THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE DISSEMINATION OF ISLAMIC DA'WAH AMONG YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of Islamic da'wah through social media in reaching youth, with a focus on three major platforms: YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. The background of this research arises from the phenomenon of increasing social media usage among adolescents, which not only serves as a means of entertainment but also becomes a medium for the dissemination of religious values. The method employed is descriptive qualitative, with data collection techniques including in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation of digital da'wah content. The data were then analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, with validity tested through source and method triangulation. The results indicate that social media plays a significant role in expanding the reach of da'wah to youth, particularly through short, creative content, visually appealing materials, and a communicative style of language. Nevertheless, digital da'wah also faces several challenges, such as low digital literacy, social media algorithms that prioritize entertainment, and the limitations of content duration in conveying profound religious messages. Recommended strategies include optimizing content upload times, collaborating with Islamic influencers, and enhancing digital literacy and social media ethics among youth. Thus, this study confirms that social media holds great potential as a medium for contemporary da'wah, provided it is managed with appropriate, innovative strategies aligned with the needs of the youth audience.

Keyword: Da'wah, Social Media,YouTube, TikTok, Instagram

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education plays a crucial role in addressing negative behaviors and juvenile delinquency. In Indonesia, Islamic education teachers in Lampung actively implement interventions to mitigate the adverse effects of social media platforms such as TikTok by emphasizing the development of ethics, self-discipline, and adolescent well-being (Sagala & Kandedes, 2024). Beyond the influence of online media, schools that integrate Islamic education also enhance spiritual knowledge and social awareness, which have been shown to reduce juvenile delinquency (Fadilah et al., 2022). Religious identity is particularly significant for Muslim youth living in environments with tendencies toward Islamophobia, where maintaining religious identity can be challenging. The emergence of Islamic television channels and young da'i since the mid-1990s has helped instill a vision of moderate Islam and foster positive religious identity formation among adolescents (Alazrak & Saleh, 2016). Thus, Islamic education not only imparts knowledge but also guides youth toward moral, spiritual, and socially responsible behavior.

In addition to formal education, pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) in Indonesia provide a learning environment that integrates secular and religious education, instilling cultural and religious values into adolescents' daily lives (Pakpahan et al., 2025). Spiritual practices such as prayer, Qur'anic recitation, fasting, and religious classes are used to enhance moral awareness and prevent problematic behaviors, demonstrating positive effects on shaping adolescents' consciousness and behavior (Rahman et al., 2018; Rahman et al., 2019). Da'wah activities in mosques, such as those at Masjid Al-Mukhlisin in Lampung, help equip youth with sound morals and foster respect for other religious communities (Nasor et al., 2022). Media, particularly Islamic-themed series such as *Dirilis Ertugrul*, strengthen adolescents' connection to Islamic history, culture, and values, fostering religious pride (Yasin et al., 2021). Family and community support is also critical in reinforcing da'wah practices and religious development, promoting social cohesion, participatory awareness, and positive engagement in religious activities (Kashif et al., 2015; Daas, 2025).

Social media has become an essential medium for delivering da'wah to youth, particularly through popular platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook. These platforms provide flexible and convenient access to da'wah content anytime and anywhere, facilitating millennials' deeper understanding of religious knowledge (Briandana et al., 2020; Sule & Sulaiman, 2021). Interactive approaches on social media also enhance youth engagement, helping them comprehend Islamic teachings more profoundly (Zafri et al., 2023). Furthermore, family and community support is vital for da'i, especially female preachers, in managing dual roles and optimizing technology for da'wah purposes (Sari et al., 2025). Creative use of social media, such as humorous rhetoric or casual styles, along with celebrity da'i leveraging their popularity and media skills, effectively attracts urban youth while shaping positive religious perspectives (Sholihah & Rohmatulloh, 2023; Raya, 2024; Rustan et al., 2020).

