

## Transformation of Da'wah Communication from the Perspective of Islamic Communication: A Literature Study

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### ABSTRACT

*This article analyzes the transformation of Da'wah communication in the digital era from the perspective of Islamic communication. The study is motivated by the rapid shift of Da'wah activities toward digital platforms, which expands the dissemination of Islamic messages but also raises challenges related to religious authority, message commodification, and ethical communication. Despite the increasing presence of digital Da'wah, studies that integrate these developments with the normative principles of Islamic communication remain limited. Therefore, this research aims to examine the patterns of transformation in digital Da'wah and identify the relevance of Islamic communication values in guiding its development. This study employs a qualitative literature review approach. Data were collected from scholarly books and peer-reviewed journal articles published within the last five years that discuss digital Da'wah, Da'wah communication strategies, and Islamic communication principles. The selected literature was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify major patterns, conceptual arguments, and emerging issues. Data verification was conducted through cross-comparison among sources to ensure consistency and reliability. The findings indicate that digital Da'wah transforms communication practices through message visualization, short narratives, and interactive storytelling that encourage two-way engagement between da'i and mad'u. While digital media broadens the reach and inclusivity of Da'wah, it also introduces risks of shifting authority and commercialization of religious content. This study contributes by proposing the reinforcement of Islamic communication values qawlan sadīdan, qawlan balīghan, qawlan ma'rūfan, and qawlan layyīnan as an ethical framework for adaptive and socially transformative digital Da'wah*

### ABSTRAK

Artikel ini menganalisis transformasi komunikasi dakwah di era digital dari perspektif komunikasi Islam. Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh pergeseran pesat aktivitas dakwah ke platform digital yang memperluas penyebaran pesan-pesan Islam, namun juga menimbulkan berbagai tantangan terkait otoritas keagamaan, komodifikasi pesan dakwah, serta etika komunikasi. Meskipun dakwah digital semakin berkembang, kajian yang mengintegrasikan perkembangan tersebut dengan prinsip-prinsip normatif komunikasi Islam masih relatif terbatas. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pola transformasi dakwah digital serta mengidentifikasi relevansi nilai-nilai komunikasi Islam dalam mengarahkan perkembangannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui studi literatur. Data dikumpulkan dari buku ilmiah dan artikel jurnal bereputasi yang diterbitkan dalam lima tahun terakhir yang membahas dakwah digital, strategi komunikasi dakwah, serta prinsip-prinsip komunikasi Islam. Literatur yang terpilih dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola utama, argumen konseptual, serta isu-isu yang berkembang. Verifikasi data dilakukan melalui perbandingan silang antar sumber untuk memastikan konsistensi dan keandalan temuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dakwah digital mentransformasikan praktik komunikasi melalui visualisasi pesan, narasi singkat, dan storytelling interaktif yang mendorong keterlibatan dua arah antara da'i dan mad'u.

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Meskipun media digital memperluas jangkauan dan inklusivitas dakwah, fenomena ini juga menghadirkan risiko pergeseran otoritas keagamaan serta komersialisasi konten keagamaan. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dengan mengusulkan penguatan nilai-nilai komunikasi Islam *qawlan sadīdan*, *qawlan balīghan*, *qawlan ma'rūfan*, dan *qawlan layyinan* sebagai kerangka etis bagi pengembangan dakwah digital yang adaptif dan transformatif secara sosial.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

*Da'wah* is a fundamental element in Islamic teachings that functions as a means of conveying values of faith, morality, and social responsibility to humankind.<sup>1</sup> From an academic perspective, *Da'wah* cannot be understood merely as an activity of religious preaching, but rather as a communication process aimed at building understanding, shaping attitudes, and encouraging behavioral change in accordance with Islamic teachings.<sup>2</sup> Islamic communication theory positions *Da'wah* as a communicative activity that is both normative and persuasive, which must be grounded in Qur'anic communication principles such as *qawlan sadīdan* (truthful and honest speech), *qawlan balīghan* (effective and well-targeted speech), *qawlan ma'rūfan* (appropriate and good speech), *qawlan layyinan* (gentle speech), and *qawlan karīman* (noble and respectful speech).<sup>3</sup> These principles are aligned with the concepts of *hikmah*, *mau'izah ḥasanah*, and *mujādalah bi al-latī hiya aḥsan*, which emphasize that *Da'wah* should be delivered wisely, argumentatively, and ethically so that religious messages can be effectively and responsibly received by the *mad'ū* as the audience of *Da'wah*.<sup>4</sup>

The development of information and communication technology over the past two decades, particularly in the digital and social media era, has triggered fundamental changes in the practice of *Da'wah* communication.<sup>5</sup> The presence of digital media such as YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and podcasts has created new spaces for *Da'wah* activities that were previously conducted primarily through mosque pulpits, *majlis ta'lim*, and face-to-face interactions. From the perspective of Islamic communication theory, this change of medium requires adjustments in the delivery of *Da'wah* messages so that they remain aligned with the principle of *qawlan balīghan*, namely effective, contextual, and audience-appropriate communication.<sup>6</sup> This transformation has made *Da'wah* no longer confined to specific spaces

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<sup>1</sup> Anita Ariani et al., "Integration of Da'wah Ethics and Psychology in Banjar Culture: A Humanistic Approach to Religious Communication," *Muharrrik: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Sosial* 8, no. 2 (2025): 33–47, <https://doi.org/10.37680/muharrrik.v8i2.7922>.

<sup>2</sup> M Sabir, "Interaction Between Dakwah and Local Culture," *Journal Iof Innovative Iand ICreativity* 5, no. 3 (2025): 36232–41.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Tahir and Sri Rahayu Rayhaniah, "Implementation of The Principles of Islamic Communication In The Digital Era," *Borneo International Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2022): 1–12.

