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Da'wah and the Digital Age

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Abstract- Da'wah in language means calling, inviting, invitation, appeal and dish. Da'wah can also be interpreted as an appeal or invitation. Da'wah cannot be separated from communication, the da'wah process contains communication, in essence communication plays an important role in da'wah activities, especially in the digital era, the success or failure of the da'wah process carried out by da'i is determined by communication factors, good communication skills are an asset for da'i to convey da'wah messages effectively and efficiently. Communication has three important roles in the world of da'wah in the digital era. First, it helps da'i in understanding the character of society in the digital era. Second, it ensures the effective delivery of da'wah messages to the community. Third, it plays a role in delivering da'wah messages to all segments of society in the digital era. Given that online media da'wah is a medium for spreading communication. For this reason, through this media, it is emphasized that the communication delivered is more informative. The presence of online media da'wah around us helps the spread of da'wah carried out orally and in writing.

Key words – Da'wah, Communication, Digital.

I. PRELIMINARY

The spread of da'wah or more briefly called syi'ar Islam, is a means of conveying religious teachings, has undergone various transformations throughout its history. Starting with oral da'wah delivered directly by the Prophet Muhammad SAW and his companions, then da'wah developed through print media, radio, and television. However, in the midst of rapid technological development, Islamic da'wah is now entering a new phase driven by digitalization and advances in information technology. The digital era characterized by the use of the internet, social media, and mobile devices has drastically changed the face of da'wah, allowing religious messages to be spread more widely, faster, and more easily accessible to audiences from various walks of life

Digital technology makes it easier for preachers to communicate the message of Islam in more diverse and interesting formats, such as videos, articles, infographics, podcasts, and live broadcasts through popular platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter. This phenomenon has changed the way people obtain religious information, making da'wah not only focused on the local scope, but also global. A person at the end of the world can easily access and engage in da'wah delivered by preachers from different countries and backgrounds. This is also a response to the development and progress of the times, so that religion can be more accepted in the midst of a society that is already familiar with the digital world.

However, there are two sides to the coin: while these technological advances offer many benefits, they also present new challenges. The rapid spread of information in cyberspace is not always accompanied by strict supervision, giving rise to the risk of spreading hoaxes, misinformation, and radical views that can undermine the purpose of da'wah itself. On the other hand, inappropriate use of digital media can also reduce the depth of the da'wah message, so that the religious message conveyed can be reduced or even misunderstood by some audiences. Because it is not conveyed directly.

Therefore, it is important to examine how this Islamic da'wah develops amid the dynamics of digitalization. This research aims to explore how preachers utilize digital technology as a tool for da'wah, as well as what challenges are faced in the process of delivering religious messages in the digital era. Through this research, it is hoped that a more effective strategy can be found in utilizing digital media for da'wah, so that the message of Islam is still well conveyed and still maintains conformity with the values of religious teachings.

II. RELATED RESEARCH

A number of studies have been conducted on the effect of digitalization on Islamic da'wah. Research conducted by Andini et al. (2023) discusses major changes in the way of da'wah in the digital era. Previously, da'wah was delivered through face-to-face lectures in certain places, but now the delivery of da'wah can be done online through social media such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok. Andini et al. concluded that social media allows the spread of da'wah messages more widely and quickly, even beyond geographical and time boundaries. Da'wah that was once limited to physical spaces can now be reached by a global audience, without space and time constraints. However, with this convenience, new challenges arise, especially in terms of monitoring the accuracy and quality of da'wah content disseminated on these platforms.

