



## Designing an Optimal Religious Propagation Model with Emphasis on the Actions of Preachers

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to develop an optimal model for religious propagation by examining the actions of successful preachers, specifically Shiite preachers and mosque imams. The research adopts a sociology of religion approach and employs a grounded theory methodology. Interviews were conducted with 44 imams and associates from ten successful mosques in various regions. Through open coding, axial coding, and summarization, the study identified foundational factors, effective factors, obstacles, and outcomes of optimal propagation. The research revealed that “strengthening social bonds,” “efforts to solve people’s problems by involving them,” and “education, growth, and development of people” are three foundational factors. Additionally, “ethical characteristics,” “social characteristics,” and “management skills” were identified as three main categories of effective factors in the optimal propagation model. The obstacles related to “personal characteristics of the imam,” “characteristics of institutions and organizations,” “characteristics of mosque attendees and the imam’s companions,” and “the societal environment” were categorized as four main obstacles to optimal propagation. The study concluded that “strengthening hope and empathy,” “solving problems,” and “individual and social growth” are the three main outcomes of optimal propagation. The results of this study can be beneficial for religious institutions and active preachers in identifying criteria for effective propagation, empowering preachers, and evaluating their performance.

**Keywords:** *Propagation; Preacher; Optimal Model; Effective Factors; Foundational Factors; Obstacles; Outcomes*

### **Introduction**

Religion, as a significant subject in the modern era, has garnered extensive attention and study from scholars across various fields of humanities and social sciences. The dimensions, aspects, and vast diversity of religion allow for fresh and unique perspectives, enabling different approaches to its study.

One of the issues prevalent in most religions, and heavily emphasized, is the matter of propagation. Propagation is a fundamental pillar in most major religions and plays a crucial role in their expansion. The objectives of propagation can vary, including:

- Conveying the message of the religion to its followers;
- Reminding and reinforcing the teachings of the religion to its adherents;
- Addressing doubts of those who have uncertainties;
- Delivering the message of the religion to non-followers with the aim of converting them;
- Familiarizing others with its teachings; in some religions like Judaism, conversion is not possible, but efforts are still made to acquaint others with their teachings.

The importance of religious propagation has led to the training of individuals as religious preachers in most religions. These individuals are often required to engage in full-time propagation throughout their lives. These preachers, known by different titles in each religion, often wear specific attire and form a distinct social group with their own lifestyle, means of livelihood, ethics, and behaviors. For instance, in Hinduism, there are Brahmins; in Judaism, Rabbis; in Christianity, Priests; and in Islam, Clerics, each engaging in various specialized activities.

Religious propagation can be examined from different perspectives; one such perspective is communication science. Considering the various schools of thought and diverse theories in communication science, propagation can be analyzed in multiple ways. In fact, propagation can be viewed as a messaging process. However, an examination of these theories reveals significant differences in the definitions and objectives of both propagation and communication across different schools of thought, which is beyond the scope of this discussion.

Another perspective on religious propagation is examining it through the principles governing the teachings of that religion. The philosophical, ethical, doctrinal, and behavioral propositions of religions significantly influence their propagation models.

Religious propagation can also be studied from various academic perspectives, such as historical, geographical, psychological, social sciences, anthropology, and different schools of thought, including deontology, consequentialism, utilitarianism, value theory, phenomenology, and gender perspectives.

In Islam, religious propagation has received considerable attention, especially after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, leading to the establishment of various institutions and organizations dedicated to it.

The issue this research aims to address is the “design of an optimal propagation model.” Given the points mentioned in the introduction, this study examines religious propagation from the sociology of religion perspective, which is an external viewpoint. If religion is to be viewed sociologically, one of the critical issues is the appropriate and correct method of its propagation.

Instead of focusing on details like tools, methods, formats, audiences, preachers, and structures, this research aims to consider the model and pattern of religious propagation. While examining the model, these details are also addressed but within a comprehensive framework related to other sections.

This depiction, formed by examining the real actions of preachers in the field, is not prescriptive but a realistic description that strives to be as accurate as possible, examining details to the fullest extent. Therefore, the output of this model can be referenced and serve as a basis for other research.

To achieve this, the actions of ten male Shiite preachers stationed in mosques across various regions of Iran, who are considered successful by others and have gained good acceptance, are studied and analyzed. Additionally, interviews were conducted with 34 associates of these mosques, totaling 44 interviews in this research.

Theoretically, this research can compare Christian and Islamic propagation methods and the criteria for optimal propagation from religious texts and field perspectives. It can also significantly assist religious, educational, and cultural institutions in designing training, content production, content formats, supportive models, and evaluation and monitoring models.