<sup>4</sup> M. Taufiq Hidayah Tanjung and Abdullah Abdullah, "The Concept of Communication in the Quran; Analysis of Theory and Practice," *International Journal Of Education, Social Studies, And Management (IJESSM)* 5, no. 1 (2025): 72–85, <https://doi.org/10.52121/ijessm.v5i1.629>.

<sup>5</sup> Agus Yosep Abduloh et al., "The Urgency of Multicultural Islamic Education, Democracy And Human Rights In Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2022): 21–43, <https://doi.org/10.20885/ijiis.vol.5.iss2.art2>.

<sup>6</sup> Bambang S. Ma'arif et al., "Educational Communication Based on Qur'anic Religious Pluralism in Increasing Religious Moderation of Muslim Students in Indonesia," *International Journal of Religion* 5, no. 8 (2024): 557–69, <https://doi.org/10.61707/8j1fed40>.

and times, but rather has evolved into a form of communication that is global, rapid, and cross-cultural. A number of recent studies indicate that the use of digital media can expand the reach of *Da'wah* and increase audience participation, especially among younger generations who are closely connected to digital technology, as long as *Da'wah* messages are conveyed in relevant, ethical, and responsible language in accordance with the values of Islamic communication.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the strategic opportunities opened by the transformation of *Da'wah* communication in the digital era, this phenomenon also raises several conceptual and practical issues that cannot be ignored.<sup>8</sup> One crucial issue is the shifting of religious authority, whereby the production and distribution of *Da'wah* messages have become increasingly open, allowing anyone to disseminate religious content without adequate scholarly verification. From the perspective of Islamic communication theory, this condition potentially contradicts the principle of *qawlan sadīdan*, namely the obligation to convey messages that are truthful, accurate, and accountable.<sup>9</sup> As a result, digital *Da'wah* is vulnerable to the oversimplification of Islamic teachings, ideological bias, and even the spread of religious content that deviates from the ethical values of Islamic communication, which emphasize honesty, responsibility, and the welfare of the ummah.

In addition to the issue of religious authority, the practice of *Da'wah* communication in digital media also shows a tendency toward the commodification of religious messages, in which *Da'wah* content is often packaged sensationally to attract audience attention and increase viewership. From the perspective of Islamic communication, this phenomenon risks shifting the orientation of *Da'wah* from its primary function of nurturing the ummah toward interests in popularity, monetization, and compliance with media algorithms.<sup>10</sup> Such conditions run counter to the principles of *qawlan ma'rūfan* and *qawlan karīman*, which emphasize the delivery of religious messages in a proper, dignified manner and oriented toward the common good. Several recent studies affirm that without a strong framework of Islamic communication ethics, digital *Da'wah* risks losing the substance of Islamic values and the goal of social transformation that constitutes the very essence of *Da'wah* itself, causing *Da'wah* messages to become shallow and pragmatic.

Several recent studies have examined the relationship between *Da'wah* and digital media from different perspectives. For instance, 'Ulyan emphasize the role of social media platforms in expanding the reach of Islamic preaching and facilitating broader audience engagement in digital environments.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, Azmi & Rifai focus on the adaptation of *Da'wah* communication strategies to digital audiences, particularly the importance of visual content

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<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Fikri 'Ainun Najib and Miftakhul Rohman, "Optimization of Educational Da'wah on Social Media as a Communication Strategy for Islamic Religious Education for Gen Z in High Schools in Blitar City," *Journal of Communication Studies* 5, no. 2 (2025): 173–82, <https://doi.org/10.37680/jcs.v5i2.7834>.

<sup>8</sup> Al Kahfi and Kholis Ali Mahmudi, "Transformation Of Da'wah In The Digital Era: Modern Strategies In Optimizing Technology-Based Da'wah Management," *Jdk : Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 9, no. 2 (2024): 63–79.

<sup>9</sup> Djeprin E Hulawa and Kasmia, "Qaulan Sadida As a Qur'anic Framework for Revitalizing Character Building in The Digital Era," *Fitrah: Journal of Islamic Education* 6, no. 2 (2025): 292–309, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.53802/fitrah.v6i2.1144>.

<sup>10</sup> Dinda Ayu Pratiwi et al., "The Commercialization of Da'Wah: An Islamic Perspective," *HUNafa Jurnal Studia Islamika* 22, no. 1 (2025): 33–46, <https://doi.org/10.24239/jsi.v22i1.828>.

<sup>11</sup> Mohammad 'Ulyan, "Digital Da'wah and Religious Authority: A Narrative Review of Islamic Preaching in the Social Media Era," *Sinergi International Journal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 3 (2023): 100–113, <https://doi.org/10.61194/ijis.v1i3.591>.

and concise narratives in maintaining audience attention.<sup>12</sup> Hanif highlight the growing tendency toward the commodification of religious content in digital spaces, arguing that algorithm-driven platforms may influence the framing of *Da'wah* messages.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Jaili & Yusria Ningsi explore how digital *Da'wah* can increase youth participation in religious discourse through interactive media formats.<sup>14</sup> In addition, Hulawa & Kasmianti discuss the normative foundations of Islamic communication based on Qur'anic principles such as *qawlan sadīdan* and *qawlan balīghan*.<sup>15</sup> While these studies provide valuable insights into digital *Da'wah* practices, most of them tend to focus either on media utilization, audience engagement, or communication ethics separately. The novelty of this study lies in its effort to synthesize these perspectives by analyzing the transformation of *Da'wah* communication in the digital era through a comprehensive Islamic communication framework. By integrating empirical discussions on digital media with the normative principles of Qur'anic communication, this study offers a conceptual contribution that bridges technological developments with the ethical and value-based foundations of Islamic *Da'wah* communication.

