Transformation of Da'wah Methods in the Social Media Era: A Literature Review on the Digital Da'wah Approach

Yogi Fery Hidayat¹, Nurkholis Nuri²

¹ Universitas Darunnajah, Indonesia; yferyhidayat@gmail.com
² Universitas Najran, Arab Saudi; nurkholisnuri188@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This research aims to examine the transformation of da'wah methods in the digital era, especially through the use of social media as a da'wah platform. The development of information technology has changed the way of delivering da'wah from traditional methods, such as lectures in mosques and taklim councils, to more modern through digital platforms, such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook. Through a literature approach, this study identifies significant changes in the way dai convey religious messages, as well as the challenges faced in the context of social media. The results of the study show that digital da'wah allows dai to reach a wider and diverse audience, especially the younger generation who are active on social media. More interactive da'wah models, such as the use of short videos, infographics, and live discussions through the comment or *live streaming feature,* are considered effective in attracting the attention of the audience. However, da'wah in the digital era also faces major challenges, such as the spread of information that is difficult to control, hoaxes, and the lack of technical competence of some dai in utilizing digital platforms optimally. This research also formulates effective da'wah strategies on social media, which include increasing digital literacy, collaborating with *influencers,* and managing interesting content while maintaining the essence of religious teachings. With a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities of digital da'wah, dai are expected to be able to adapt their da'wah methods to be more relevant and effective in the digital era. *This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC license.*

Corresponding Author:
Yogi Fery Hidayat
Universitas Darunnajah, Indonesia; yferyhidayat@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has had a significant impact on various aspects of life, including da'wah activities. Da'wah, which was previously carried out through conventional media such as the pulpit, taklim council, and printed writing, is now transformed by using digital platforms, especially social media (Anwar et al., 2024). Social media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and

Twitter allow da'wah to be delivered more widely, quickly, and interactively (Muhammad and Subarkah, 2024). The increasing number of social media users every year shows that this platform has great potential to be used as a means of spreading Islamic teachings (Qury, 2024).

Da'wah in the era of social media offers various conveniences for dai to reach a more heterogeneous audience, both in terms of age, educational background, and geographical area (Royani and Rizal, 2024). In addition, social media allows for direct interaction between the dai and the audience through comment features, private messages, or online discussions, which is not possible in traditional da'wah methods (Muthia et al., 2024). This provides an opportunity for dai to respond to questions or problems faced by the community more quickly and contextually.

However, this transformation also presents many challenges. One of the main challenges is the simplification of da'wah messages in the form of short and visual content which can sometimes reduce the depth of the religious message itself. On social media, dai often only have a few seconds to grab the user's attention, so the message conveyed tends to be concise and practical (Sawitri, 2024). This raises concerns that in an effort to attract attention, the substance of da'wah that is profound in nature can be ignored (Sawitri, 2024).

On the other hand, social media is also inseparable from the challenge of negative content, such as hoaxes and hate speech, which can sometimes obscure the da'wah conveyed (Qury, 2024). Da'wah carried out in the digital world must compete with various content that is often not in line with Islamic values. In addition to technical challenges in delivering messages, da'wah through social media must also face the social and cultural dynamics that emerge in the digital society. The use of social media tends to create *filter bubbles,* where audiences are often only exposed to content that suits their personal preferences, including in terms of religion (Pariser, 2011). This causes da'wah that is universal and inclusive sometimes does not reach a wider and diverse audience, but is instead limited to certain groups who have similar beliefs. Therefore, a da'wah strategy is needed that is able to penetrate these boundaries, so that the message of peaceful and inclusive Islam can reach all levels of society.

Not only that, the role of *influencers* or public figures on social media also needs to be considered in the context of da'wah. Many digital dais have been successful in building a huge influence through social media, but their success often depends on the ability to build *a strong* personal branding (Glucksman, 217). This brings new challenges, where the personality of the dai must be consistent with the Islamic values conveyed, so as to maintain the credibility of da'wah (Muhammad and Subarkah, 2024). Deviations in behavior or the delivery of messages that are contrary to Islamic teachings can reduce the audience's trust in the da'wah carried out (Royani and Rizal, 2024).