## **Background**

Among foreign studies, one notable research is “Religious Propagation: Propagation Models of Global Movements in the 21st Century” (Gancler, 2009), which examines various global and widespread models of Christian propagation in the 20th century. The author aims to demonstrate that Christian propagation is part of a larger tradition shaped within the framework of the Great Church. This tradition not only influences global Christian propagation but is also influenced by it. The article reviews six models of propagation: Central Church Propagation, Mission of God, Church of Others, Gnosis, Propagation in Life Realities, and Propagation as Whole Life, providing evidence for each from the four Gospels.

This research and other similar studies indicate that valuable investigations have been conducted in Christianity with a focus on model analysis and trend analysis of propagation models and their relationship with global developments and other religions. However, such comprehensive and macro-perspective studies on propagation methods in Islam were not found.

Among domestic studies in this field, Ibrahim Khanmohammadi conducted research titled “Pathology of the Religious Propagation Model and Presenting an Optimal Model (Case Study: Islamic Propagation Office of Qom Seminary)” (Khanmohammadi, 2013). In this study, he notes that face-to-face propagation has gained significant attention due to its unparalleled capacity and is the dominant model of religious propagation today. He examines this propagation from a pathological perspective, utilizing library research, expert interviews, and thematic and content analysis methods to identify four categories of issues in four domains:

- 1. Audience’s Understanding Issues:** Homogeneous view, lack of audience segmentation, mismatch between preacher and audience, lack of content diversity.
- 2. Content and Message Issues:** Tolerance in the production process, non-compliance with standards, lack of scientific approach, lack of comprehensiveness, mismatch between content, preacher, and audience.
- 3. Management and Policy Issues:** Lack of focus on propagation activities, weak internal and external relations, lack of strategic planning, weak human resources, and structural weaknesses.
- 4. Communicator Issues:** Weak interaction with the audience and target community, weak knowledge, skills, and artistic foundation, and behavioral issues.

Although this research is closely related to the topic of this dissertation in terms of title, it differs significantly in results due to its structural and managerial perspective.

In domestic researches, religious propagation is generally approached from an internal religious perspective, relying on religious teachings. Methodologically, most studies have used library methods and rarely conducted field studies on the topic of propagation. Additionally, these studies often have a

pathological and prescriptive view, making them less directly impactful on this research. In the present study, by combining internal and external religious perspectives and studying successful propagation cases, we aim to design a successful model in the field of religious propagation.

### ***Theoretical Literature and Concepts***

Given the research topic and the scope of related subjects, the main concepts that need to be considered and addressed in this study include the concepts of religion, propagation, religious propagation, preacher, action, and model. Each of these concepts has multiple definitions in various books and articles, which will be reviewed in this section, and one definition will be selected as the primary definition.

**Religion:** According to Mr. Soleimani in his book “Definition of Religion in Theology and Philosophy of Religion,” based on the views of contemporary Islamic thinkers, the shortest definition for Islam as the true religion is: “God’s program for the happiness of mankind, provided through revelation and reason. The path to salvation consists of a set of beliefs, ‘what is and what is not,’ actions, ‘what should and should not be,’ which lead to human salvation and happiness. When we say ‘God’s program,’ we refer to a ‘personal, singular God,’ which implies belief in a higher realm. This definition also includes other implications, such as human free will, which cannot be detailed here. According to this definition, ‘religiosity’ means ‘submitting to God’s program, which has been conveyed to humans through revelation and reason, and this is called ‘Islam.’” (Soleimani, 2017, p. 393) According to the Holy Quran, the highest religion is this: “And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter, he will be among the losers.”

**Religious Propagation:** Delivering God’s message and religion to the audience in a complete, clear, and conscious manner, free from coercion and compulsion, while arousing their emotions, feelings, and will, using legitimate methods with the aim of guidance or Completion of proof. (Davoudabadi, 2015, p. 20).

**Religious Preacher:** A person who strives to convey religious messages to others is called a religious preacher. In religious literature, religious propagation is not limited to speech and includes conveying religious messages through the preacher’s behaviors and actions.

The preacher considered in this research is a full-time male Shiite cleric stationed in a neighborhood mosque. Some are resident clerics, some are part of the “Hejrat plan”, and some are self-established.

**Model:** A model for a theory is like a skeleton; an effective model should help predict events, and this predictive symbol of the model entails three properties: high accuracy, combinatorial richness, and a high degree of relevance or organizational power. (Farhangi, Safarzadeh, 2014, p. 69)

Generally, a model can be described as a framework that includes concepts, hypotheses, and indicators to facilitate the proof of a theory or hypothesis or to accurately represent a reality.