Based on these dynamics, a comprehensive academic study is needed to understand the transformation of *Da'wah* communication within the framework of Islamic communication. A literature study approach is essential to systematically examine developments in concepts, strategies, opportunities, and challenges of *Da'wah* in the digital era, while reaffirming the role of Islamic communication values as a normative foundation for contemporary *Da'wah* practices. This study serves not only as an effort at scholarly mapping, but also as a reflective means to integrate Qur'anic communication principles such as honesty, wisdom, courtesy, and public benefit into digital *Da'wah* strategies. Thus, this research is expected to contribute theoretically to the enrichment of Islamic communication studies, as well as practically to the development of *Da'wah* communication models that are relevant, ethical, and adaptive to the dynamics of digital society.

## B. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review (library research) method.<sup>16</sup> This approach is chosen because the research objective focuses on conceptual and theoretical understanding of the transformation of *Da'wah* communication from the perspective of Islamic communication, rather than on quantitative measurement or empirical hypothesis testing. A literature study enables the researcher to examine, analyze, and

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<sup>12</sup> Aulia Ulul Azmi and Achmad Rifai, "Contemporary Islamic Thought: Answering the Challenges of *Da'wah* in the Digital Era," *Al-Ulum Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Penelitian Ke Islaman* 12, no. 1 (2025): 95–107, <https://doi.org/10.31102/alulum.12.1.2025.95-107>.

<sup>13</sup> Abdulloh Hanif, "The Transformation of Religious Authority in Digital *Da'wah* Habib Husein Ja'far," in *Proceedings of the Excellent Campus and Technology Conference*. (Pasuruan: UNU Pasuruan Conference, 2025), 75–90.

<sup>14</sup> Hambali Jaili and Yusria Ningsih, "Interactive Preaching To Youth Through Social Media: The perspective of Brunei Darussalam," *Proceedings of International Conference On Da'wa Management & Engagement* 01, no. 2 (2024): 175–89.

<sup>15</sup> Hulawa and Kasmianti, "Qaulan Sadida As a Qur'anic Framework for Revitalizing Character Building in The Digital Era."

<sup>16</sup> Lutfia Nafisatul Hanifah, "Literature Review: Factors Affecting Alcohol Consumption and the Impact of Alcohol on Health Based on Behavioral Theory," *Media Gizi Kemas* 12, no. 1 (2023): 453–62, <https://doi.org/10.20473/mgk.v12i1.2023.453-462>.

synthesize various relevant academic perspectives in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of *Da'wah* in the digital era.

The literature reviewed in this study is limited to publications from the last five years to ensure relevance to the contemporary dynamics of *Da'wah* communication in the digital era. Data were collected through a systematic literature search conducted in several academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, and ScienceDirect.<sup>17</sup> The search process used specific keywords such as *digital Da'wah*, *Da'wah communication*, *Islamic communication*, and *social media and Da'wah*. In the initial stage, the search results were screened based on titles and abstracts to identify studies that directly discuss the transformation of *Da'wah* communication in digital contexts. Articles that were not relevant to the topic or did not focus on Islamic communication perspectives were excluded. After the initial screening, the selected publications were further evaluated based on several criteria, including thematic relevance, publisher credibility, methodological clarity, and theoretical contribution to the fields of Islamic communication and *Da'wah* studies. The final set of literature consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly books that provide conceptual discussions or empirical findings related to digital *Da'wah* practices.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. Each selected source was read carefully and coded to identify key themes such as the transformation of *Da'wah* strategies, the role of digital media, opportunities and challenges in digital *Da'wah*, and the application of Islamic communication values.<sup>18</sup> The findings from different sources were then compared and synthesized to identify recurring patterns, conceptual similarities, and differences among studies. To ensure the reliability of the analysis, data verification was carried out through cross-checking among multiple sources and reviewing consistent arguments across the literature. This process enabled the study to construct a comprehensive conceptual understanding of the transformation of *Da'wah* communication in the digital era within the framework of Islamic communication.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Development of the Concept of *Da'wah* in the Digital Era

The results of the literature review indicate that the concept of *Da'wah* has undergone a significant transformation along with the development of communication technology and social change.<sup>19</sup> Historically, *Da'wah* has never been a static practice; rather, it continuously adapts to the media environment and communication patterns of society. The literature suggests that the evolution of *Da'wah* communication can be categorized into several typological phases that reflect shifts in media usage, communication strategies, and audience

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<sup>17</sup> Muhamad Ari, Sulaiman Dorloh, and Shuhairimi Abdullah, "A Systematic Literature Review of Islamic Boarding School (Pesantren) Education in Indonesia (2014-2024) Islamic Boarding Schools Are Indonesian-Based Traditional Islamic Educational Institutions . 1 Islamic Boarding Schools Are among the Most Ancient," *Tribakti* 35 (2024): 161–80, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33367/tribakti.v35i2.5330> E-ISSN.

<sup>18</sup> I Gusti Ayu Agung Omika DEWI, "Understanding Data Collection Methods in Qualitative Research: The Perspective Of Interpretive Accounting Research," *Journal of Tourism Economics and Policy* 1, no. 1 (2022): 23–34, <https://doi.org/10.38142/jtep.v1i1.105>.