The increasingly plural social context in the digital world also requires dai to understand contemporary issues faced by society, such as gender issues, the environment, and social justice. Da'wah messages that are relevant to these issues will be more accepted by modern audiences, especially the younger generation who are increasingly critical. Therefore, a da'wah strategy is needed that is not only relevant to the characteristics of social media but also able to convey religious messages in depth and comprehensively (Royani dan Rizal, 2024).

Therefore, further studies are needed to understand how da'wah methods can be transformed effectively in the era of social media. This study seeks to examine various approaches to digital da'wah through literature review to find effective strategies to utilize social media as a da'wah platform without reducing the essence of the religious messages conveyed.

One of the important theories relevant to this research is the *Diffusion of Innovations Theory*, because social media is considered an innovation in da'wah methods. *The Diffusion of Innovations Theory* was proposed by Everett M. Rogers in 1962. This theory explains how new ideas, products, or innovations spread within a society or group over time (Rogers, 1983). In addition, *the Uses and Gratifications Theory* put forward by mass communication researchers, with Elihu Katz, Jay G. Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch as key figures in developing this theory in the late 1950s to early 1970s is also relevant, as it explains that the audience actively chooses a particular medium based on their needs. Audiences use social media to get information according to their preferences and interests (Ruggiero, 2000).

In this study, the researcher seeks to maintain originality by presenting significant differences compared to previous studies. For example, Abrori and M. Sofyan Alnashr (2023) using a qualitative descriptive approach with literature analysis and focusing on the actualization of da'wah methods in the midst of dynamic social changes. Meanwhile, the research Ahmad Zarkasyi Mukhtar (2022) focusing more on the use of Youtube and *podcasts* as da'wah strategies with a qualitative interview-based approach, researching how this social media can motivate the millennial generation in participating in da'wah. Different from research Mastanah et al. (2023) which highlights the use of Instagram as the main da'wah medium with critical discourse analysis using the Norman Fairclough approach, which provides a different perspective in understanding the message of da'wah on social media. In this context, this study takes a different approach by focusing on a more in-depth literature review, which examines the transformation of da'wah methods in general through various social media platforms. With a focus on a comprehensive approach to digital da'wah, this research provides a comprehensive perspective on how da'wah can adapt and develop amid technological advances and changes in audience behavior in the era of social media.

2. METHODS

In this study, the researcher uses a library research method , which focuses on collecting and analyzing written sources related to digital da'wah and the transformation of da'wah methods in the era of social media. The literature method is used because this research does not involve the subject in the field context, but rather examines relevant academic literature, journals, books, and articles (Sugiyono, 2013). This technique aims to understand how digital da'wah is practiced and what challenges are faced based on theoretical studies that have been put forward previously. In addition, this research is qualitative with a descriptive approach (Creswell, 2018). This approach is used to provide a comprehensive overview of the da'wah phenomenon on social media, analyze various relevant literature, and find patterns or trends in the use of social media for da'wah.

The research subjects are in the form of scientific works and documents related to digital da'wah spread across various sources (Sugiyono, 2013). According to Kurniawan (2017), population refers to all those that have common characteristics that have been identified and used by researchers as a more specific source of information. The population in this study is all relevant literature on digital da'wah and the use of social media for da'wah. The sample used is selected purposively, that is, selecting works that are considered the most relevant and quality in providing the required information (Creswell, 2018). Sample criteria include books, journal articles, and academic scientific papers that discuss topics related to da'wah transformation, da'wah challenges, and da'wah strategies in the era of social media. The selected sources are mainly from the last five years to ensure relevance and context appropriate to current conditions.