However, utilizing social media for youth da'wah also presents several challenges. The spread of inaccurate or misleading information can influence adolescents' beliefs, highlighting the need for credibility indicators in Islamic content so that youth can evaluate the authenticity of online information (Kadir et al., 2019). Additionally, maintaining a balance between entertainment and education is essential to ensure that da'wah remains grounded in Islamic texts and does not provide only superficial understanding (Usman et al., 2024). Technological support, such as WhatsApp chatbots, can improve the efficiency of information dissemination and facilitate youth access to

Islamic studies (Hulliyah et al., 2021). Therefore, integrating creativity, education, and socio-technological support is key to successful social media da'wah for younger generations.

This study addresses a gap in the digital da'wah literature, particularly regarding the effectiveness of social media in reaching youth, as most previous research has focused on conventional da'wah or the influence of social media on negative adolescent behaviors without emphasizing da'wah strategies. The novelty of this research lies in its integrated analysis of three popular platforms—YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok—using a descriptive qualitative approach that combines in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation of digital da'wah content. The study aims to explore how social media can be effectively used to disseminate Islamic values to youth, identify emerging challenges, and formulate optimal strategies to enhance the reach and quality of da'wah. The expected impact of this research is both practical and theoretical: practically, it assists da'i and religious institutions in designing creative, communicative, and relevant da'wah content; theoretically, it contributes to the development of digital da'wah studies, media literacy, and the understanding of adolescent behavior in the context of religion and modern technology.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at portraying and understanding the role of social media in disseminating Islamic da'wah among adolescents. This approach was selected because it allows the researcher to explore participants' subjective perceptions and experiences while analyzing the phenomenon holistically. Qualitative research emphasizes the quality of social interactions and the meanings constructed, rather than merely the quantity of data, enabling an in-depth understanding of digital da'wah.

The research method used is field research, which allows direct data collection from da'wah communities and social media account managers targeting adolescents. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the experiences, motivations, and challenges faced by both da'wah account managers and adolescents as the audience. Participatory observation was employed to examine da'wah content and interactions on social media, while documentation involved collecting materials such as videos, comments, and statistical data.

Data analysis followed a qualitative approach using data reduction, data presentation in the form of descriptive narratives, and conclusion drawing to identify themes and patterns from the collected data. The analytical process was conducted inductively to develop theory related to digital da'wah. Data validity was ensured through source and method triangulation, comparing information from multiple sources and methods to establish the credibility of the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
The Use of Social Media for Islamic Da'wah among Adolescents

The use of social media among Indonesian adolescents has developed significantly over the past decade, with various platforms serving as channels for communication, entertainment, as well as spiritual interaction and religious learning. According to DataReportal (2024), platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp are the most popular in Indonesia, including among adolescents. Each platform possesses characteristics that support the potential for digital Islamic da'wah.

YouTube, with a penetration rate of approximately 62% of internet users in Indonesia, has become the primary platform for preachers to deliver Islamic studies. Content on YouTube can range from long-form to short-form videos, allowing adolescents to access da'wah material according to their spiritual needs. Topics vary widely, including thematic studies, religious Q&A sessions, and general sermons.

Meanwhile, Facebook and Instagram, with active user rates of approximately 59% and 54% respectively, are primarily used to disseminate da'wah content in visual formats, including Islamic quote posters, short lecture reels, and live sermons. WhatsApp, although more private in nature, is also an important medium for delivering da'wah messages, particularly through broadcasts, study groups, and limited discussion forums. TikTok, as a relatively new platform experiencing rapid growth among Generation Z, shows positive trends in Islamic da'wah. Although precise daily user estimates for da'wah are unavailable, an increasing number of young da'i use TikTok to convey Islamic messages in creative and entertaining short video formats.