<sup>19</sup> Sy. Nurul Syobah et al., "Transformation of the *Da'wah* Strategy of the NIDA Institute of Pesantren Mudi Mesra Aceh in Facing the Digitalisation Era," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 44, no. 1 (2024): 115–28, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v44.1.21119>.

engagement.<sup>20</sup> In the earliest phase during the prophetic and early Islamic period, *Da'wah* was primarily conducted through direct interpersonal communication. Religious messages were conveyed through oral preaching, dialogue, and exemplary conduct within small community settings. The communication strategy emphasized wisdom (*hikmah*), ethical persuasion, and contextual understanding of the audience. In this phase, *Da'wah* functioned as a relational and community-based communication process aimed at shaping belief and moral conduct through direct interaction between the da'i and the mad'u.

During the classical Islamic scholarly period, the development of educational institutions such as mosques, *halaqah*, and madrasah expanded the institutional dimension of *Da'wah*. Religious scholars began to formalize the dissemination of Islamic knowledge through teaching circles, written manuscripts, and scholarly commentaries. *Da'wah* communication in this period became more structured and knowledge-centered, emphasizing the authority of scholars in interpreting and transmitting religious teachings. The next phase emerged with the expansion of print technology in the modern era. Books, religious magazines, and printed pamphlets enabled *Da'wah* messages to reach broader audiences beyond local communities. This stage marked the transition from localized religious communication to mass dissemination of Islamic knowledge. Religious organizations and educational institutions increasingly played a strategic role in producing and distributing *Da'wah* materials. With the emergence of broadcast media in the twentieth century, *Da'wah* communication experienced another transformation through radio and television. These media enabled religious messages to reach mass audiences simultaneously, creating a new model of one-to-many communication. Religious lectures, televised sermons, and public religious programs became influential tools in shaping religious awareness at a national scale.

The development of the internet in the early twenty-first century marked the beginning of the digital phase of *Da'wah* communication.<sup>21</sup> Websites, blogs, and online forums created interactive platforms where religious discussions could occur beyond geographical boundaries. However, the most significant transformation occurred with the rise of social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and podcasts, which allow users not only to consume but also to produce and redistribute religious content. In this contemporary digital environment, *Da'wah* has evolved into a multidimensional communication process involving message production, distribution, interpretation, and interaction within networked digital spaces. Audiences are no longer passive recipients but active participants who comment, reinterpret, and share religious messages across platforms. This participatory communication pattern reflects the characteristics of digital society, where communication flows are decentralized and interactive.

From the perspective of Islamic communication theory, these developments indicate that the transformation of *Da'wah* is primarily instrumental rather than substantive.<sup>22</sup> While communication channels, media formats, and interaction patterns continue to evolve, the essential objectives of *Da'wah* namely strengthening faith, promoting moral conduct, and

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<sup>20</sup> M Syukri Ismail, Anshori Hidayat, and Muhammad Debit, "Adapting Da' Wah Communication Strategies," in *Proceeding of International Conference on Education, Society and Humanity*, vol. 01, 2023, 1676–84.

<sup>21</sup> Jaili and Yusria Ningsih, "Interactive Preaching To Youth Through Social Media: Theperspective of Brunei Darussalam."

<sup>22</sup> Safril et al., "Transformative Public Speaking: Da'Wah As a Medium for Empowering the Community," *Mediova: Journal of Islamic Media Studies* 5, no. 2 (2025): 171–87, <https://doi.org/10.32923/medio.v5i2.5952>.

encouraging social responsibility remain unchanged. Therefore, Islamic communication principles remain crucial in guiding contemporary *Da'wah* practices. In this context, the principle of *qawlan balighan* becomes particularly relevant because it emphasizes the importance of delivering messages effectively, contextually, and appropriately according to the psychological and social conditions of the audience. In digital environments characterized by short attention spans and high information competition, *Da'wah* messages are often delivered through concise narratives, visual storytelling, and interactive formats. When these communication strategies are combined with Islamic ethical principles, digital media can function as an effective instrument for expanding the reach and impact of *Da'wah* without compromising the authenticity of Islamic teachings.

The evolution of *Da'wah* communication across historical periods can therefore be understood as a gradual shift from interpersonal preaching to institutional dissemination, mass broadcasting, and finally network-based digital communication. This typology illustrates that the transformation of *Da'wah* is closely related to technological development and changing patterns of social communication. To illustrate this conceptual evolution, this study proposes a fishbone model that maps the historical development of *Da'wah* concepts and communication strategies from the prophetic period to the digital era. The model highlights how each stage contributes to the current form of digital *Da'wah* while maintaining the normative foundation of Islamic communication values.

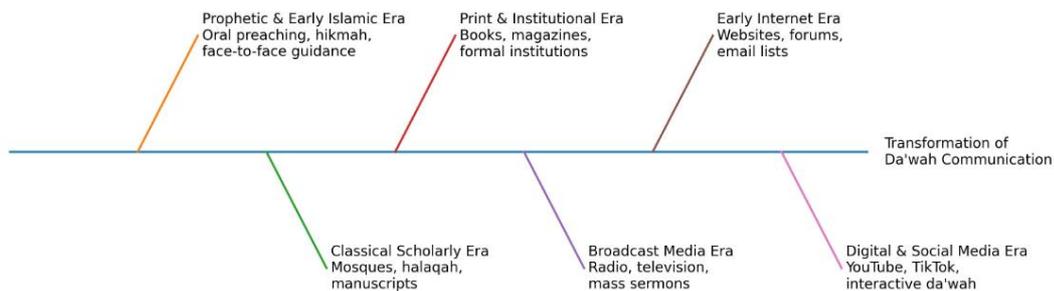


Figure 1. Evolution of *Da'wah* Communication from Classical to Digital Era

## 2. The Development of Digital *Da'wah* Communication Strategies

Recent literature indicates that *Da'wah* strategies in the digital era have undergone significant changes, both in terms of message form, communication style, and patterns of interaction between preachers and audiences. Digital *Da'wah* no longer relies on lengthy and monologic message delivery, but instead utilizes strategies such as message visualization, short narratives, Islamic storytelling, and the use of popular language that is easy to understand and closely connected to the everyday lives of audiences particularly younger generations who are familiar with digital culture.<sup>23</sup> This strategic shift reflects a movement from an informative approach to *Da'wah* toward a more communicative and persuasive approach, in line with the characteristics of digital media that demand speed, creativity, and visual appeal.<sup>24</sup> The development of these strategies also affects how preachers build relationships with the *mad'u*. Digital media enable two-way and even multi-directional

