



THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ISLAMIC PREACHING: A CASE STUDY OF THE YOUTUBE CHANNEL OF ASH-SHOMAD MOSQUE

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ABSTRACT

The shift from traditional media such as newspapers, magazines, and television to digital platforms, including YouTube, has prompted Islamic preaching (dakwah) to adapt to modern technology. In this context, Ash-Shomad Mosque utilizes social media to disseminate Islamic messages to a community that increasingly accesses information online. The objectives of this study are: 1) to examine how the YouTube channel of Ash-Shomad Mosque is used as a medium for dakwah, and 2) to identify the challenges and obstacles present in the operation of the mosque's YouTube channel. This study employs qualitative field research methods, focusing on the implementation of Ash-Shomad Mosque's YouTube channel in the development of dakwah media. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. The object of this research is Ash-Shomad Mosque, Citra Raya, Tangerang. The results indicate that the use of YouTube as a dakwah medium by Ash-Shomad Mosque has had a significant positive impact, both spiritually and socially. Materials such as sermons, Islamic studies, and Friday khutbahs are accessible at any time, allowing worshippers who cannot attend in person to benefit from the teachings. This also supports the dissemination of Islamic values that are inclusive and tolerant. One of the main outcomes is the effective digital dakwah, which enables the mosque to reach audiences beyond the local Citra Raya community, even globally, without geographical limitations.

Keyword: User, YouTube, Mosque, Dakwah Media



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INTRODUCTION

Islamic preaching (dakwah) is an activity aimed at disseminating the teachings of Islamic Sharia and inviting the community to acknowledge the existence of God, encompassing two main elements: *Amar Ma'ruf* (encouraging good deeds) and *Nahi Munkar* (preventing wrongdoing) (Hidayat, 2022). The practice of dakwah emphasizes strengthening *tauhid* (monotheism), politeness, avoidance of wrongful acts, simplification of religious teachings, the delivery of positive messages, collaboration, and gradual instruction in Sharia. Over time, dakwah has undergone a transformation through the integration of academic approaches and information technology. In Indonesia, higher education institutions utilize social and communication approaches to reach broader audiences (Millie et al., 2023). In Malaysia, dakwah is conducted through digital platforms and Islamic websites, requiring critical evaluation of the credibility of online information (Salih et al., 2019). These approaches allow the dissemination of Islamic teachings not only via conventional media but also through modern media, such as social media, which is used by popular preachers to expand the reach of dakwah both online and offline (Weng, 2018).

Dakwah also requires cultural and environmental integration to enhance its effectiveness. For instance, incorporating Chinese cultural elements into dakwah activities, such as Chinese-style mosques and cultural celebrations, helps convey Islamic messages while maintaining the principles of the religion (Weng, 2022). Additionally, challenges such as religious pluralism and female leadership shape the dynamics of dakwah in Indonesia, where *nyai* in Madura play a significant role despite the patriarchal context (Jannah & Ida, 2019; Weng, 2019). Educational integration is also crucial, such as incorporating Islamic values into engineering curricula to develop holistic professional understanding (Radzol & Hamzah, 2023). The role of institutions and communities, including mosques that function as centers for dakwah, education, and learning, as well as movements like Muhammadiyah in Sorong promoting *dakwah bil hal*, demonstrates that dakwah is not merely ritualistic but also oriented toward social welfare (Noordin et al., 2017; Wekke et al., 2019).

Social media has transformed the dakwah landscape by enabling wider reach and more intensive interaction with communities. Platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Telegram allow preachers to disseminate religious messages without geographic limitations, significantly enhancing the effectiveness of dakwah (Sule & Sulaiman, 2021). Influencers and opinion leaders on social media can rapidly spread information, influencing public attitudes and behavior (Kerim et al., 2025). Furthermore, visual and interactive content, including videos, live broadcasts, and interactive posts, makes dakwah more engaging for modern audiences (Weng, 2018). Semi-virtual initiatives, such as One Day One Juz (ODOJ) on WhatsApp, encourage daily participation in reading the Qur'an, demonstrating that social media functions not only as an information medium but also as a platform for building online religious communities (Nisa, 2018). Social media also provides space for female preachers, such as Teungku Inong in Aceh, to balance public and private roles while conducting dakwah (Sari et al., 2025).