Furthermore, Hayat (2022) discusses how da'wah communication in digital media plays a role in strengthening Islamic learning. Hayat argues that digital technology provides space for da'wah to be more interactive and participatory. In this context, the audience is not only a passive recipient, but can also interact directly with the preacher. Platforms such as YouTube, Zoom, and social media allow da'wah to be delivered in a way that is easier to understand, for example through video lectures, interactive articles, or even discussion forums. This more engaging religious learning can improve Muslims' religious understanding, especially among the younger generation who are more accustomed to multimedia formats. Hayat also emphasized that social media has the potential to be an efficient learning space, with a more flexible and accessible approach at any time.

by Athik Ummah (2020) highlights the importance of digital da'wah strategies tailored to the habits and preferences of millennials and Generation Z. These generations access information more frequently through digital platforms and prefer community-based interactions. Ummah argues that digital da'wah should be community-based, where audiences are not only passive recipients but also actively participate in the creation of da'wah content. This community-based da'wah provides space for audiences to discuss, interact, and even contribute to spreading religious messages. In this way, da'wah is not just a one-way street, but a dialog that involves many parties, especially the younger generation who want to feel involved in spreading Islamic values.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, researchers used a qualitative approach with the methods of literature study and in-depth interviews. The literature study will include a review of various previous studies, articles, and books relevant to the topic of digital da'wah. In addition, in-depth interviews will be conducted with several preachers who actively use digital platforms in their da'wah. This interview aims to explore their experiences, challenges, and views regarding the development of da'wah in the digital era.

In addition, this research will also analyze da'wah content disseminated through social media and other digital platforms to assess its effectiveness and impact on audiences. The data obtained will be analyzed descriptively to provide an overview of the development of digital da'wah and the factors that influence its success.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Da'wah in the Digital Context

Da'wah is an activity of conveying the teachings of Islamic religious knowledge to the community. Da'wah can also mean an invitation to Islam, which is the path of God, the path that is pleased by Allah Swt., not other paths that are misguided and deviate from the path of Islam.

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ.

Meaning: "And let there be among you a group of people who call to virtue, enjoin the good, and forbid the evil. And they are the fortunate ones." (Q.S. Ali Imran:104).

In this surah, we are encouraged to preach, remind, and support in spreading goodness and preventing evil. Spreading goodness and preventing evil is an obligation for Muslims and is the key to achieving happiness and success in life.

In terms of etymology or language, the word da'wah comes from Arabic, namely da'a yad'u, or da'wah in the form of isim masdar from du'aa, both of which have the same meaning, namely invitation, exclamation or call. While according to terminology or terms there are several definitions, da'wah is an effort to disseminate the truth and invite others to believe in it. (Mahmuddin, Manaemen dakwah Rasulullah, (Jakarta, Restu Ilahi, 2004), pp. 6)

The digital era is an era or age in which it already has such advanced development conditions that all important activities can be carried out digitally. The development of the digital era is also increasingly running so fast that humans cannot stop it. This is none other than because we as humans are the ones who ultimately demand and ask for various kinds of things more efficiently and practically. Technological developments also affect religious activities. Today, proselytizing is not only done through traditional media but can also be done through digital media such as social media. Therefore, the ability to utilize social media as a means of da'wah is important for da'is. In addition to staying current, it is also an optimization of the da'wah itself. Coupled with technological advances, direct oral da'wah that has been practiced since the time of the Prophet, da'wah is now experiencing changes following the times by utilizing technological advances. So that da'wah is not only carried out in certain congregations or places of worship, so that da'wah messages are not only delivered to certain circles. So it is hoped that through the use of technology, da'wah can be expanded and accepted by many people without the limitations of space and time.

There are many types of social media that can be used as alternative options for spreading da'wah, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, Youtube, Telegram and others. However, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are the most popular social media among the general public, especially among the younger generation. Therefore, these three social media are the most strategic social media to use in preaching.

B. Da'wah Challenges in the Digital Age

a.