Data collection techniques refer to the methods or strategies used by researchers to collect information or data (Riduwan, 2005). The data collection technique in this study is documentation. This technique is carried out by collecting and reviewing literature in the form of scientific journals, books, and articles that discuss the transformation of da'wah on social media. The tool used for data collection is a bibliography consisting of relevant sources that have been identified during the literature review process. The data collected is classified based on key themes, such as the transformation of da'wah methods, challenges in digital da'wah, and effective strategies in da'wah on social media (Creswell, 2018). Data collection is carried out systematically using academic databases and various scientific publications from research institutions related to the transformation of da'wah in the era of social media.

The data that has been collected is analyzed qualitatively using a content analysis approach. This analysis aims to identify the main themes, patterns, and relationships between the various concepts found in the literature studied (Sugiyono, 2013). The analysis process begins with reading and understanding each source of literature. The next stage is data reduction by simplifying or selecting the data that is considered the most relevant and significant from a large amount of data to facilitate further

analysis. Furthermore, the researcher conducted coding to identify important elements related to digital da'wah and its transformation (Creswell, 2018). After the coding process, the data was categorized based on themes such as the transformation of da'wah methods, da'wah challenges, and da'wah strategies in the era of social media. The categorized data is then compared and synthesized to produce a deeper understanding of the research topic. The results of this analysis are expected to provide recommendations related to more effective da'wah strategies in the era of social media.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Transformation of Da'wah Methods

The transformation of da'wah in the digital era is an important phenomenon that can be explained through the perspective *of Uses and Gratifications Theory.* This theory emphasizes how individuals actively choose media that can meet specific needs, desires, and gratuities. In this context, the change in the way da'wah is delivered from traditional methods to digital platforms cannot be separated from efforts to meet the needs of audiences who are increasingly dependent on technology.

In the past, traditional da'wah was carried out through face-to-face meetings, lectures at mosques, taklim assemblies, or other religious activities. However, with the development of technology and the increasing use of social media, especially among millennials, the needs of the audience are changing. This generation, who are more familiar with digital technology, have a preference for accessing religious information in a fast, flexible and engaging way. They tend to look for content that can be accessed anytime and anywhere without being limited by time and place. Through social media such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and other platforms, dai seeks to meet this need by providing da'wah content that is easily accessible and consumed by the audience.

In accordance with *the Uses and Gratifications Theory*, dai realized that digital audiences have shorter attention spans and different needs compared to traditional audiences. Therefore, they switched to using more effective strategies, such as short videos, infographics, and short but meaningful text messages. This type of content was chosen because it can attract attention and provide satisfaction for audiences who want short but concise information. In this case, the dai not only acts as a messenger, but also as a content creator who must be creative and relevant to ensure that their da'wah message is in accordance with the audience's preferences.

Along with the development of technology, the role of dai has also undergone a transformation. In the past, their role was more limited as conveyors of Islamic teachings in the pulpit or religious forums, such as in mosques or taklim councils. However, with innovations in digital media, the role of dai has grown rapidly. In innovation diffusion theory, those who are able to effectively adopt digital technologies can be considered early *adopters*, who function as content managers and have influence in spreading these innovations to a wider audience.

Dai who have adopted social media platforms are required to attract the attention of the audience with more creative and interactive content. They need to have skills in producing da'wah videos, compiling infographics, and writing short texts that are easy to understand. This is in line with the implementation stages *in the Diffusion of Innovations Theory*, where those who have understood and accepted innovation begin to fully apply it in their daily da'wah activities. Dai must also be able to utilize technological tools such as social media algorithms to reach a wider audience, especially the millennial generation, who have a preference for visual and interactive content.

However, the adoption of this innovation is not only about mastering technology. *Diffusion of Innovations Theory* also emphasizes the importance of maintaining authentic values in the midst of innovation. In the context of digital da'wah, the challenge faced by the dai is how to maintain the authenticity and integrity of Islamic teachings in the midst of competition for digital content that is often more concerned with aesthetics and entertainment than substance. The dai need to be careful not to sacrifice the fundamental values of da'wah for the sake of popularity alone. Additionally, the theory highlights the importance of engagement and interaction with audiences as part of the innovation diffusion process. Dai who are familiar with social media must be responsive to questions and

discussions that appear in the comment column, which can increase audience engagement and trust in the da'wah message conveyed. Through this direct interaction, digital da'wah innovations can be accepted and adopted more widely by the community.