This research aims to create a framework for propagation, considering concepts and individuals to identify influential factors, enabling factors, obstacles, and outcomes of propagation, and to evaluate it.

Given the points mentioned, no framework or model for propagation has been outlined so far, and this research attempts to develop such a model. Consequently, the definitions of propagation and preacher provided so far may undergo significant changes after the model is designed. However, this research only models a part of one type of propagation and one specific type of preacher. To achieve broader models, other types of propagation and preachers need to be examined.

**Action:** The concept of action is one of the key concepts in social sciences, distinguishing humans from animals from the perspective of the “social definition paradigm” (Ritzer, 2012, p. 632). The concept of behavior refers to instinctive or conditioned reflex movements in animals, while action refers to meaningful movements and behaviors. In simpler terms, action is meaningful human behavior, which, if directed towards others, becomes social action and, according to Weber, is the main subject of sociology.

In this research, propagation action can be considered as goal-oriented rational action, which may become value-oriented rational action through bureaucratic processes. This means that preachers usually perform propagation actions with divine intentions and to fulfill religious duties and obligations, even though they receive payments for these duties and their livelihood depends on it. However, they consider their primary motivation to be fulfilling religious duties and obligations. After the revolution, with the establishment of propagation institutions and activities within bureaucratic structures, propagation was defined as a specific and structured activity in society. Institutions were tasked with providing preachers, financial support, and content and logistical support. Over time, these propagation actions within the bureaucratic structure gained a structural title, and preachers, like other government and non-government employees, perform propagation activities as part of their job duties.

**Principles and Foundations of Effective Religious Propagation from an Islamic Perspective:** Religious propagation has three main pillars: the preacher, the message, and the audience. For effective and impactful propagation, the specific conditions and regulations for each of these pillars must be observed. As previously mentioned, impactful propagation is one that transforms the audience, leading them to connect with Almighty God. One of the prerequisites for impactful propagation is that good content is conveyed to the audience through appropriate methods, resulting in change.

**Characteristics of the Preacher:** To prevent the contamination of the message and ensure its impact, it is not enough for the content to be pure and sublime. Other factors, such as the method of message transmission and the individual conveying the message, are also crucial. Therefore, some characteristics of preachers are highlighted below:

- Sincerity (Khorasani, 2018, p. 63)
- Understanding the goal and believing in it (Pazhouhandeh, 2014, p. 22)
- Proper understanding of society (Pazhouhandeh, 2014, p. 29)
- Insight and awareness
- Neat and clean appearance (Hassannlou, 2015, p. 37)
- Good temperament and gentleness (Naji, 1991, p. 67)
- Lack of financial expectations (Bousleki, 2012, p. 186)
- Concern and sense of responsibility (Babashah & Kashaniha, 2021, p. 221)
- Use of legitimate tools in propagation (Yousefian, 2008, p. 83)
- Minimum scientific, ethical, and skill qualifications (Shokri & Faghihi, 2018, p. 113)
- Simplicity in lifestyle (Bousleki, 2012, p. 187)

**Characteristics of the Message:** The subject of propagation is called the message (Morvian, 2002, p. 4). The nature and essence of the message attract the audience's attention and bring them closer to the message's goals. The characteristics of the message that can attract the audience's interest include:

- Appropriate subject
- Strength and solidity of content
- Diversity, innovation, and creativity
- Beautiful words and literary references (Tayebi, 2009, p. 39)
- At the audience's level (Morvian, 2002, p. 4)
- Relevance to the current needs of the time and the audience (Tayebi, 2009, p. 39)

**Characteristics of the Audience:** The third pillar of propagation is the "audience" or "message receiver," whose characteristics must be considered. The audience can be categorized in various ways, including:

- Demographic characteristics (Dennis, 2008, p. 82)
- Beliefs (Severin & Tankard, 2014, p. 314)
- Income sources (Arab Benapchi, ?, p. 27)
- Behavior (Rathi Tehrani, 2011, p. 40)
- Stages of the process (Mohsenian Rad, 2013, p. 450)
- Media usage (Farzi Shoub et al., 2014, p. 67)

In conclusion, Islam has numerous principles, foundations, and behavioral patterns for preachers and propagation, some of which have been mentioned. These factors significantly influence the model of effective religious propagation. By examining the model of effective religious propagation and the actions of preachers, it can be determined which of these principles are more or less emphasized in practice.