One of the main challenges in da'wah in the digital era is the diversity of information that is widely spread on the internet. Information that is not properly verified can mislead religious understanding and divide the ummah. Therefore, it is important for us as Muslims to be critical and wise readers. Before disseminating information, we need to ensure the truth and validity of the source. In the context of da'wah, spreading inaccurate da'wah messages can lead to misunderstandings among the ummah

In addition, it is a challenge to maintain morals and ethics in interacting in cyberspace. Negative comments or even slander often appear in the spread of da'wah messages on social media, da'i must be able to maintain ethics and educate mad'u to interact politely without misunderstanding the teachings of Islam.

In the Qur'an, Allah Swt. says in surah Al-Maidah verse 87,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

"O you who believe, forbid not that which is good which Allah has made lawful for you, and transgress not the limits."
(Q.S Al Maidah [5:87])

This verse reminds us of the importance of maintaining speech and behavior in cyberspace so as not to cross the line and defame the religion of Islam.

Competition between Entertainment Content. Social media is now starting to be filled with various types of content including entertainment which is often more attractive to internet users. The challenge for da'i in spreading their da'wah is how to create Islamic and educative content that is still interesting so as not to lose competition with entertainment content

Security and privacy are also challenges in proselytizing in the digital age. Digital platforms are highly vulnerable to cyber-attacks, eavesdropping, and privacy violations

In the context of da'wah, this can be a risk for da'i and mad'u who play actively on social media. For example, personal identities can be misused, and da'wah messages can be manipulated by irresponsible parties.

In addition, differences in interpretation of Islamic teachings among the ummah can also lead to internal conflict. This is due to differences of opinion that are often provoked by irresponsible individuals and a lack of in-depth understanding of Islamic teachings

C. Da'wah Strategy in the Digital Age

Da'wah in the digital era is both a challenge and a great opportunity to spread the message of Islam to a wider and more diverse audience. In addressing the challenges of da'wah in this digital era, strategies are needed to face and overcome the challenges of da'wah, this requires an effective and structured strategy.... Here are some strategies that can be applied by da'i in spreading da'wah in the digital era:

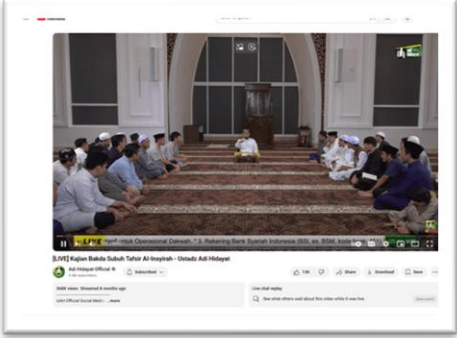
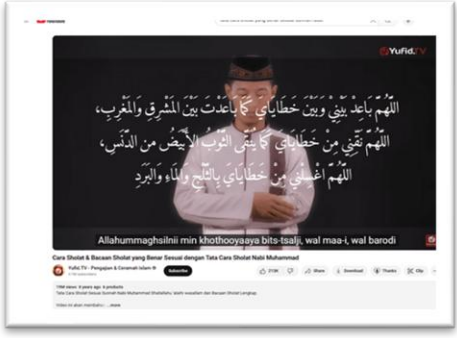
1. **Building a Personal Brand as a Da'i in the Digital Age**


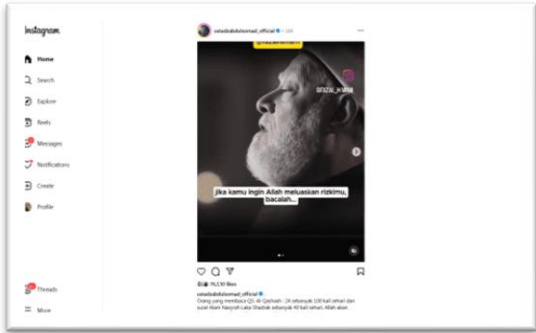
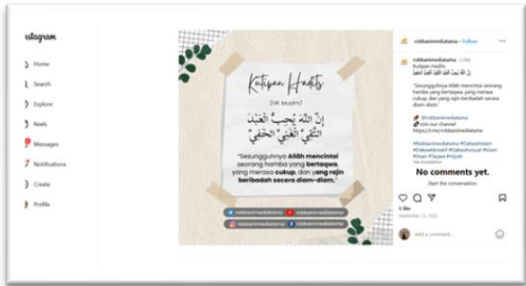
Creating a strategy to build *personal branding* as a *da'i* to gain trust and be recognized by the community, so that it can attract people to listen to da'wah.