Da'wah models in the digital era are developing to be more diverse and interactive along with the emergence of various social media platforms. Based on *the Uses and Gratifications Theory*, the audience actively chooses media that can meet their needs and desires. In the context of da'wah, the video delivery model is one of the most prominent because it can meet the needs of the younger generation who prefer visual and interactive content. Platforms such as YouTube and Instagram have become the main medium for dai to deliver religious lectures and messages in a short and interesting format. Da'wah videos are presented with creative visuals and easy-to-understand language styles, so they are more effective in attracting attention and providing satisfaction for young audiences.

In addition, the use of short texts and images on social media, such as Instagram, is also a popular da'wah model because it suits the preferences of audiences who tend to choose visual content over long text. Posters with Islamic motivational quotes, Qur'anic verses, and religious advice are often shared to give a profound message in a simple way. *Uses and Gratifications Theory* explains that audiences prefer content like this because it can meet their need for information that is easily accessible, fast, and direct, without taking a long time to understand.

Another advantage of digital da'wah that fits this theory is its ability to offer direct interaction with the audience. Features such as comment columns, direct messages, and *live streaming* allow audiences to actively interact with dai. They can ask questions, provide feedback, or ask for further explanations in real-time. This gives more satisfaction to the audience, because they feel heard and can participate directly in the da'wah process. Da'wah is no longer one-way, but dialogical and participatory, which makes the audience more engaged and feels that their needs for religious information are met.

3.2 Challenges in Digital Da'wah

The challenges of da'wah in the digital era are so complex, one of the most prominent is the ease of disseminating information that carries two sides of the coin. On the one hand, da'wah can spread more quickly and widely, but on the other hand, it is difficult to filter accurate and correct information. Social media and the internet as a public space allow anyone to disseminate information, including those who may not have sufficient knowledge about the teachings of Islam. This can cause confusion among the public, especially for those who are new to religion or have a limited understanding.

The ease of access to excessive information causes challenges in maintaining the authenticity of da'wah messages. With so much competing content in cyberspace, da'wah messages often lose competition with other information that is more interesting or sensational, even though the content is not educational or even misleading. Social media algorithms tend to promote content that gets a lot of interaction, without paying attention to the quality or accuracy of that information. This makes dai have to compete with various content that is sometimes more visually attractive, but the substance is weak or contrary to Islamic values.

One of the major challenges in da'wah in the digital era is the lack of competence of some dai in utilizing technology effectively. In accordance with the stages *in the Diffusion of Innovations Theory*, many preachers are in the early stages of adoption, where they are just beginning to know and understand how social media works as a tool of da'wah. At this stage, dai often find it difficult to adapt to technological changes and need a good adaptation process in order to be able to convey da'wah messages in a relevant and accurate manner to digital audiences, without losing the essence of religious teachings. Many dai have deep religious knowledge, but are not used to using social media and digital tools as a means of da'wah. This creates barriers in getting their message across to a wider audience, especially the younger generation who are familiar with technology.

Dai who are not used to the use of digital technology often have difficulty competing with other content that is more visually appealing and interactive. In fact, in the digital era, the ability to make good use of platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, or Facebook is important so that da'wah messages

can be received by a younger and more diverse audience. A lack of understanding of how social media algorithms work, content strategies, or how to create visually appealing content often leaves da'wah messages behind compared to other content that may be less educational, but more appealing to social media users.