### ***Research Methodology***

Given that this article aims to examine the actions of preachers, field research is necessary. If initial hypotheses are considered in this research, they can deeply influence the results. Therefore, the grounded theory method was used to minimize the impact of existing assumptions and obtain results directly from the field.

In the grounded theory method, research data is collected through interviews. After transcription, data analysis, and coding of interview texts, a paradigmatic model is presented. Using a set of data, grounded theory develops a theory that broadly explains a process, action, or interaction. Most researchers use the Strauss and Corbin method for grounded theory analysis. The theory resulting from such a research method is a process theory.

### **Characteristics of the Grounded Theory Model**

- It is inductive and exploratory.
- It is a method for generating hypotheses, not testing them.

In the grounded theory model, the conceptual framework of this theory is derived from current information and not from previous studies. The researcher compares each piece of data with all other data, comparing similarities, differences, and relationships between each part of the data. This research method is based on three elements: concepts, categories, and propositions. The researcher may change data collection methods as the theory progresses and ask deeper questions if necessary.

Grounded theory aims to understand and comprehend individuals' experiences of events in a specific context. Using data, a theory is developed that explains a process or phenomenon. Grounded theory does not start with a hypothesis, but after collecting initial data, relationships are identified, and a conditional hypothesis is formed.

Among the various methods for developing a model, this research uses the paradigmatic method.

**Paradigmatic Model:** The paradigmatic model represents causal, intervening, and contextual factors of the central phenomenon and the necessary strategies to achieve outcomes. This model is a key component of the grounded theory method used by Strauss and Corbin. It consists of five parts: causal conditions, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, strategies, and outcomes. At the center of the model is the central phenomenon, around which activities are shaped, showing the flow of processes and activities that have occurred within the context of this research.

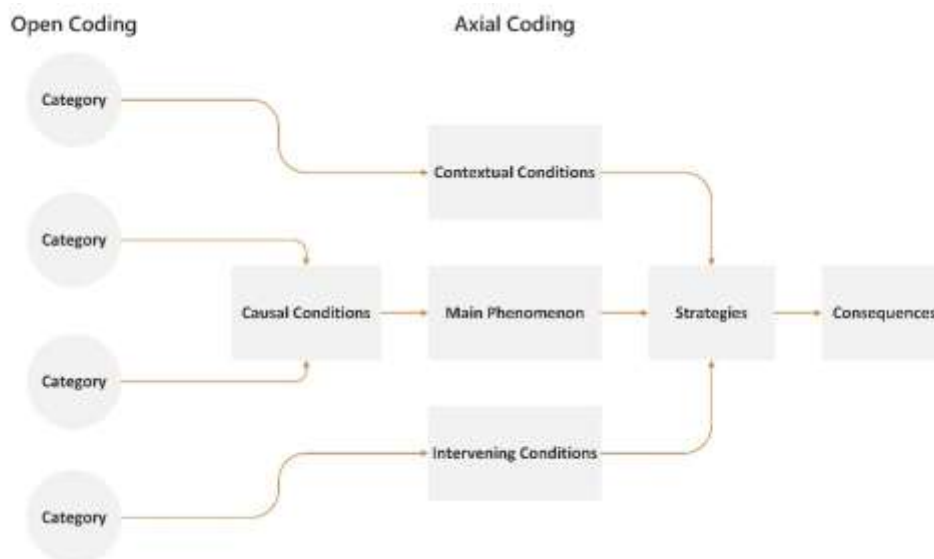


Figure 1-3: Presenting the Paradigmatic Model in Grounded Theory (Habibi, Paradigmatic Model)

The paradigmatic model represents the final result of qualitative analysis using the grounded theory method. In this model, the identified categories are systematically displayed through axial and open coding.

**Target Population:** The target population for this dissertation consists of male religious preachers who serve as imams in mosques. These individuals are located in various regions across the country, including villages, cities, and suburban areas.

**Research Sample:** This research aims to examine samples that have achieved relative success in their activities. Approximately thirty thousand imams with the mentioned characteristics are present in the country, reviewed by the Islamic Propagation Organization's Hedayat Foundation. From Hedayat Foundation's reviewed imams, about three hundred of the best were selected, and ten imams with the necessary diversity and distribution were chosen.