Social media is particularly effective in attracting digitally literate youth, as easily accessible and visually appealing content fosters greater audience engagement (Hasanah et al., 2024). Scholars and preachers adapt dakwah content to contemporary issues relevant to youth, including motivational and psychological themes (Usman et al., 2024; Zaenuri, 2025). However, online dakwah also requires adherence to ethical standards and credibility, referencing authentic Qur'anic verses and Hadiths (Rossanty et al., 2021). Verification mechanisms are essential to prevent the spread of misinformation and extremist teachings (Kadir et al., 2019). On the other hand, the digital transformation of dakwah

presents challenges, including balancing online and offline activities and the risk of spreading extremist ideologies, requiring preachers to adapt communication strategies for effectiveness and safety in modern society (Lewinsky et al., 2024).

Based on this background, the author chose the topic "The Use of Social Media in Dakwah (A Case Study of the YouTube Channel of Ash-Shomad Mosque, Citra Raya, Tangerang)" because YouTube has become one of the most popular and effective digital platforms in the modern era. With its broad reach, easy accessibility, and flexibility, YouTube serves as an appropriate medium for conveying dakwah messages to audiences from various backgrounds, particularly youth. The interactive visual and audio content on YouTube allows Islamic values to be presented in a more creative, relevant, and easily accessible manner at any time. Utilizing YouTube in dakwah addresses contemporary challenges in disseminating Islamic teachings more effectively. This study aims to examine how the YouTube channel of Ash-Shomad Mosque is used for dakwah and to identify the challenges encountered. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of communication studies and serve as a reference for further research on dakwah through social media.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research approach using the Uses and Gratifications method, aimed at exploring the phenomenon of social media use in dakwah through the YouTube platform. The research focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of how individuals actively select media to fulfill their psychological, social, and emotional needs, in accordance with the Uses and Gratifications theory. The study employs two sampling techniques: purposive sampling, which selects participants based on specific considerations, and snowball sampling, where participants are gradually recruited by expanding contacts from initial respondents.

Data were collected using several methods, including observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation involved monitoring activities on the Ash-Shomad Mosque YouTube channel and other social media accounts. Interviews were conducted with mosque administrators, such as Ust. Lutfi Maulana, to obtain in-depth information regarding the challenges and benefits of utilizing social media for dakwah. Documentation included analyzing video and photo content uploaded to the YouTube channel. Data analysis followed the steps of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, aimed at organizing the data, presenting it systematically, and deriving relevant conclusions. To ensure data validity, the study employed triangulation, combining multiple data sources, methods, and theoretical perspectives to strengthen the accuracy and credibility of the findings. Through this methodology, the study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how social media, particularly YouTube, is used as a medium for dakwah at Ash-Shomad Mosque and its impact on the audience.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Use of the Ash-Shomad Mosque YouTube Channel

YouTube provides an engaging platform for conveying religious messages in a more interactive and creative manner. Preachers such as Baba Ali, an American Muslim televangelist, employ humor and interactivity in their videos to capture audience attention (El Nagggar, 2018). The use of visual elements and dramaturgy in content helps present religious phenomena in a more dramatic and compelling way. Some preachers also utilize YouTube to build their religious identity and authority, such as the Huzme group, which has created a unique and independent religious

identity through its content. However, the digitalization of dakwah also raises concerns regarding shifts in the representation of religion, which may create tensions between tradition and modernity (Çiçek, 2025). This demonstrates that YouTube presents both opportunities and challenges for contemporary dakwah practices.

In addition, YouTube enhances engagement and interaction between preachers and their audiences. Preachers can communicate directly with their followers, fostering dialogue and active participation. For example, Spanish-speaking Catholic communicators have successfully built relationships with their audiences through their channels (Fuente-Cobo et al., 2023). Audience comments and interactions provide insights into responses to the content delivered (Perera & Wathsala, 2025). YouTube also serves an educational function, disseminating content on Islamic law, sermons, prayers, and Islamic history for various age groups. Channels focused on the Qur'an provide diverse video formats, such as webinars, tutorials, and lectures, facilitating the spread of religious knowledge (Abd Razzak et al., 2024). Nevertheless, information validity remains a challenge, as some content may be inaccurate or misleading (Aripin et al., 2016). Preachers such as Khaled Abou El Fadl illustrate how digital media can influence religious authority and knowledge (Tsourlaki, 2020).