In addition, according to Qury (2024), The presence of negative content such as heretical teachings, hoaxes, and misleading information is also a serious challenge for da'wah in cyberspace. This kind of content often goes viral faster because it is presented in an interesting way, even though it is not based on facts or the truth of Islamic teachings. Dai who are not skilled enough in using technology will find it difficult to straighten out this information and maintain the authenticity and integrity of da'wah. Thus, technological competence is important so that da'wah can compete and remain relevant in the midst of such a fast and diverse flow of information. This challenge also concerns the ability of dai to respond quickly to hot issues in society. In the digital world, information moves quickly, so that people who are unable to adapt to these dynamics often miss the opportunity to provide enlightenment in society.

The challenge of maintaining the authenticity of da'wah messages is becoming increasingly complex in the digital era. Such easy access to information allows anyone to convey religious messages, even by people who may not have an adequate religious education background. This phenomenon poses a risk of spreading inaccurate or even misleading information related to Islamic teachings. In this context, da'wah messages delivered by individuals without sufficient authority or understanding often create confusion among the people.

As a result of this ease of access, social media platforms and websites are often filled with content that claims to be da'wah, but does not have a strong foundation in Islamic teachings. In some cases, these messages can lead to misunderstandings, such as extreme simplifications of religious teachings, or even add to divisions among Muslim communities. This is a challenge for dai who have religious authority to ensure that the da'wah spread remains based on correct and valid Islamic principles. Furthermore, the audience that receives this da'wah message often does not have the capacity to assess the validity of the information. They tend to assume that all content of a religious nature has the same validity, even though not all content creators have the necessary competencies to convey religious messages correctly. This exacerbates the challenge for competent dais, as they must correct misconceptions spread by individuals or groups who have no authority in the field of religion (Choirin et al., 2024).

To overcome this challenge, dai who have authority and competence in religious teachings need to be more proactive in using digital media. They must be faster in producing and disseminating correct and engaging content to match the spread of invalid information. In addition, dai also needs to increase interaction with the audience to answer questions and correct misunderstandings directly. Thus, the authenticity of da'wah messages can be maintained in the midst of the rapid flow of information in the digital era.

3.3 Effective Strategies in Da'wah on Social Media

The transformation of da'wah in the digital era is an important phenomenon that can be explained through the perspective *of Diffusion of Innovations Theory*. This theory focuses on how innovations, in this case digital technology and social media, are adopted by society and spread from one group to another. In the context of da'wah, this innovation involves changing the way religious messages are delivered from traditional methods to digital platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook.

The da'wah strategy in the digital era emphasizes the importance of using social media and digital platforms to reach a wider audience, especially the younger generation. Royani and Rizal (2024) revealed that platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook have proven effective in attracting the interest of millennials and Generation Z who are active users of social media. This generation prefers visual and interactive content, so that the da'wah approach through these media becomes relevant.

Instagram, for example, is used to spread da'wah messages in the form of images, short videos, and infographics that can be easily consumed by users. Da'wah messages packaged in a visually appealing format have the potential to go viral and spread more widely, especially when users share them with their friends. YouTube, on the other hand, allows dai to deliver lectures in a longer and more in-depth video format, explaining the teachings of Islam in a more structured and detailed way. The use of YouTube also allows the audience to access da'wah at any time according to their convenience. In addition, platforms like Facebook allow for more in-depth discussions and dialogue between dai and audience. Through the comment or *live streaming feature,* the audience can ask questions and get answers directly from the dai, which creates a two-way interaction. This strengthens the relationship between the dai and the audience, as well as providing an opportunity for the dai to answer hot issues in the community.

Another strategy that is also adopted in digital da'wah is collaboration with *influencers* or public figures who have great influence on social media. By collaborating with these figures, da'wah messages can reach more people and spread more widely among audiences that may not have been previously reached by traditional da'wah. The effective use of social media as a da'wah strategy provides greater flexibility and reach compared to traditional da'wah methods, making da'wah more inclusive and relevant in this modern era.