<sup>23</sup> Rismayanti et al., "Digital Da'wah And The Future Of Islamic Media: Navigating Cultural And Technological Challenges," *ICOMMEDIG* 1, no. 1 (2024): 534-42.

<sup>24</sup> Akmal Rizki Gunawan Haibuan et al., "Analysis of Digital Technology on Da ' Wah," *AL-Balagh* 10, no. 1 (2025): 33-64, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22515/albalagh.v10i1.9963>.

interactions through comment sections, direct messages, and online discussion forums, so that audiences are no longer merely passive recipients of *Da'wah* messages but actively participate in the processes of interpretation and dissemination of religious content. This condition requires preachers to possess competencies that are not only theological, but also communicative and contextual, so that *Da'wah* messages can be comprehensively understood and do not lead to misunderstanding.

From the perspective of Islamic communication, digital *Da'wah* strategies must remain grounded in the principles of *ḥikmah* and *mau'izah ḥasanah*, namely the delivery of religious messages in a wise, persuasive manner and oriented toward the welfare of the *mad'ū*. *Ḥikmah* requires preachers to be able to read the social, psychological, and cultural contexts of digital audiences, while *mau'izah ḥasanah* emphasizes the delivery of advice using polite, reasoned, and non-provocative language. Several studies affirm that the effectiveness of digital *Da'wah* is not determined solely by technological sophistication or media popularity, but depends greatly on the preacher's capacity to maintain communicative courtesy, accuracy of message substance, and clarity of meaning so as to avoid religious misinterpretation amid the rapid and dense flow of information.

Furthermore, the application of the principles of *ḥikmah* and *mau'izah ḥasanah* in digital *Da'wah* functions as an ethical filter against tendencies toward sensationalism and the commodification of religious messages. Preachers are required not merely to seek audience attention through attractive visual packaging, but also to ensure that *Da'wah* messages are delivered responsibly, educationally, and in ways that reflect Islamic values as *raḥmatan lil-ālamīn* (a mercy to all creation). Thus, digital *Da'wah* strategies grounded in Islamic communication are able to maintain a balance between the demands of modern communication effectiveness and a commitment to the ethical principles and substantive objectives of *Da'wah*.

### 3. Opportunities for *Da'wah* in the Digital Era

Recent literature indicates that *Da'wah* strategies in the digital era have undergone significant transformation in terms of message form, communication style, and patterns of interaction between preachers and audiences. Several studies emphasize that digital platforms have encouraged the adaptation of *Da'wah* communication to the characteristics of online audiences who tend to prefer concise, visual, and engaging content. For instance, Khadiq explain that the expansion of digital media has shifted *Da'wah* practices from conventional sermon-based communication toward multimedia-based dissemination of Islamic messages.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Nuriana & Salwa argue that digital *Da'wah* increasingly utilizes short narratives, visual storytelling, and simplified language to adapt to the fast-paced information consumption patterns of digital audiences.<sup>26</sup> In this context, digital *Da'wah* no longer relies on lengthy and monologic message delivery, but instead employs strategies such as message visualization, Islamic storytelling, and the use of popular language that resonates with everyday experiences, particularly among younger generations who are closely connected to digital culture. This shift reflects a movement from an informative model of

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<sup>25</sup> Khadiq, "Transformation of Islamic Religious Practices in the Digital Era," *Jurnal Dakwah* 24, no. 2 (2023): 175–92, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jd.2023.24205>.

<sup>26</sup> Zulfa Ilma Nuriana and Nisrina Salwa, "Digital Da'wah in the Age of Algorithm : A Narrative Review Of," *Sinergi International Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 4 (2024): 242–56.

*Da'wah* toward a more communicative and persuasive approach that aligns with the dynamics of digital media requiring speed, creativity, and visual attractiveness.

The development of these strategies also influences the pattern of interaction between *da'i* and *mad'u*. Digital media platforms enable two-way and even multi-directional communication through comment sections, direct messages, and online discussion forums. Social media has transformed audiences from passive recipients into active participants who can respond to, reinterpret, and redistribute religious messages within their own digital networks. This participatory communication environment creates new opportunities for broader engagement in religious discourse but also requires preachers to develop competencies beyond theological knowledge. Preachers must possess digital literacy, communicative sensitivity, and contextual understanding so that *Da'wah* messages can be delivered clearly and responsibly without generating misinterpretation in diverse online communities.

From the perspective of Islamic communication, these strategic adaptations must remain grounded in the normative principles of *hikmah* and *mau'izah hasanah*, which emphasize wisdom, persuasion, and ethical communication in the delivery of religious messages. According to Santoso, the Qur'anic communication framework stresses that *Da'wah* should prioritize courtesy, rational persuasion, and contextual sensitivity so that religious messages are not only understood intellectually but also accepted emotionally by the audience.<sup>27</sup> In the digital environment, the principle of *hikmah* requires preachers to understand the social, psychological, and cultural characteristics of digital audiences, while *mau'izah hasanah* encourages the use of respectful, constructive, and non-provocative language when presenting religious advice. These principles function as important ethical guidelines that ensure the communication of Islamic teachings remains aligned with the broader goals of guidance, compassion, and social harmony.