The following table illustrates the average duration of social media use in Indonesia, indicating adolescent engagement levels on each platform:

Table 1. Average Duration of Social Media Use

Platform	Estimated Daily Users	Average Duration
YouTube	62%	90 minutes
Facebook	59%	75 minutes
Instagram	54%	65 minutes
WhatsApp	52%	60 minutes
TikTok	55%	70 minutes

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Social media today is no longer merely a space for social expression and entertainment; it has transformed into a platform for disseminating religious values, including Islamic da'wah. Among adolescents, the role of social media is particularly significant, as this generation grows up in a fast-paced, visual, and interactive digital ecosystem. Findings from this study indicate that the role of social media in Islamic da'wah for adolescents can be observed through several aspects, namely accessibility, content flexibility, and the closeness of communicative approaches.

Islamic da'wah through social media has proven capable of reaching adolescents in ways that are more adaptive to their lifestyles. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok provide spaces for short, visual content, which aligns with the information consumption habits of young people. Meanwhile, YouTube is used to distribute more in-depth da'wah material, such as thematic lectures or sermons, which can be watched repeatedly at any time. WhatsApp is also utilized in more private and personal contexts, such as community groups or broadcasts containing brief religious messages. Modern da'wah is not merely about delivering content; it also requires understanding audience psychology and selecting the appropriate medium. Therefore, the use of social media has become essential in the era of contemporary da'wah, emphasizing communicative, empathetic, and interactive approaches.

From a strategic perspective, the success of da'wah delivery via social media largely depends on creativity and communication context. Preachers who can adjust their language style, content duration, and format to the characteristics of their audience are more likely to be well-received. Various forms of da'wah content—including creative videos, infographics, opinion articles, podcasts,

and web series—demonstrate that the delivery of da'wah is no longer limited to the pulpit but can also be conducted through smartphone screens. Content that is inspiring, communicative, and non-patronizing proves more effective in instilling Islamic values gradually yet consistently.

Nonetheless, this study also found that the use of social media for da'wah faces several challenges. Obstacles such as the spread of misinformation, low media literacy, and algorithms biased toward sensational content pose serious challenges that require strategic solutions. Furthermore, the dominance of conservative narratives and the limited number of digital preachers underscore the urgency of enhancing the capacity of human resources in da'wah, as well as fostering synergy between religious institutions, digital communities, and educational bodies.

From the perspective of contemporary da'wah, social media offers a new field that must be leveraged with approaches based not only on knowledge but also on empathy, creativity, and technology. Da'wah is no longer merely about delivering a message but also about how that message is packaged and received by the audience. Therefore, social media should not be viewed as a competitor to conventional media but as a strategic partner in da'wah. These platforms have great potential to reach the hearts and minds of adolescents, who are a vital asset for the future of the Muslim community.

Social Media Da'wah Strategies

Islamic da'wah strategies on social media are strongly influenced by the characteristics of each platform as well as the demographics of its users. Various methods of delivering da'wah messages have been developed to align with the digital content consumption patterns of adolescents. Muslim preachers, content creators, and Islamic institutions have designed diverse approaches to ensure that da'wah messages are effectively received by young audiences. One of the most prominent strategies is the dissemination of creative da'wah videos. By utilizing features such as Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and TikTok content, young preachers deliver short sermons in the form of storytelling, light sketches, or visualizations of hadiths and Qur'anic verses with casual narratives. Such content is highly favored by adolescents due to its digestible format, ease of understanding, and relevance to daily life.

The following table outlines various types of da'wah strategies used on social media, along with their main platforms, content forms, and primary objectives:

Table 2. Social Media Da'wah Strategies

Strategy Type	Main Platform	Content Format	Primary Objective
Short sermons	Instagram, TikTok	Short videos, Reels	Practical & inspirational education
Da'wah lectures	YouTube	Sermon videos, live streaming	Broad religious understanding
Limited interactive da'wah	WhatsApp	Broadcasts, group discussions	Clarification & consolidation
Islamic campaigns	Instagram, YouTube	Infographics, quotes, posters	Promotion of Islamic values

Visual short sermons are a da'wah strategy that utilizes short video features on Instagram and TikTok. Content in the form of Reels or Stories delivers Islamic messages quickly, lightly, and

engagingly, such as brief advice, hadith quotations, or religious reflections. The language used is adapted to the communication style of young people so that it feels familiar and non-patronizing. This strategy has proven effective because the short duration and dynamic visuals facilitate adolescents in receiving and understanding da'wah messages.

