are discussed below in three sections: (1) Respondents' profile, (2) Problems related to LADM, and (3) Effectiveness of LADM.

#### *Respondents' Profile*

A summary of the respondents' profile is listed down in Table 1 below according to sex, age, marital status, type of employment, income level, educational achievement, duration of stay in FELDA and home-state origin. For each category a detailed breakdown is given, with a percentage calculated for each of the sub-categories.

**Table 1: Respondents' Profile**

| Category             | Detailed breakdown    | Percentage |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Sex                  | 1. Male               | 47 %       |
|                      | 2. Female             | 53 %       |
| Age                  | 1. Less than 18 years | 20 %       |
|                      | 2. 19-21 years        | 21 %       |
|                      | 3. 22-40 years        | 23 %       |
|                      | 4. 41-56 years        | 21 %       |
|                      | 5. Above 57 years     | 15 %       |
| Marital Status       | 1. Single             | 51 %       |
|                      | 2. Married            | 49 %       |
| Type of Employment   | 1. Government sector  | 17 %       |
|                      | 2. Private sector     | 14 %       |
|                      | 3. Self employed      | 49 %       |
|                      | 4. Housewives         | 20 %       |
| Total income (in RM) | 1. Less than 1,000    | 60 %       |
|                      | 2. 1,001 - 1,500      | 34 %       |
|                      | 3. 1,501 - 2,000      | 1 %        |
|                      | 4. 2,001 - 2,500      | 4 %        |
|                      | 5. More than 2,500    | 1 %        |
| Education Level      | 1. UPSR               | 21 %       |
|                      | 2. PMR                | 24 %       |
|                      | 3. SPM                | 44 %       |
|                      | 4. STPM / STAM        | 5 %        |
|                      | 5. Diploma            | 3 %        |
|                      | 6. Degree             | 3 %        |

|                           |                  |      |
|---------------------------|------------------|------|
| Duration of stay in FELDA | 1. 1-5 years     | 17 % |
|                           | 2. 6 -10 years   | 12 % |
|                           | 3. 11-15 years   | 13 % |
|                           | 4. Over 16 years | 57 % |
|                           | 5. 5 months      | 1 %  |
| Home State Origin         | 1. Johor         | 4 %  |
|                           | 2. Kedah         | 8 %  |
|                           | 3. Kelantan      | 7 %  |
|                           | 4. Kuala Lumpur  | 1 %  |
|                           | 5. Perak         | 9 %  |
|                           | 6. Pulau Pinang  | 3 %  |
|                           | 7. Selangor      | 4%   |
|                           | 8. Pahang        | 64 % |

As can be seen in Table 1 above, the number of female respondents were much higher (53%) compared to that of the male (47 %). As for the age group a large number of them belonged to a range of 22 to 40 years (23%). The figure suggests that these respondents were likely to be the second generation of FELDA settlers.

In terms of employment, the majority were self-employed with an income of less than RM1,000 (60%). This figure concurs with the average income of other settlers in Tersang cluster who earned less than RM1, 000 at the time of the survey, their earnings being drastically reduced because of the ongoing re-planting project that affected the entire cluster. This average income contrasted very much with that earned by settlers in other FELDA areas whose monthly average was above RM2,000.

Marital status of the respondents showed that a slightly higher proportion (51%) of settlers were single compared to those who were married (49 %). This figure shows that many of them were children of the first generation of settlers. These unmarried respondents were still dependent on their family of orientation and not quite ready to set up a household of their own.

The level of educational achievement indicates that the majority of the respondents have an SPM qualification (44%). This figure gives a general picture that FELDA settlers have a moderate and low level of education, mostly SPM and below. However, there were also those who have a high level of education, even up to the university and college levels (3% for each), particularly among children of the first generation settlers. It also shows that the second generation of the settlers were much better-off in terms of educational achievements than their parents who have missed out on the opportunity due to various factors, poverty being one of them.

For the period of stay in the settlements more than half (57%) of the respondents have been living there for more than 16 years. This duration is not surprising since Tersang cluster was first opened in 1970s and was among the earlier FELDA settlements established in the state of Pahang. As for the state of origin of respondents the majority of them (64 %) hailed from the state of Pahang. This figure indicates that the cluster was dominated by participants from Pahang in line with the main objective of FELDA that gives priority to local population. As such Tersang cluster has a cultural pattern that is characteristically Pahang in nature especially with regard to the spoken dialect that is based on Raub and Lipis accent. The dialect seems to have some similarities with that spoken in the neighbouring state of Perak.