Based on research conducted, the Ash-Shomad Mosque YouTube channel currently has 1,300 subscribers, 412 videos, and a total view count of 209,482. With such a considerable following, the use of YouTube for dakwah is clearly effective in the current era. The channel features various dakwah content, including religious studies, Friday sermons, YouTube Shorts, and live streaming. Additionally, the channel can be used to post religious classes, Qur'an interpretation sessions, religious presentations, or archive events such as major Islamic celebrations (e.g., Nuzulul Qur'an or Eid al-Adha). Some of the content available on the Ash-Shomad Mosque YouTube channel includes:

1. Islamic Study Content

The Islamic study content with the highest number of viewers, totaling 237, was "*The Dimension of Education in the Family of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him)*" by Ust. Dr. Ahmad Irfan, SS., M.Pd.i. The content discussed how Muslims can emulate and adopt the educational practices of Prophet Ibrahim's family and apply them within their own families. There are several key points highlighted by Ust. Dr. Ahmad Irfan, SS., M.Pd.i: first, we live in a modern era that influences negative changes in society and family life; second, negative social changes in human behavior must be prevented through education, which serves as a means to nurture innate human goodness; third, we should cultivate a love for Allah SWT that surpasses all other attachments.

Furthermore, the second most-viewed Islamic study video, with 213 viewers, was "*Peaceful Life in the World*" by Ust. Dr. Ahmad Irfan, SS., M.Pd.i. In this content, he explained that we live in a world full of challenges and tests, but religion provides guidance on how to live peacefully and happily. Citing the pious scholar Hamid Al-Laffaf, Ust. Dr. Ahmad Irfan, SS., M.Pd.i summarized four elements that lead to peace and happiness: first, the pursuit of wealth, money, and luxury does not yield true satisfaction unless one embodies the trait of *Qana'ah*—contentment and acceptance of whatever Allah has bestowed, whether in the form of sustenance or other divine decrees; second, seeking pleasure and worldly comfort is only truly attained through sufficient provision; third, enjoyment of food is only meaningful with a healthy body; fourth, the pursuit of livelihood and sustenance on earth should be complemented with recognition that true provision is from the heavens, emphasizing that while humans must strive for sustenance, they must not neglect prayer and reliance (*tawakku*) on Allah SWT. Ust. Dr.

Ahmad Irfan, SS., M.Pd.i encouraged reflection on the essence of life and the return to Allah SWT, noting that life serves as a means to accumulate provisions for the eternal life in the hereafter. The researcher found that the Islamic study content has not been updated with new material; the last time the Masjid Ash-Shomad channel uploaded Islamic study content was two years ago.

2. Friday Sermon Content

This content is a regularly scheduled program that airs every Friday. Due to the strict airing schedule, the content editor must complete editing approximately two hours before upload. The Friday sermon content with the highest number of viewers, reaching 11,000 views, was delivered by Dr. KH. Marjuki Al-Jawiy, M.Pd., MA. He emphasized the importance of Islamic law in regulating human behavior, from the smallest to the largest matters. Dr. KH. Marjuki Al-Jawiy, M.Pd., MA also conveyed guidance on selecting leaders, as outlined by Imam Al-Mawardi in his book *Al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyah*, explaining that a leader must be just, knowledgeable, possess broad insight, have healthy senses, demonstrate creativity and courage, and have a noble lineage.

The second most-viewed Friday sermon, with 1,200 viewers, was delivered by KH. Nur Alam Jaelani, MA, focusing on piety and practices that protect believers from temptations that weaken faith in Allah SWT. In his sermon, KH. Nur Alam Jaelani, MA highlighted the timeless message of the Prophet Muhammad SAW: *fear and be mindful of Allah SWT*. He urged the audience to reflect on their own level of piety and encouraged increased devotion. KH. Nur Alam Jaelani, MA identified three key safeguards for maintaining piety and resisting the temptations of Satan to protect one's life in this world and the hereafter: Mosque, serving as a fortress for believers, not only as a place of worship but also as a center for learning and knowledge. Remembrance (Dhikr), providing protection from Satanic temptations and fostering inner peace. The Prophet Muhammad emphasized regular prayer and gratitude through dhikr. Al-Qur'an, acting as a shield against distractions and disturbances to faith, serving as a guide for Muslims in daily life. KH. Nur Alam Jaelani, MA concluded by praying for Allah SWT's guidance so that believers may improve and live righteously. Friday sermon content on the Masjid Ash-Shomad YouTube channel generally attracts between hundreds to thousands of viewers, making it one of the channel's most viewed types of content.