Online da'wah studies are primarily conducted through platforms such as YouTube, which serves as the main medium for delivering in-depth Islamic content. This approach features thematic lectures, weekly sermons, and Q&A sessions with longer video durations. The strength of this strategy lies in its flexibility, allowing audiences to access content anytime according to their needs. The systematic and comprehensive delivery of material makes this strategy effective in expanding religious understanding in depth. Limited interactive da'wah is conducted via WhatsApp using discussion groups, broadcast messages, and private Q&A sessions with preachers. Although this approach has a smaller and more private scope, it allows for more personal and profound communication. This strategy is often used by school communities, pesantrens, or religious organizations that aim to cultivate closer relationships between preachers and their followers.

Islamic visual campaigns leverage visually-oriented social media such as Instagram and YouTube to convey moderate and peaceful Islamic messages. Content includes infographics, inspirational quotes, and aesthetically engaging digital posters. The main goal of this strategy is to foster a positive perception of Islamic teachings among social media users while encouraging netizens to share educational and inspiring messages. The digital da'wah strategy employed by Ustadz Hanan Attaki on YouTube emphasizes engaging content, active audience interaction, and a significant impact on viewers' religious understanding and behavior. Research indicates that social media is an effective da'wah tool due to its broad reach, two-way interaction, and ability to adapt content to audience characteristics (Muharrifah & Sikumbang, 2025). Digital da'wah strategies also aim to enhance Generation Z's religious understanding through careful platform selection, message delivery methods, and audience interaction, which strengthens religious knowledge and supports social-media-based religious education (Jalaluddin et al., 2024).

Similarly, Ustadz Muhammad Nuzul Dzikri's da'wah on Instagram demonstrates that social media facilitates the dissemination of religious messages, increases audience engagement, and effectively builds personal and contextual religious understanding among young users (Maharani & Asia, 2024). Social media da'wah strategies emphasize balanced and moderate content, enabling audiences to understand Islamic teachings selectively and avoid radical interpretations (Zahid & Hasan, 2018). Maintaining theological integrity is also critical, with core Islamic values such as tawhid and adab preserved in online interactions (Simamora & Farid, 2024). Interactive and inclusive approaches are key to successful digital da'wah, with two-way interactions proven to enhance religious understanding, particularly among youth (Zafri et al., 2023). The role of women in digital da'wah, as exemplified by Teungku Inong in Aceh, highlights the importance of family support and digital literacy for effective religious messaging (Sari et al., 2025). Consequently, da'wah strategies not only focus on delivering information but also on fostering relational engagement and building deep religious awareness.

Technology and digital tools are central to modern da'wah. Chatbots and mobile applications can increase follower engagement and facilitate communication (Chaiwanarom & Krourat, 2025), while platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Telegram, and Twitter enable widespread dissemination of Islamic messages (Sule & Sulaiman, 2021). Diverse content development, covering foundational beliefs to contemporary social issues, with a distinctive personal style, also attracts wider

audiences (Kerim et al., 2025A). Integrating motivational support, psychological engagement, and involvement of influencers or celebrity scholars further extends the reach and visibility of da'wah messages (Kerim et al., 2025B; Dahlan et al., 2025). Finally, addressing risks of polarization, misinformation, and potential radicalization is essential. Continuous evaluation and strategic adjustments are necessary to ensure that da'wah remains relevant and effective in the digital era (Rohid et al., 2025; Zaenuri, 2025).

Challenges in Spreading Da'wah on Social Media

One of the main challenges in digital da'wah is the widespread dissemination of inaccurate information or hoaxes on social media. Unverified information often intermingles with da'wah messages, potentially misleading audiences and causing misunderstandings. Such misinformation can negatively affect public perception of Islamic teachings and undermine the credibility of preachers delivering da'wah content. To address this issue, preachers must ensure that every message is rigorously verified, including cross-checking with reliable sources. The use of clear references, logically structured narratives, and fact-based communication is crucial. These measures not only maintain the quality of da'wah but also build public trust, ensuring that the mission of da'wah continues effectively and safely, free from misleading content.