Furthermore, the application of *hikmah* and *mau'izah hasanah* also serves as an ethical safeguard against the tendency toward sensationalism and the commodification of religious messages in digital platforms. Algorithm-driven social media environments often encourage content creators to prioritize attention-grabbing formats that may oversimplify complex religious teachings. Without strong ethical awareness, this situation can lead to the transformation of *Da'wah* messages into entertainment-oriented content that emphasizes popularity and monetization rather than religious guidance. Therefore, digital *Da'wah* strategies should not merely focus on visual attractiveness or audience engagement, but must also ensure the accuracy of religious messages, the integrity of Islamic teachings, and the welfare of the community. When digital communication strategies are combined with Islamic ethical principles, *Da'wah* can maintain a balance between modern communication effectiveness and its fundamental purpose as a means of moral guidance and social transformation in accordance with the values of *rahmatan lil-'alamīn*.

#### **4. Challenges of Digital *Da'wah*: Ethics and Religious Authority**

On the other hand, the literature review also identifies a number of critical challenges emerging from the practice of digital *Da'wah* that require careful scholarly attention. One of

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<sup>27</sup> Dwi Santoso, "Islamic Communication Strategy in Gus Idham's *Da'wah*: Interpreting the Values of the Quran as a Foundation for Persuasion," *Journal Corner of Education, Linguistics, and Literature* 4, no. 001 (2024): 840-47, <https://doi.org/10.54012/jcell.v4i001.542>.

the most frequently discussed issues is the transformation of religious authority in the digital environment. The open architecture of social media platforms allows virtually anyone to produce and disseminate religious content without undergoing traditional processes of scholarly verification or institutional endorsement. Digital platforms have democratized the production of religious discourse, enabling broader participation in *Da'wah* activities but simultaneously weakening the traditional gatekeeping mechanisms that once ensured the credibility of religious knowledge. Similarly, Hanif argue that the decentralization of religious authority in digital spaces often leads to the emergence of religious influencers whose popularity may not always correspond with scholarly competence.<sup>28</sup> As a consequence, digital *Da'wah* may generate religious narratives that are overly simplified, ideologically biased, or detached from the broader epistemological tradition of Islamic scholarship. Such conditions increase the risk of misunderstanding, polarization, and fragmentation of religious perspectives within the Muslim community, particularly when religious messages are consumed rapidly without critical reflection.

From the perspective of Islamic communication, this phenomenon presents a significant challenge to the principle of *qawlan sadīdan*, which emphasizes truthfulness, accuracy, and accountability in the transmission of religious messages. The Qur'anic communication framework requires that religious guidance be conveyed responsibly and based on sound knowledge so that the integrity of Islamic teachings can be preserved. However, in the digital environment where information flows quickly and content competition is intense, religious messages are often simplified to meet the expectations of online audiences. Ethical integrity of Islamic communication becomes increasingly important in digital contexts because audiences may lack the ability to differentiate between authoritative religious knowledge and unverified interpretations circulating on social media.

In addition to the issue of shifting authority, another significant challenge identified in the literature is the growing tendency toward the commodification of *Da'wah* within the digital media ecosystem. Algorithm-driven platforms such as video-sharing and social networking sites often prioritize content that generates high engagement, including views, likes, and shares. This technological environment can encourage religious communicators to package *Da'wah* messages in sensational or emotionally provocative formats in order to attract audience attention. While such strategies may increase visibility and audience reach, they also risk transforming *Da'wah* into a form of religious entertainment that prioritizes popularity and monetization over the substantive objectives of Islamic guidance. In this context, the logic of digital media algorithms may inadvertently influence the framing of religious messages, encouraging content creators to simplify complex theological issues or emphasize controversial topics to maximize engagement.

From the perspective of Islamic communication ethics, this tendency contradicts the normative principles that underlie the practice of *Da'wah*. The principle of *qawlan sadīdan* emphasizes honesty and responsibility in message delivery, while *qawlan ma'rūfan* and *qawlan karīman* highlight the importance of presenting religious teachings in a dignified and socially constructive manner. When *Da'wah* messages are excessively shaped by the demands of digital popularity, the orientation of *Da'wah* may shift from its fundamental role of nurturing faith, moral awareness, and social responsibility toward pragmatic goals such as

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<sup>28</sup> Hanif, "The Transformation of Religious Authority in Digital Da'wah Habib Husein Ja'far."

personal branding and economic gain. Consequently, several scholars argue that without a strong ethical framework rooted in Islamic communication principles, digital *Da'wah* risks losing its transformative function as a medium for moral guidance and community development.

Therefore, strengthening Islamic communication ethics becomes an urgent necessity in responding to the complex challenges of *Da'wah* in the digital era. Ethical principles derived from the Qur'anic communication framework can serve as a normative guide for ensuring that digital *Da'wah* remains truthful, responsible, and oriented toward the welfare of the ummah. By integrating technological adaptation with ethical awareness and scholarly accountability, digital *Da'wah* can continue to function as an effective instrument of religious communication while preserving the authenticity and integrity of Islamic teachings in contemporary digital society.