## Criteria for Selecting Imams

1. Theoretical and practical commitment to Islamic values in all orientations and activities.
2. Being a point of reference for the public in general neighborhood issues and some personal matters.
3. Feeling responsible for the people, their issues, and considering their pain as one's own.
4. Utilizing various financial, intellectual, communicative capabilities and manual labor of the people to identify neighborhood issues, prioritize them, find solutions, design corrective actions, and take practical steps.
5. Involving different groups, especially women, in activities.
6. Utilizing all public capacities and various groups.
7. The imam's patience and foresight in facing difficulties and a comprehensive view of neighborhood issues.
8. Courage in action, integrity, and gaining public trust.
9. Teamwork spirit (non-autocratic) and the ability to network with capable individuals around them.
10. Familiarity with the neighborhood's culture and cultural ecosystem and using relevant elements to advance transformative goals in the neighborhood.
11. Appropriate, timely, and measured use of societal archetypes.
12. Correct understanding of local capacities, vulnerabilities, opportunities, and threats, and having a roadmap for activities.
13. Maintaining dignity in interactions with the wealthy and feeling responsible and humble towards the poor.
14. The potential impact of the ingrained and cultural familiarity of the masses in a region with the Ummah-Imamate system on the imam's success.
15. Moderation in lifestyle and being people-oriented in demeanor and approach.
16. Ability to revive the spirit of public demand from officials.
17. Effective communication (result-oriented) with various groups, especially officials, benefactors, and prominent and efficient individuals in the neighborhood.
18. Steadfastness in executing justice and decisions that have been thoroughly considered.
19. Having noble lineage and tribe on one hand and local prestige and proper utilization of this social position on the other.
20. Appropriate and optimal use of new technologies (virtual networks, etc.), new social ideas (startup activities), cooperatives, and innovators.
21. Appropriate, measured, and suitable media activities in advancing goals.



## Interview Process

The interview process continued from February 2021 to July 2021. The dates, duration, and number of interviewees are detailed in Table 2-3 below.

Table 2-3

Row	City	Interview Date	Duration of Stay	of Interview Volume	Number of Interviewees
1	Semnan	17/02/2021 - 18/02/2021	2 days	8 hours	2
2	Ardabil	06/04/2021 - 07/04/2021	2 days	7 hours	4
3	Bandar Abbas	17/05/2021 - 18/05/2021	2 days	11 hours	7
4	Mashhad	01/06/2021 - 02/06/2021	2 days	8 hours	3
5	Sahand	20/05/2021	1 day	4.5 hours	3
6	Zahedan	06/09/2021 - 07/09/2021	2 days	4.5 hours	1
7	Ahvaz	06/07/2021 - 07/07/2021	2 days	9 hours	8
8	Ahvaz	08/07/2021 - 10/07/2021	2 days	6 hours	4
9	Qorveh/Vinsar	22/07/2021	1 day	5 hours	5
10	Kashmar/Zendejan	21/08/2021 - 22/08/2021	2 days	6 hours	5

In addition to interviewing the imams, interviews were also conducted with their associates, some audience members, and the general public. Therefore, the total number of interviewees in this research is 42.

## Research Findings

From the interview texts, activities that could demonstrate specific characteristics were identified, and a component was identified from each category of actions.

One of the most important aspects of any research is ensuring the accurate realization of the initial components identified through open coding. If this stage is not done correctly, the rest of the research results will also be problematic. Therefore, this research uses the grounded theory method, which examines four categories of factors to develop a model:

- Influential factors;
- Results and outcomes;
- Enabling factors and variables;
- Inhibiting factors and variables.

At this stage, considering these four general sections, the text corresponding to each was extracted as a component. Identifying the formats in which these components should be recognized is crucial and must be tailored to each research. Therefore, through initial review and induction, some criteria for identifying components were obtained, which are mentioned below:

1. An activity that should be done, not done, or prevented.
2. A relationship that should be strengthened, weakened, established, or canceled.
3. A feeling that should be strengthened, weakened, or controlled.
4. An institution that should be built, strengthened, controlled, or closed.
5. An administrative organization and structure that should or should not be connected with.
6. A characteristic or ethical or educational habit.
7. A social feature.
8. A social group that should be considered: attention to a social group.
9. A person or personality that should be considered: attention to a person or personality.
10. A routine that should be created or canceled.
11. ...

Therefore, from the first stage of this research, which is extracting components from the interviews, efforts have been made to consider these four factors (influential and effective factors, obstacles, and outcomes) and extract the components in the above-mentioned categories and formats.

In Table 2, the number of components obtained in each section and from each mosque is detailed separately.