Low digital literacy and limited awareness of ethical social media use also pose serious obstacles to online da'wah. Many social media users do not fully understand how to interact responsibly and wisely online, resulting in misinterpretation, distortion, or misuse of da'wah messages. This situation makes audiences susceptible to negative content or unconstructive debates, reducing the positive impact of religious communication. Therefore, strengthening digital literacy is key to enabling individuals to critically evaluate information and behave ethically when engaging with da'wah content. Preachers should also adapt their communication style to be more accessible, using simple language and visually engaging media. Digital literacy education and the reinforcement of ethical online interaction form the foundation for effective da'wah delivery that produces transformative social impact.

Another significant challenge is the rising presence of radical content on social media. Digital platforms are often exploited by certain groups to disseminate extremist ideologies that may trigger social conflict and distort public perceptions of Islam. Da'wah messages that emphasize peace, compassion, and tolerance risk being overshadowed by provocative or radical content, leading audiences to receive biased or misleading information. Addressing this requires stricter content monitoring by da'wah practitioners and communication strategies that reinforce moderation and balance. Collaboration with online communities and media literacy organizations can also help mitigate the impact of radical content. With the right approach, digital da'wah can maintain its emphasis on peace, foster critical awareness, and counter extremist narratives that threaten social harmony.

Modern social media platforms, especially short-video based platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels, impose strict content duration limits. This poses a challenge for digital da'wah, as complex and nuanced religious messages are difficult to convey fully in a brief format. Many religious concepts require detailed explanations for proper understanding, yet platform constraints often force preachers to condense content or omit important details. Creativity is therefore essential in developing concise, engaging, and informative da'wah content. Storytelling, visualization, animation, and segmenting material into sequential parts can help deliver messages more effectively, enabling

audiences to grasp the core of the da'wah clearly without compromising its educational or moral value.

Challenges in digital da'wah also arise from internal factors within da'wah organizations, such as limited expertise, weak coordination, and insufficient organizational capacity. These issues can result in inconsistent messaging and hinder competitiveness with other social media content. Additionally, the rapid pace of technological development demands that preachers adapt to remain relevant and effectively reach young audiences. Without adequate technological knowledge and skills, digital da'wah risks falling behind while audiences gravitate toward innovative and interactive content. Effective solutions include strengthening internal capacity through ongoing training, improving team coordination, and innovating in the use of diverse media formats. Such approaches ensure that digital da'wah operates professionally, adaptively, and effectively, while expanding its reach and positive impact within society.

CONCLUSION

Social media plays a highly significant role in the dissemination of Islamic da'wah among adolescents. Digital platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp function not only as tools for entertainment or communication but also as strategic instruments employed by preachers and Islamic institutions to convey religious messages. Social media enables da'wah to reach young audiences widely and rapidly through content that is visual, concise, and flexible, including short sermons, Islamic infographics, and online religious studies, which are particularly appealing to the digital generation. Various digital da'wah strategies, such as creative videos, reflective articles, online religious dialogues, and Islamic visual campaigns, have proven effective in adapting the methods of religious outreach to the needs and characteristics of contemporary adolescents. However, despite these advantages, digital da'wah also faces several challenges, including the spread of hoaxes, low media literacy, the dominance of conservative narratives, limited capacity among digital preachers, and social media algorithms that inadequately support educational content. These obstacles require serious attention to ensure that digital da'wah remains effective and moderate. Overall, this study demonstrates that social media can serve as a potent medium for Islamic da'wah among adolescents when delivered with a creative, communicative, and contextual approach. With adequate digital literacy awareness, Islamic da'wah has the potential to strengthen the religious identity of young people in the digital era while simultaneously addressing contemporary challenges.

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