## **5. Islamic Communication Values as the Normative Foundation of Contemporary *Da'wah***

The literature review emphasizes that the transformation of *Da'wah* communication in the digital era must be accompanied by a strong reinforcement of Islamic communication values as a normative foundation that guides *Da'wah* practices to remain ethical, responsible, and socially meaningful. As digital media increasingly shape the production and dissemination of religious discourse, scholars argue that technological adaptation alone is insufficient to ensure the effectiveness and integrity of *Da'wah* communication. Instead, the process must remain grounded in Qur'anic communication principles that regulate not only the substance of religious messages but also the manner in which those messages are conveyed. Islamic communication emphasizes ethical speech and responsible interaction as fundamental components of *Da'wah*, ensuring that religious guidance is delivered in ways that promote understanding, compassion, and social harmony.<sup>29</sup>

Within this framework, several Qur'anic communication principles provide important normative guidance for contemporary *Da'wah* practices. The principle of *qawlan sadīdan* emphasizes truthful, honest, and accountable communication, requiring that religious messages be conveyed based on sound knowledge and reliable sources. In the context of digital *Da'wah*, this principle becomes particularly relevant in addressing the rapid circulation of unverified religious information across social media platforms. Meanwhile, *qawlan balīghan* highlights the importance of delivering messages in ways that are effective, clear, and appropriate to the psychological and social conditions of the audience. Digital audiences tend to engage more effectively with concise, contextualized, and visually supported religious messages, making communicative adaptability an essential skill for contemporary preachers.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, the principles of *qawlan ma'rūfan* and *qawlan layyinan* emphasize the ethical dimension of communication by encouraging the use of polite, respectful, and gentle language in the delivery of religious messages. These principles are particularly important in digital communication environments, where anonymity and rapid information exchange often lead to harsh debates and polarized discourse. By maintaining courteous and compassionate

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<sup>29</sup> Ali Muhammad Bhat, "Bridging Divides: Islamic Communication in the Modern Era," *Journal of Islamic Communication Studies (JICO S)* 3, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15642/jicos.2025.3.2.94-106>.

<sup>30</sup> Haibuan et al., "Analysis of Digital Technology on Da' Wah."

communication styles, digital *Da'wah* can foster constructive dialogue and prevent the escalation of religious tensions within online communities. The ethical tone of religious communication significantly influences how audiences interpret and internalize *Da'wah* messages in digital spaces.

The integration of these Islamic communication values demonstrates that digital *Da'wah* should not be understood merely as a technological adaptation, but as a normative communicative process that balances media innovation with Islamic ethical principles. Digital technology functions as a *wasilah* (means) that expands the reach, accessibility, and interaction of *Da'wah* activities, while Islamic communication values serve as a moral compass that safeguards the direction and objectives of *Da'wah*. Without such ethical grounding, digital *Da'wah* risks becoming driven primarily by algorithmic visibility and audience engagement rather than by its fundamental mission of moral guidance and social transformation.

Furthermore, this normative framework also addresses the challenges of sensationalism and commodification identified in previous studies. The algorithmic logic of digital media often encourages content creators to prioritize popularity and engagement metrics. By anchoring digital *Da'wah* practices in Qur'anic communication ethics, preachers are encouraged to maintain the integrity of Islamic teachings while still adapting their communication strategies to contemporary media environments.<sup>31</sup> In this sense, Islamic communication functions both as a theoretical paradigm and as a practical guideline for designing ethical digital *Da'wah* strategies. Consequently, the success of digital *Da'wah* should not be measured solely by quantitative indicators such as audience reach, number of followers, or intensity of online interaction. Rather, its effectiveness must also be evaluated in terms of message quality, ethical communication practices, and its contribution to the moral and social transformation of the ummah. By integrating Islamic communication values with digital media strategies, contemporary *Da'wah* can remain authentic to its theological foundations while simultaneously responding adaptively to the complexities of modern digital society.

## **6. Reflection on the Transformation of *Da'wah* in the Digital Era and Its Implications**

The findings of this literature study highlight that the transformation of *Da'wah* communication in the digital era represents not merely a technological shift, but a broader reconfiguration of how Islamic messages are produced, disseminated, and interpreted within contemporary society. The review reveals that digital media have significantly expanded the scope of *Da'wah* practices, transforming them from primarily face-to-face and institutional communication into network-based communication that is participatory, rapid, and globally accessible. These findings are consistent with previous studies which emphasize the growing influence of digital platforms in shaping contemporary religious communication. Digital technologies have enabled wider dissemination of Islamic messages and encouraged more interactive forms of religious engagement.

However, the present study extends these discussions by demonstrating that the transformation of digital *Da'wah* should be understood primarily as an instrumental

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<sup>31</sup> Moh Edy Marzuki, Nuzhat Fatima, and Intan Sariningsih, "Da'wah Ethics in the Digital Era in Media Transformation and Moral Governance," *Al-Tsiqoh : Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Dakwah Islam* 10, no. 2 (2025): 67-78, <https://doi.org/10.31538/altsiq.v10i2.6923>.

transformation rather than a substantive one. While communication media, strategies, and interaction patterns have evolved, the fundamental objectives of *Da'wah* namely strengthening faith, cultivating moral awareness, and encouraging social responsibility remain unchanged. In this regard, the findings complement the ethical framework of Islamic communication, which emphasizes that Qur'anic communication principles should guide the process of delivering religious messages. At the same time, this study contributes by integrating these normative principles with contemporary discussions on digital media, thereby bridging the gap between technological developments and the ethical foundations of Islamic communication.

Another important reflection emerging from this study concerns the challenges posed by the digital media environment, particularly the shifting of religious authority and the commodification of *Da'wah* messages. Algorithm-driven media platforms often encourage sensationalism and the simplification of complex religious teachings. The present study confirms these concerns but further argues that these challenges can be addressed through the systematic integration of Qur'anic communication values such as *qawlan sadīdan*, *qawlan balīghan*, *qawlan ma'rūfan*, and *qawlan layyinan* into digital *Da'wah* practices. By positioning these principles as an ethical-operational framework, digital *Da'wah* can maintain a balance between communication effectiveness and adherence to Islamic moral values.