Table 2: Number of Components Obtained in Each Section and from Each Mosque

Mosque Name	City	Foundational Factors	Influencing Factors	Barriers	Outcomes
Imam Ali (AS)	Ardabil	76	49	25	15
Imam Zain al-Abidin (AS)	Bandar Abbas	39	21	4	8
Imam Hussein (AS)	Sahand	28	11	11	5
Fatimiyah	Ahvaz	40	10	5	3
Hejazi	Ahvaz	38	7	3	3
Vali Asr (AJ)	Zahedan	16	5	1	2
Qaemiyeh	Semnan	44	14	10	5
Vinsar	Qorveh	51	16	14	9
Zendeh Jan	Kashmar	33	13	13	6
Seyyed al-Shuhada (AS)	Mashhad	45	16	8	8
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>410</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>64</b>

## Categorization of Extracted Components

After extracting components related to the topic from the conducted interviews, the components were divided into four main categories. The next step in obtaining the desired propagation model is to discover categories among these components, which are also divided into four categories.

A very effective method in obtaining the propagation model is to determine the frequency of components under each category; the more components under a category, the higher its importance. Each component may confirm several categories, resulting in a frequency under categories that exceeds the number of components. This is due to the repetition in counting components, leading to a frequency higher than the actual number of components in each section.

After finalizing the categories produced from summarizing the components, it becomes clear that these categories are also numerous for a clear and understandable summary. Therefore, another summarization step is needed to extract the propositions for determining the propagation model from these categories. This section aims to achieve this and present these propositions.

Since general categorization and proposition discovery might make the content less understandable, the categories under each proposition are also provided, considering their frequencies. Some categories fall under two or more propositions, and their frequencies in each categorization are presented.

## The Foundational Factors of Propagation

Several types of categorization were tested to determine the propagation propositions. For example, initially, it was attempted to categorize under the problem-solving model and its stages, such as capacity identification, problem identification, root cause analysis, solution finding, prioritization, etc. Since this categorization did not form a balanced structure among the components, it was not selected. The second method attempted to categorize under Parsons's classification, which includes cultural, political, social, and economic categories. This categorization also did not yield results, as the outputs lacked model value and merely provided a categorization that was inconsistent in some sections. The third method was categorization based on the triad of beliefs, ethics, and rules, which, besides not being comprehensive and exclusive, was ineffective considering the categories and components. Another method was the triad categorization used in Bloom's taxonomy, including motivational factors, knowledge factors, and insight factors. This categorization was also not used because it was not comprehensive of all items, with some categories falling under two titles and some under none. As follows:

1. **Imbalance:** A large number of categories might fall under one proposition, while some propositions might have none.
2. **Lack of comprehensiveness:** Some categories did not fall under any proposition.
3. **Lack of exclusivity:** Some items were not considered in the categorization.
4. **Lack of precise correlation:** Some categories fell under two or more propositions.
5. **Inefficiency:** The output did not provide an efficient categorization for model design and practical application.
6. **Lack of simplicity:** The model should be simple to implement, but some categorizations were too complex to understand and execute.
7. **Lack of relevance:** The categorization did not align with the propagation concept.

In the end, efforts were made to identify the most important tasks for laying the groundwork for propagation, categorizing the components under them. As evident from the frequencies and number of categories, the most important tasks for successful propagation include strengthening social ties, addressing people's issues, and promoting people's growth.

The main propositions in the factors laying the groundwork for propagation, along with their frequencies, are as follows (each proposition is followed by a sample component):

- **Addressing People's Issues and Problems (374):** Leading the charity center under the "Emdad Committee".
- **Strengthening Social Ties (398):** Mediating and assisting with overdue installments for needy families (e.g., negotiating with creditors, paying part of the installments, etc.).
- **Promoting People's Growth and Development (339):** Conducting educational and cultural classes for youth and adolescents.

The total frequency of components in this section is 1111.

#### The Influencing Factors of Propagation

After examining the components and categories related to the factors influencing propagation, it became clear that the main factors influencing propagation are related to the characteristics of the preacher. Therefore, efforts were made to categorize the propositions related to the factors influencing propagation based on the characteristics of the preacher.

Overall, these characteristics were divided into three main categories: ethical, social, and managerial. While various categorizations could be made, this categorization was chosen for the following reasons:

1. The research topic, which aims to achieve a propagation model;
2. The components obtained;
3. The practical and operational perspective on the activities of the Imams;
4. The emphasis on the characteristics of the preacher, as reviewed in the theoretical foundations in the second part of the dissertation;
5. The possibility of addressing these issues more straightforward and specifically.

In summary, the main propositions in the factors influencing effective propagation can be categorized as follows (each proposition is followed by a sample component):

- **Ethical Characteristics of the Preacher (31):** Working sincerely and humbly, providing services to people without expecting anything in return, and being honest.
- **Social Characteristics of the Preacher (47):** Congratulating young people and teenagers in the mosque on their birthdays with sweets, a text message, or a phone call.
- **Managerial Characteristics and Skills of the Preacher (63):** Organizing and defining responsibilities for the board of trustees with the aim of developing mosque activities and providing services to the neighborhood.