In line with the study conducted by Awaliyah (2024), In the digital era, DAIs are required to use a more creative approach in conveying da'wah messages to remain relevant and attractive to audiences, especially the younger generation. One effective approach is through the use of short videos, infographics, and interactive discussions on various social media platforms. Short videos containing da'wah messages are effective because they are easy to consume by social media users who have a short attention span. Platforms like TikTok and Instagram *Reels* provide a means for dai to convey meaningful short messages in a visually appealing way.

In addition to videos, infographics are also one of the popular tools in conveying religious information. Infographics can summarize Islamic teachings, verses of the Qur'an, or important hadiths in an easy-to-understand, visual, and concise format. In this way, da'wah not only relies on long texts, but is also able to convey messages in a more visual and engaging way, which is preferred by digital audiences.

More than that, the formation of a digital *(online)* da'wah community is also one of the effective strategies to strengthen da'wah and build a closer relationship between the dai and the audience. These communities allow audiences to come together, share experiences, and ask questions about religious issues they face. Online discussion forums, groups on social media, or *live streaming* sessions allow for two-way interaction between dai and audience, creating a more inclusive and interactive environment (Muhsinah, 2024).

This *online* community not only provides a forum for religious discussions, but also serves as a means to strengthen solidarity among community members who have the same interest in deepening the teachings of Islam. This allows the audience to feel more engaged and have space to express their opinions, while also strengthening their connection to religion. This strategy is effective in maintaining audience engagement and encouraging active participation in religious activities digitally, which is increasingly important in the modern era.

The digital da'wah community is one of the effective strategies in expanding the reach of da'wah and increasing understanding of Islam among the millennial generation. This generation, which is connected to technology and social media, has extensive access to a wide range of information, including da'wah. The digital da'wah community has successfully leveraged platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook to convey religious messages that are relevant and easy to understand by younger audiences.

One of the successes of the digital da'wah community is its ability to create deeper engagement through interactive and interesting content. Da'wah messages are delivered through a variety of formats, such as videos, infographics, *podcasts,* and short articles that can be accessed at any time. The

content produced is also designed to suit the needs of the audience, making da'wah more personal and directed. In addition, this community is able to bridge the gap between the audience and the audience through direct interaction, such as discussions in the comment column, question and answer sessions via *live streaming*, and even special discussion groups managed by the community. This provides a space for the audience to learn more about Islamic teachings, as well as get direct guidance from experienced dai.

The success of the da'wah strategy that has been described previously does not only depend on content creativity, but also on good technical skills. Dai and digital da'wah community managers need to understand how social media platforms, algorithms, and digital marketing techniques work so that their da'wah messages can reach more people. Without a deep technical understanding, digital da'wah may not reach the desired audience or even lose out to other content that is more visually appealing but less educational. Therefore, in addition to having strong religious knowledge, dai also need to master technical skills in managing digital content and understanding the needs and preferences of their audience. With the right combination of technical skills and a deep understanding of religion, digital da'wah has great potential to expand its reach and improve understanding of Islam globally.

4. CONCLUSION

Da'wah in the digital era has undergone a significant transformation from traditional methods to digital platforms, especially through social media such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook. This transformation not only includes a change in the way messages are delivered, but also a change in the role of the dai as the bearer of Islamic teachings. Dai are now required to be more creative and interactive in using technology and adapt their content to the preferences of the younger generation who are more accustomed to visual and short formats.

Although digital da'wah offers many opportunities, the challenges faced are also great. The main challenges include the dissemination of information that is difficult to filter, the lack of technological competence of some dai, and the emergence of hoaxes and false teachings that can confuse the people. In addition, maintaining the authenticity of the message in the midst of competition for content that is more visually appealing but less substantial is a tough task for dai.

An effective da'wah strategy in the digital era involves the creative use of social media platforms, the delivery of messages through visual formats such as short videos and infographics, and the formation of a digital *(online) da'wah community* that supports interaction between dai and the audience. However, the success of this strategy also depends on the technical ability of dai to understand digital platforms and how algorithms work, as well as the ability to create relevant and in-depth content.

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