From the perspective of *Da'wah* studies, this research offers several important implications. Theoretically, it contributes to the development of Islamic communication scholarship by proposing a conceptual synthesis that links the evolution of *Da'wah* communication with Qur'anic ethical principles. This synthesis highlights that technological adaptation must always be accompanied by normative guidance derived from Islamic teachings. Practically, the study provides a conceptual framework that can guide preachers, Islamic institutions, and digital content creators in designing *Da'wah* strategies that are both technologically adaptive and ethically grounded.

In addition, the study reinforces the understanding that the effectiveness of contemporary *Da'wah* cannot be measured solely by quantitative indicators such as audience reach, view counts, or levels of online engagement. Rather, the success of *Da'wah* should also be evaluated in terms of the quality of religious messages, the ethical integrity of communication practices, and their contribution to the moral and social transformation of the ummah. By emphasizing the integration of Islamic communication values with digital communication strategies, this research underscores that the future development of *Da'wah* must prioritize ethical responsibility, intellectual credibility, and social relevance within the rapidly evolving landscape of digital society. Thus, the novelty of this study lies in its effort to reconstruct the transformation of digital *Da'wah* through an integrated Islamic communication framework, demonstrating that technological innovation and Islamic ethical principles must function together in shaping contemporary *Da'wah* practices. This perspective contributes to enriching the discourse of *Da'wah* communication by offering a balanced approach that recognizes both the opportunities of digital technology and the necessity of preserving the normative foundations of Islamic teachings.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This literature review shows that the transformation of *Da'wah* communication in the digital era has brought significant changes to the conceptual, strategic, and practical aspects of

*Da'wah* without shifting its substantive objectives. *Da'wah* is no longer understood merely as a conventional preaching activity, but has evolved into a multidimensional communication process involving various digital media and participatory interaction patterns. This development positions *Da'wah* as a communicative practice that is adaptive and contextual, in line with the characteristics of a plural, open, and network-based digital society. Digital *Da'wah* communication strategies have also shifted from monologic and informative approaches toward more communicative and persuasive ones through the use of message visualization, short narratives, and Islamic storytelling. However, the effectiveness of digital *Da'wah* is not determined solely by technological sophistication or media popularity, but by the ability of preachers to apply Islamic communication principles such as *hikmah*, *mau'izah hasanah*, and *qawlan balighan* so that *Da'wah* messages remain clear, courteous, and meaningful. On the other hand, the digital era offers great opportunities for expanding the reach of *Da'wah*, increasing audience participation, and creating more inclusive spaces for *Da'wah*. These opportunities can strengthen the function of *Da'wah* as a means of social transformation if technology is positioned as a *wasilah* (means), not as an end. Nevertheless, digital *Da'wah* also faces serious challenges, including shifts in religious authority and the commodification of religious messages, which may redirect *Da'wah* from the nurturing of the ummah toward pragmatic interests. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of strengthening Islamic communication values as the normative foundation of contemporary *Da'wah*. Qur'anic communication principles such as *qawlan sadidan*, *qawlan balighan*, *qawlan marufan*, and *qawlan layyinan* function as an ethical–operational framework to safeguard message quality, the direction of *Da'wah*, and the authenticity of Islamic teachings amid the dynamics of digital society. Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed. First, preachers and *Da'wah* practitioners are encouraged to enhance their digital literacy and communication competence without neglecting Islamic communication values, so that digital *Da'wah* remains effective and ethical. Second, *Da'wah* institutions and religious organizations need to develop ethical guidelines for digital *Da'wah* based on Islamic communication principles as an effort to maintain the quality and scholarly authority of *Da'wah* content. Third, future research is recommended to develop conceptual models or empirical studies on the implementation of *qawlan* principles across various digital *Da'wah* platforms. Finally, the public as digital *Da'wah* audiences should improve their religious and media literacy in order to be critical and wise in receiving and disseminating *Da'wah* messages in digital spaces.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research relies exclusively on a literature review approach, which means that the findings are derived from the synthesis of existing scholarly discussions rather than from direct empirical observation of digital *Da'wah* practices in specific communities or platforms. Consequently, the analysis focuses primarily on conceptual patterns and theoretical interpretations found in recent studies, which may not fully capture the diversity of digital *Da'wah* practices occurring across different cultural, institutional, and technological contexts. Second, the scope of the literature reviewed is limited to publications from the last five years. While this time frame ensures the relevance of the analysis to contemporary developments in digital communication, it may also overlook earlier foundational studies that have shaped the theoretical development of *Da'wah* communication in digital environments. In addition, the study mainly emphasizes the normative perspective of Islamic communication values, so

empirical assessments regarding how these values are actually implemented by digital preachers and received by audiences remain relatively limited. Therefore, future research is encouraged to expand the scope of investigation by employing empirical approaches such as qualitative case studies, digital ethnography, or quantitative audience analysis to examine how digital *Da'wah* is practiced and interpreted within specific social media environments. Further studies could also explore the perspectives of different actors involved in digital *Da'wah*, including preachers, Islamic institutions, and audiences, in order to understand how Islamic communication values are negotiated in everyday digital interactions. In addition, comparative studies across different countries or Islamic communities may provide deeper insights into how cultural, technological, and institutional factors shape the development of digital *Da'wah* strategies. Such research would contribute to strengthening the theoretical and practical understanding of *Da'wah* communication in the digital era while enriching the development of ethical and contextually relevant models of contemporary *Da'wah*.

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