3. YouTube Shorts Content

YouTube Shorts is a relatively new feature launched in 2021, allowing users to create and watch short vertical videos, similar to TikTok. Initially, the duration ranged from 15 to 60 seconds, later extended to a maximum of three minutes. YouTube Shorts also offers additional features such as music, text, and special effects. The researcher found that the Masjid Ash-Shomad channel uses YouTube Shorts to produce brief content, including free meal distribution, community activities, and Islamic events. While this content could have been presented as standard YouTube videos, it is instead uploaded as Shorts. Viewer engagement for Masjid Ash-Shomad's Shorts has remained relatively stable, ranging from 500 to several thousand views, compared to regular YouTube content, which often experiences declining viewership.

4. Live Streaming

Live streaming is a real-time video or audio broadcast conducted over the internet, allowing viewers to watch content simultaneously, similar to television broadcasts but via digital platforms such as YouTube. The live streaming session with the highest number of viewers, totaling 129,

featured the recitation of Surah Al-Jumu'ah by Ust. Mansur Tamabak. This session lasted 10 minutes and was followed by the call to Fajr prayer. Over the past five months, the Masjid Ash-Shomad YouTube channel has frequently conducted daily live streaming of Qur'anic recitations before Fajr prayer. This live streaming activity represents an innovative development for the channel, providing opportunities to expand live broadcasts beyond specific events.

5. Promotion of Social and Religious Activities

Masjid Ash-Shomad actively participates in various social activities, such as providing free driving lessons, offering funeral transportation at no cost, distributing basic food packages, providing free refillable drinking water, and distributing free meals to the local community attending congregational prayers at the mosque. The YouTube channel can be utilized to promote these activities, raise public awareness, and encourage community participation in supporting social programs. For example, documentation of activities during the Muharram Week 1444 H, including driving training for those in need, can be uploaded to demonstrate the social impact generated by the mosque.

6. Building a Digital Community

The channel serves as a platform to strengthen connections with congregation members and the broader community, aligning with Masjid Ash-Shomad's mission to foster a religious and harmonious community. Uploaded videos may include information about zakat, infaq, charity, or educational programs such as TPA (Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an). The YouTube channel also enables outreach beyond the Citra Raya area, supporting an open and modern approach to Islamic da'wah. The use of social media for da'wah, as evidenced by the Masjid Ash-Shomad YouTube channel, has produced positive effects in spreading Islamic teachings. Through the Masjid Ash-Shomad channel, da'wah messages can be disseminated worldwide, reaching audiences beyond the local congregation without geographical limitations. Content such as lectures, Islamic studies, and Friday sermons can be accessed at any time, supporting the promotion of tolerant and inclusive Islamic values. The reach and engagement achieved through YouTube indicate that modern digital media can effectively facilitate and expand the dissemination of da'wah content.

Challenges and Obstacles of the Masjid Ash-Shomad YouTube Channel

Based on the research conducted, the management of the Masjid Ash-Shomad YouTube channel, which focuses on da'wah and informational content about the mosque, faces several specific issues, particularly concerning operational challenges and local conditions. The researcher identified several obstacles that hinder the dissemination of da'wah through the YouTube channel, including: The Masjid Ash-Shomad YouTube channel, known for streaming sermons online, experiences difficulties in creating high-quality videos due to limitations in equipment and technical expertise. For instance, sermon recordings may be conducted using simple tools, which can affect audio and visual quality. Low-quality videos—such as unclear audio or blurry images—may reduce viewer interest, especially when competing with other da'wah channels like Yufid TV or Nabawi TV, which offer more professional production. The channel appears to prioritize sermon recordings, which may not be as diverse as other channels offering formats such as Q&A sessions, Islamic vlogs, or video podcasts. This lack of variety can reduce appeal to younger viewers or those seeking more dynamic content, potentially hindering the growth of subscribers and viewership.