Apart from that the local leadership was under the control of those who originated from Pahang. For instance, the chairman for a body that looked after the welfare of Orang Asli, namely Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli (PMOA), was vested in the hands of a Pahang man, Muhammad Tahir bin Haji Kassim, a settler who also held the post of *Nazir* for the mosque. He was also the Deputy Head of UMNO and a member of the JKKK. Further influence of Pahang could be seen when this FELDA cluster came under the political leadership of YB Datuk Abdul Aziz Kiram, another Pahang man, who was elected as representative in the state assembly (ADUN) for Batu Talam. Tersang cluster of FELDA settlement and surrounding traditional Malay villages happen to come under this constituency (Muhammad Tahir bin Haji Kassim, 10 Ogos 2009).

### Problems Associated with LADM

In order to find out the problems associated with the implementation of LADM programme, settlers were asked to comment on a series of statements posed in the questionnaire. They were required to respond in a format of 5 scales: Most Disagreeable (MD), Disagreeable (D), Not So Agreeable (NSA), Agreeable (A), and Most Agreeable (MA). Table 2 below shows summarises the perceptions of community members of Tersang cluster regarding the implementation of LADM project.

**Table 2: Perceptions on LADM**

| Statement   | MD   | D    | NSA  | A    | MA   |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| The presence of UKM students as foster members of the family is burdensome.                           | 61 % | 26 % | 2 %  | 5 %  | 6 %  |
| Social problems interfere with LADM programme.  | 17 % | 54 % | 7 %  | 21 % | 1 %  |
| Transport facilities to programme venues is very convenient.  | 6 %  | 12 % | 6 %  | 61 % | 15 % |
| Distribution of students as foster family members is not evenly done.                                 | 15 % | 22 % | 15 % | 43 % | 5 %  |
| Delegation of responsibilities among students helps in the smooth running of the programme.           | 4 %  | 5 %  | 0 %  | 56 % | 35 % |
| Co-operation between the settlers and students was not satisfactory.                                  | 18 % | 62 % | 10 % | 7 %  | 3 %  |
| Senior lecturers are not that keen in doing thorough supervision on the activities conducted.         | 14 % | 47 % | 27 % | 9 %  | 3 %  |
| Interactions between students and FELDA settlers are not satisfactory.                                | 31 % | 43 % | 14 % | 6 %  | 6 %  |
| The level of knowledge among UKM students is too low as to effect smooth running of the activities.   | 27 % | 45 % | 14 % | 10 % | 4 %  |
| Technical equipment not adequate, thus affecting smooth running of the programme and activities.      | 19 % | 43 % | 15 % | 18 % | 5 %  |
| Infrastructures in FELDA settlement are not adequate enough throughout the duration of the programme. | 20 % | 53 % | 15 % | 12 % | 0 %  |
| Venues for the programme that is far away is the factor for the lack of response among the community. | 26 % | 44 % | 16 % | 9 %  | 5 %  |

Table 2 above shows summaries of the perceptions in Tersang FELDA community regarding various problems that cropped up during the implementation of the programme. Below are some of the highlights:

- Respondents were more disagreeable with the statement that the presence of UKM students as foster family members was burdensome (61%).
- Respondents did not agree with the suggestion that social problems interfered with the smooth running of the programme (54%).
- With respect to the transportation 61% of the respondents agreed that it was convenient and helped students very much to get to the venues of the programme.
- Respondents agreed that the distribution of students to foster families was not done evenly (43%).
- Respondents agreed with the statement that the delegation of responsibilities to students helped in the smooth

running of the programme (56%).

- Respondents did not agree with the statement that co-operation between the settlers and students was not satisfactory (62%).
- Respondents did not agree with the claim that lecturers did not do a thorough job in supervising students' activities (47%).
- Respondents also did not agree that the interactions between students and the settlers were not satisfactory (43%).
- Respondents did not agree that the level of knowledge among UKM students was low to the extent that it adversely affect the activities (45%).
- Respondents did not agree that inadequate technical equipment had affected the smooth running of the programme (43%).
- Respondents did not agree with the statement that infrastructures available in the settlement were not satisfied during the duration of the programme (53%).
- Finally, respondents did not agree with the statement that a venue that was far away from the programme was the contributing factor for the lack of response among the community (44%).

Based on the perceptions of FELDA community, UKM students that were placed under foster parents were not that burdensome to the settlers despite the fact the former have had some problems with their income due to the re-planting exercise that they were going through at that particular point of time. Even under this condition the FELDA community was willing to receive the students for the sake of Islamic Da'wah, thanks to the explanation given about the significance of LADM before students started to arrive in the settlement.