The total frequency of components in this section is 141.

## Barriers to Propagation

In summarizing the barriers to propagation, the categorized components from the review are divided into four main categories. Some barriers are related to the personal characteristics of the Imam, essentially the Imam's ethical shortcomings that hinder the propagation process. Other barriers are related to the characteristics of the Imam's associates, the interaction of institutions, and the general conditions of the neighborhood and society, each of which in some way hinders effective propagation.

The reasons for choosing this categorization are as follows:

1. Doubts raised by the preachers themselves and others about the barriers to propagation;
2. Criticisms that are commonly raised in this topic;
3. Articles and books reviewed in the second part, which addressed the topic of propagation with a critical perspective;
4. The preacher's interactions at various levels with others, essentially introducing barriers within these layers of interaction.

In summary, the barriers to effective propagation can be divided into four categories (each proposition is followed by a sample component):

- **Barriers Related to the Personal Characteristics of the Imam (64):** Political and religious discrimination among people, creating division and conflict.
- **Barriers Related to Institutions and Organizations (20):** Neglect by some officials towards underprivileged and deprived areas.
- **Barriers Related to Mosque Members and the Imam's Associates (79):** Conflict and division between the neighborhood Imam and village officials.
- **Barriers Related to the Community Environment (28):** Population density in the neighborhood (e.g., neighborhoods with many complexes close together, making it challenging for the Imam to manage neighborhood affairs).

The total frequency of components in this section is 191.

## Outcomes of Propagation

The categories under the outcomes of propagation are diverse, and each could be considered a proposition on its own. However, to provide a usable summary and proposition discovery regarding the outcomes of effective propagation, three categories can be presented: hope and empathy, problem-solving, and individual and social growth.

The main reason for categorizing the outcomes of propagation in this way is to align them with the identified foundational factors.

In summary, the outcomes of effective propagation can be divided into these three categories (each proposition is followed by a sample component):

- **Hope and Empathy (44):** Gaining the trust of teachers and collaborating with them as a result of appreciating and honoring teachers on Teacher's Day and the services provided to schools.

- **Solving People’s Problems (33):** Creating employment and focusing charitable efforts on job creation for neighborhood youth (the outcome of this is that the individual becomes independent, gains employment, and gradually no longer needs assistance).
- **Individual and Social Growth (12):** Training staff specifically results in active groups training their own needed managers and officials, ensuring the continuity of work.

The total frequency of components in this section is 89.

Presenting the Desired Propagation Model

In this model, propagation is considered a system where some factors lay the groundwork for its activities, some factors influence its effective performance, and others hinder its precise functioning. The combination of these factors results in the model’s outcomes, results, and functions, which are presented as outcomes.