The researcher observed that some content currently presented as YouTube Shorts such as humanitarian activities including mosque or house renovations could be developed into longer YouTube videos to attract a broader audience. Similarly, Islamic study content that is currently limited to Shorts could be expanded into full-length videos to reach more viewers. Live streaming content is also restricted to the time before Fajr prayer. Live streams could be utilized more extensively, such as hosting live Islamic study sessions to increase viewership and subscriber counts. For example, streaming after Maghrib prayer could be ideal, as people tend to relax and browse social media or YouTube during this time. Furthermore, the titles of live streaming sessions are often unappealing, such as "Masjid Ash-Shomad is Live Now," which lacks information about the speaker or activity. Live stream titles should be made more engaging for instance, "*Fajr Tadarus with Ust. Lutfi Maulana*" or "*Live Islamic Study with [Speaker Name]*"—and accompanied by attractive thumbnails to increase viewer interest and channel subscriptions.

Although Masjid Ash-Shomad has an official YouTube channel, its digital promotion strategies appear to be suboptimal. The mosque has yet to fully utilize other social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram or employ paid advertising campaigns to expand reach. Competition within YouTube's algorithm makes it difficult for smaller channels to gain visibility without proper Search Engine Optimization (SEO). The researcher identified opportunities for improving promotion by using social media more effectively—for example, sharing YouTube video links on Instagram Stories could increase viewership. In other words, underutilization of social media for channel promotion limits audience reach, particularly when the primary audience consists of worshippers in the Citra Raya, Tangerang area.

Managing a YouTube channel requires a dedicated team for recording, editing, creative development, and regular content uploads. Masjid Ash-Shomad, which is actively engaged in social activities such as providing free funeral transportation and driving lessons, may prioritize on-site activities, making channel management an additional burden for volunteers or administrators. Tight schedules and the need to complete edits quickly—for example, for sermon content—further exacerbate the challenge. Moreover, sermon content has not been updated in the past nine months, with administrators focusing more on YouTube Shorts, which are easier and faster to produce. Irregular upload schedules and poorly maintained content can reduce audience engagement and negatively affect YouTube's algorithm, leading to decreased exposure on viewers' feeds.

Creating competitive YouTube content requires funding for equipment, promotion, or collaboration with renowned speakers. In interviews with mosque administrators regarding future YouTube activities, respondents expressed interest in producing podcasts, which has not yet materialized due to insufficient facilities and budget. While Masjid Ash-Shomad receives support from the Bahtera Maju Indonesia (BMI) Foundation and Tangerang Regency Government, the budget is often prioritized for social programs such as providing free drinking water, vaccinations, and food distribution rather than digital development. Consequently, the channel may struggle to compete with other da'wah channels that have more funding and adequate equipment for high-quality content production.

CONCLUSION

The YouTube channel of Masjid Ash-Shomad in Citra Raya, Panongan, Tangerang Regency, plays a significant role in disseminating Islamic da'wah messages and supporting various social and religious activities. The channel features diverse content, including Friday sermons, Islamic studies,

YouTube Shorts, live streaming, and promotions of social programs such as the distribution of iftar meals and community empowerment through training programs. Furthermore, the channel serves as a medium to strengthen community ties and expand the reach of digital da'wah. Nevertheless, several challenges are encountered in the development of the channel, including limitations in production equipment and technical skills, lack of content variety, and difficulties in promotion and channel visibility. In addition, human resource and funding constraints hinder the channel from reaching its full potential. To address these issues, several measures are necessary, such as improving the quality of content production through adequate equipment investment, providing training for the management team, and utilizing SEO to enhance audience engagement and reach. Recommendations for further development include focusing on improving content quality through better equipment, offering technical training to the management team, and creating more diverse and engaging content. It is also advised to implement a consistent upload schedule so that audiences can develop the habit of regularly watching content for instance, uploading weekly Friday sermons or regular Islamic study sessions. Additionally, leveraging appealing visual elements such as relevant thumbnails and titles can attract viewer attention. Through these measures, it is expected that the YouTube channel of Masjid Ash-Shomad can grow further and have a broader impact in spreading Islamic da'wah.

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