On the whole there were no major problems except for the case of distribution of students to their respective foster families. There were a number of complaints of uneven distribution of students among the settlers; not all settlers receive their share of students despite the large number of families in the cluster. The problem could be due to the management part of FELDA which should have distributed the students to more families on an equal basis.

Nevertheless, UKM student committee tried to do their best to ease the situation by re-distributing participants to their foster families at the last minute. However, the problem still persisted particularly when a number of settlers failed to turn up on the day distribution of student participants was made. Thus the problem of uneven distribution could not be totally solved. Another factor is due to the selection of foster families that is also involved outside organisation that may have problems of having direct contact with the families in the cluster.

Although there were some views that the younger generation of FELDA settlers were often involved in social problems, the majority of respondents did not agree with the statement that these problems interfered with the smooth running of LADM programme. Not all the youths were involved in LADM activities, but a large number of them took part in sports events organised under the programme.

On top of that there have been no elements of sabotage and other untoward incidents involving this group, a good indicator that youth problems among the settlers were still under control. However, there were other social problems such as substance abuse among the youths which tended to disrupt the comfort of FELDA social life.

For this reason LADM organising a committee that can help to invite a motivational expert to give a talk on drug abuse. The invited speaker was Dr. Khafidz Hj. Mohd Ishak, the president of Persatuan Insaf Murni. The event was well received by the youths judging from the large number attending the talk.

As for the transport facilities, most of the respondents agreed that it is not a problem for the students since most of the foster families have their own motor vehicle. However, there were a number of students who could not get to the venue on time because their host family had only one car. Nevertheless, the problem was mutually solved when other host families stepped in to help by sending the stranded students to the venue. It seems that there was a high level of co-operation among the settlers themselves for the sake of Da'wah efforts and outreach.

The long distance they needed to travel to the programme venues was not a big factor that inhibited their full participation in LADM activities. Indeed, there are other intervening factors including poor dissemination of information to the settlers which was the responsibility of FELDA's management. Apart from that, there were some settlers who were quite undecided as to whether they should participate or not, particularly those who did not offer themselves as a foster family to the students.

On the whole the feedback on the survey shows that FELDA community in Tersang cluster was more than satisfied with the commitments shown by students in all activities, and they also agreed that the delegation of responsibilities among students had helped in the smooth running of the programme. The settlers could feel and experience for themselves the two-way interactions between students and their foster families despite the fact the settlers were busy with their daily work routine at the same time these students were fully engaged in LADM activities. To ensure that there would be continuous ties students were encouraged to maintain the contact with their foster families in the settlement even after they have graduated from the university.

The level of knowledge among student participants was more than adequate for them to handle religious activities at the settlement's mosque. At first there were some doubts among the settlers regarding the ability of UKM students to deliver religious talks and *Tazkirah*. But after a series of religious sessions the settlers saw for themselves the competency of LADM participants in spreading the message of Da'wah to the general public. An example of this can be seen in the capacity attendance at a Forum Perdana, in which postgraduate students were involved as lead speakers. One of them was Nik Zawawi Hj Salleh, a PhD candidate from UKM. The forum also saw the attendance of a state assembly member (ADUN) for Kuala Besut, Zikmal Fuad and a Qari from Indonesia; all managed to give a good impression on the settlers who attended the event (Nik Zawawi Hj Salleh, 14 Ogos 2009).

Technical problems have been never a real issue in the running of the programme because there were ample facilities and infrastructures available in the settlement. The mosque, school and community hall have given their co-operation and utmost support to the programme. On the whole it can be said that FELDA settlements have proven to be a good location for placements of students in LADM exercise.

The lack of lecturers for monitoring of students in the field has been expected all along, but it was not a serious problem according to the respondents. While the presence of lecturers is indispensable the monitoring can also be done by FELDA management itself should the need arises.

There were a large number of female students involved in the programme, much more than their male counterpart. This means that a proportionate number of female lecturers were needed to supervise female participants in the field. However, due to logistic problems, duration they stay, not many female lecturers were able to take part in the supervision of LADM students. Hence, to overcome this problem change is made for monitoring the LADM students by concentrating on it more thoroughly and effectively.

### 3.1 Effectiveness of LADM Programme

Table 3 below shows the perception of FELDA settlers on the effectiveness of LADM programme. The questionnaires consist of various statements for which the participants were required to answer in the scale of 5: Most Disagreeable (MD), Disagreeable (D), Not So Agreeable (NSA), Agreeable (A), and Most Agreeable (MA).