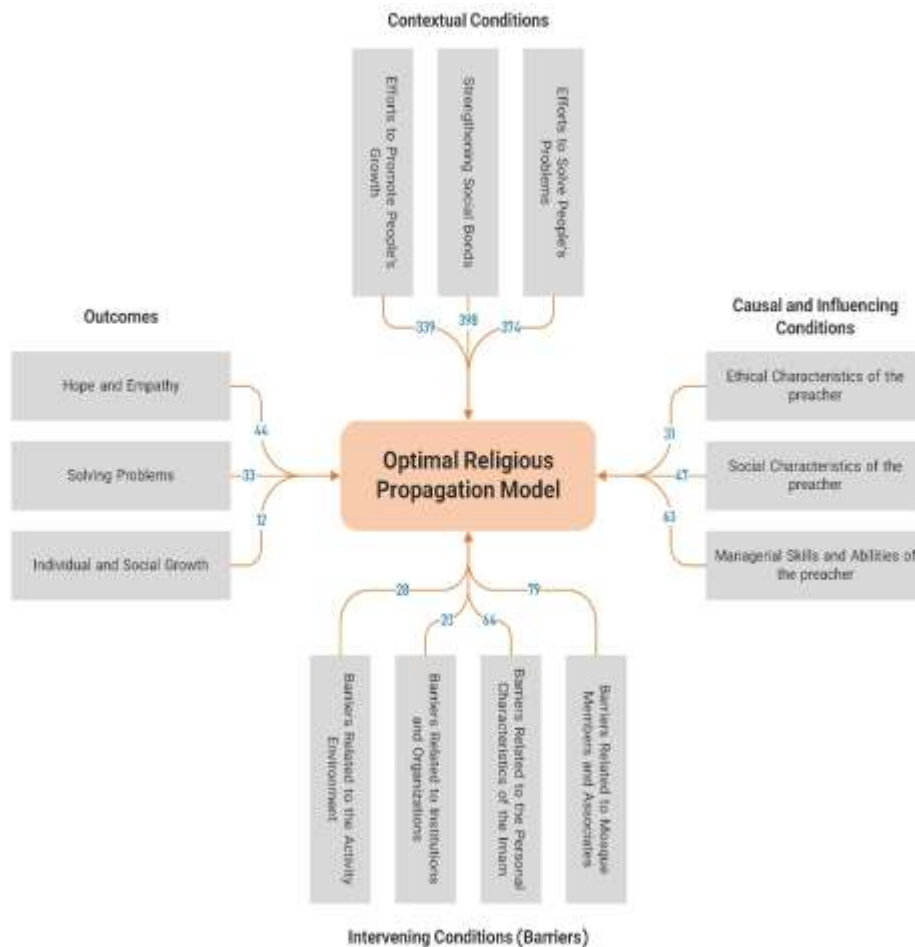


Figure 1-5: Overall Diagram of the Optimal Religious propagation Paradigm Model

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results obtained from identifying components and categories, and considering the frequency of components, several points can be concluded:

- It is evident that the majority of propositions are derived from foundational factors. This means that to achieve effective propagation, foundational factors must be strengthened above all else.
- The fewest propositions pertain to the outcomes of propagation. This is because, in the conducted interviews, individuals primarily focused on explaining the preliminaries and paid little attention to the outcomes. This characteristic is prevalent in cultural and propagational activities, where the focus on outcomes is not central, and activities are carried out only when they have immediate and apparent benefits. Consequently, activities may be scattered and not targeted.
- The relatively low number of components related to barriers compared to other factors suggests that the issues in propagation are more about creating the necessary conditions rather than the barriers themselves. Upon examining the barriers, it becomes clear that most of them are not independent obstacles but rather the absence of necessary conditions that have created obstacles or become obstacles themselves.
- Problem-solving, strengthening social bonds, and promoting people's growth are the three main tasks of a preacher.
- Among the influencing factors, the most important characteristics of a preacher are managerial skills.
- The social characteristics of the preacher are more important than their individual ethical traits.
- The most significant barriers in propagation are related to the preacher associates.
- The personal characteristics of the Imam are one of the major obstacles in the propagation process.
- Institutional barriers and those related to the general environment are less significant compared to the individual characteristics of the preacher and their associates. However, when consulting the preacher, institutional and external problems are often cited as the main obstacles.
- The most important outcomes of effective propagation are fostering empathy and hope.
- Individual and social growth is the least expected outcome from the audience's perspective. This indicates that although the most important task of a preacher should be the growth of individuals, this expectation is generally lower.
- For the audience, solving livelihood problems and then educational and leisure issues are more important than intellectual and knowledge-related matters.
- In organizational development, the preacher prioritizes the organization within their own mosque over inter-mosque organizations.
- In identifying capacities, financial and charitable capacities receive twice as much attention as human resources and elite capacities.
- Among the individual ethical traits of the preacher, humility is the most emphasized characteristic.
- The most important characteristic of a preacher is involving others in carrying out tasks.

- Conflict and division among associates are the most significant barriers.
- Poor interaction between officials and the public is one of the main barriers to organizational interaction.
- The Iran's difficult economic situation has a significant impact on propagation.

Based on these results, several questions can be answered:

#### Policy Recommendations

Based on the results of this research, several recommendations can be made at the policy-making level for propagation institutions in the country and other related organizations:

1. Do not view the field of propagation as merely a cultural domain; propagation can have significant impacts in the social sphere as well.
2. Beyond cultural and social domains, propagation can be used to address issues in other areas.
3. The most important use of propagation to help solve issues in other areas is to mobilize the public.
4. One of the crucial needs in solving various national issues is to promote culture in those areas. For example, promoting environmental protection culture, using domestic products, saving and avoiding waste, reading culture, and peace and reconciliation culture, each of which has a significant impact on solving issues in their respective fields such as environment, economy, legal sector, and others.
5. Replace the social leadership model of Imamate with the facilitation model, which has incurred significant costs but has not yielded serious benefits.
6. One of the most important policies in propagation should be empowering the students, as their knowledge and methodological weaknesses are substantial. If this empowerment is not achieved, strengthening other sectors cannot be effective.

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