**Table 3: Perceptions of FELDA Settlers on the Effectiveness of LADM**

| Statement  | MD   | D    | NSA  | A    | MA   |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| LADM activities on talks and forums on religion interfere with regular activities at the mosque. | 36 % | 44 % | 13 % | 3 %  | 4 %  |
| LADM programmes are embedded with political ideologies.  | 26 % | 41 % | 13 % | 15 % | 5 %  |
| LADM programmes help to promote the feeling of neighbourhood among FELDA settlers.               | 4 %  | 1 %  | 2 %  | 45 % | 48 % |
| LADM programmes held at the mosque are of great interest to FELDA settlers.                      | 3 %  | 2 %  | 5 %  | 47 % | 43 % |
| The knowledge learned by students at the university has been successfully applied in LADM.       | 1 %  | 2 %  | 4 %  | 63 % | 30 % |
| LADM programmes help to promote the significance of collective prayer (solat berjemaah).         | 2 %  | 8 %  | 9 %  | 37 % | 44 % |

|   |      |      |      |      |      |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| Religious talks and <i>ceramah</i> do not give any effect on me.  | 42 % | 35 % | 9 %  | 12 % | 2 %  |
| The sports programme helps to foster good relationship between students and FELDA settlers.                             | 2 %  | 4 %  | 1 %  | 33 % | 60 % |
| Programmes related to spiritual activities give a positive effect on me.  | 3 %  | 8 %  | 5 %  | 48 % | 36 % |
| The performance on Islamic culture gives me a new exposure on the dimension of Islamic entertainment                    | 2 %  | 4 %  | 4 %  | 50 % | 40 % |
| The talk on the use of methadone as a successful treatment for drug dependency is something different from other talks. | 3 %  | 4 %  | 11 % | 55 % | 27 % |
| <i>Gotong-royong</i> activity helps to promote the spirit of co-operation.  | 0 %  | 5 %  | 1 %  | 42 % | 52 % |
| Motivational programmes have given a positive effect on school children.  | 2 %  | 4 %  | 4 %  | 51 % | 39 % |
| LADM programmes bring out the importance of doing da'wah among Orang Asli community.                                    | 2 %  | 3 %  | 5 %  | 58 % | 32 % |
| The length of LADM period should be extended.   | 4 %  | 2 %  | 3 %  | 45 % | 46 % |
| LADM field project has managed to achieve its objective.  | 1 %  | 3 %  | 10 % | 56 % | 30 % |

Table 3 above shows various perceptions held by FELDA settlers regarding LADM programmes. They can be summarised as follows:

- 44% of the respondents did not agree with the statement that religious talks and forums interfere with regular activities at the mosque.
- 41% of the respondents did not agree that LADM programmes are embedded with a political agenda and ideologies.
- 48% of the respondents were most agreeable that LADM helps to promote the sense of neighbourhood among FELDA settlers.
- 47% of the respondents agreed that LADM programmes held at the mosque are of great interest to FELDA settlers.
- 63% of the respondents agreed that students have managed to successfully apply to LADM programmes the knowledge they have acquired at the university.
- 44% of the respondents were most agreeable that LADM programmes have instilled in them the significance of collective prayer (*solat berjemaah*).
- 42% of the respondents were most disagreeable that the talk programmes did not have any effect on them.
- 60% of the respondents were most agreeable that the sports events helped to promote good relationship between students and FELDA settlers.
- 48% of the respondents also agreed that the spiritual programmes have given them a very positive effect.
- 50% of the respondents agreed that the performance on Islamic culture gives them a new exposure on the dimension of Islamic entertainment.
- 55% of the respondents agreed that the talk on the use of methadone as a successful treatment for drug dependency was something different from other talks.



- 52% of the respondents were most agreeable that the *gotong-royong* programme helped to promote the spirit of co-operation among the settlers.
- 51% of the settlers agreed that the motivational programmes have given a positive effect on school children.
- 58% of the respondents agreed that LADM programme has highlighted the importance of doing Da'wah among the Orang Asli community.
- 46% of the respondents were most agreeable that the length of LADM field exposure should be extended.
- 56% of the respondents agreed that LADM programme has managed to achieve its objective.

On the whole it can be seen that the majority of FELDA respondents has given a very positive view of the activities conducted under LADM, particularly in relation to spiritual and religious activities, including talks, forum and collective prayers. All these help to make the mosque more a life as many of the settlers came to participate in the programmes. Nevertheless, an interesting comment was given by a member of the mosque committee, Ishak bin Hamid, (11 August 2009). He retorted that such programmes definitely do have a positive effect, but only to those who were regular attenders while those who distance themselves away from the mosque, such as the youth group, still remained marginalised and uninterested in whatever is going on there.

Apart from that the respondents were very impressed with the performance on Islamic culture which has given them a new dimension to the extent of Islamic forms of entertainment, comprising of *nasyid*, *qasida*, and *Marhaban*, and Islamic fashion and attire. The general feeling was that Islam does not prohibit the Muslims from seeking entertainment and to dress up in fashionable way as long as they abide by the Shariah rules.

Even though the evening show on Islamic culture was well received by the settlers, the *post-mortem* held soon after has raised some issues regarding the appropriate kind of fashion that should be promoted. Hence the head cover for women (*tudung*) should be lengthened below the breast level, while body-clinging attire should be avoided (Post-Mortem LADM, 11 Ogos 2009).

The findings also showed that motivational programmes held at the cluster's secondary school did have a positive effect on students who were sitting for SPM as they were made to realise on the importance of education and the need to pass the examination with good results, it is a reminder that they badly needed.

As for student participants in the sports events were a welcomed break from the seriousness of LADM main activities. Apart from that these events are one of the practical ways of drawing in the involvement of the youth group.

The talk on the treatment of drug addiction, especially on the use of methadone as an alternative, received a good response from the settlers who considered it different from other talks ever held on a similar subject. The session was made even more meaningful by the attendance and participation of trainees from the drug rehabilitation centre in Raub, who shared their views and experience with student participants and the settlers.

Another important point about LADM is that it has raised the level of consciousness among FELDA settlers of Tersang cluster on the importance of doing da'wah outreach among Orang Asli community, being their immediate neighbours. There was a high level of participation among the settlers in social service activities extended to Orang Asli villages. For instance, in a programme conducted in Belau, both FELDA settlers and students took part in a *gotong royong* project which helped to promote the sense of co-operation and understanding with the Orang Asli community.

Many of the respondents felt that the duration of LADM programmes should be extended to a longer period so that students can apply the knowledge they have acquired in the classrooms more effectively in real-life situations. However, because of management and financial constraints, the time period for LADM programme could not be extended. Instead, the programmes could be upgraded to incorporate more effective activities and optimum use of resources.

To put it briefly, the majority of respondents seemed to agree that LADM has achieved its objective since all activities planned for the programme have been carried out smoothly without encountering any serious problem. Nevertheless, the measure of success of LADM programme should also be considered in a long-term period. Hence, there should be a constant effort on the part of the university to ensure that LADM programme is continued in order to achieve the main objective of Da'wah activities not only among Tersang community but also in other places as well.

Other more substantial, even critical, comments by the respondents were that UKM students should make careful and thorough preparation prior to their going to the field for LADM activities. In certain cases, typically in sports events, they went about in a haphazard manner, indicative of poor attention to planning details. Future programmes should take into account this kind of weaknesses.

The respondents hoped that LADM programme would continue to be a regular event and diligently organised by the university for the purpose of raising their level of consciousness and commitment to the religion and Da'wah efforts as well as incorporating activities that are suitable for the youth group in the settlement.

### Conclusion

The research shows that LADM is a programme that has received good response from the target community of Tersang cluster of FELDA settlement. The overall implementation of the programme has been a success thanks to the management, organisation and availability of infrastructures, as well the commitment of concerned lecturers. Overall assessment of LADM programme by the settlers was very satisfactory despite minor hitches here and there. The effectiveness of the programme was felt throughout the target community. There may be some comments and critiques by both students and settlers but these are taken as constructive views in the spirit of Islamic brotherhood and in the interest of Da'wah commitment. In the final analysis it can be said that though LADM field exposure students have been able to put theories into practice, making full use of what they have acquired in the classrooms into practical Da'wah efforts in the field. Even though the programme was a success it does not mean that those involved in the activities should remain complacent. Perhaps the new approach should be considered in order to further improve LADM programme for future exercises. As society changes students and those involved in Da'wah activities should also adapt themselves to new challenges and obstacles, a fact that they have to face as soon as they graduate from the university.

### References

- Badlihasham Mohd Nasir. Concept Paper LADM 2009.
- Ishak bin Hamid, committee member of Tersang mosque. Interview on 11 August 2009.
- Post-Mortem Paper on LADM, 11 August 2009.
- Muhammad Tahir bin Haji Kassim, *nazir* for Tersang Mosque. Interview on 10 August 2009.
- Nik Zawawi Hj Salleh, PhD candidate, Department of Da'wah and Leadership Studies, UKM. Interview on 14 August 2009.