2. **Utilization of Various Digital Platforms**

The digital age offers many platforms that can be used to spread da'wah. Each platform has different audience characteristics, so it is important to choose the right platform according to the purpose of da'wah.

The following is a table of strategies and advantages of digital platforms in digital da'wah along with examples of their utilization:

a. Youtube		
Da'wah Strategy	Excellence	Utilization Example
<p>Create more in-depth video lectures and studies with attractive visuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global reach and diverse audience • Can deliver in-depth messages with a long duration. 	<p>- Video lecture on Qur'anic interpretation.</p>  <p><i>Fig. 1 Video lecture on Qur'anic interpretation.</i></p> <p>- Video tutorials on proper worship (for example, how to pray correctly)</p>  <p><i>Fig. 2 Video tutorial on proper prayer</i></p>
b. Instagram		
Da'wah Strategy	Excellence	Utilization Example
<p>Use images, short videos, and Stories to grab the audience's attention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An eye-catching visual platform. • Direct interaction through comments, likes and shares. 	<p>- Infographic about fasting.</p>

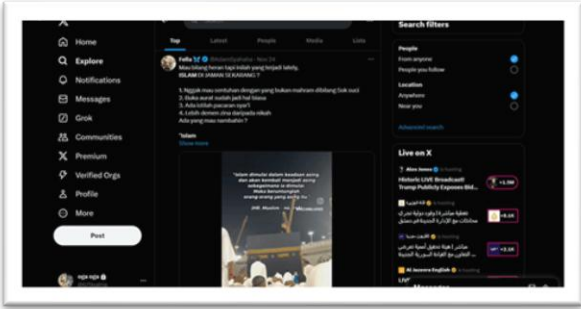
		 <p><i>Fig. 3 Infographic about fasting.</i></p> <p>- A short video on taushiah.</p>  <p><i>Fig. 4 Short video on taushiah.</i></p> <p>- Stories contain hadith quotations.</p>  <p><i>Fig. 4 Stories containing hadith quotes</i></p>
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c. Facebook


Da'wah Strategy	Excellence	Utilization Example
<p>Create a community group for discussion and sharing da'wah material.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group features for in-depth discussions. • Audiences of all ages. 	<p>- Discussion group about hijrah and Islamic preaching.</p>  <p><i>Fig. 4 Group discussion on hijrah and da'wah Islam</i></p> <p>- Live streaming of lectures that can be followed live.</p>

d. Twitter or X

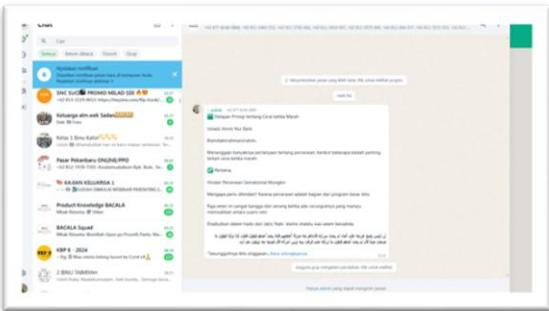
Da'wah Strategy	Excellence	Utilization Example
<p>Share tweets or threads about</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach a fast and interactive audience. 	<p>- Threads about Islamic views on current social issues.</p>

<p>understanding Islam and addressing current issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hashtags to expand your reach. 	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Fig. 4 Thread on Islamic views on current social issues</i></p> <p>- Tweet daily with a hadith or Qur'anic verse.</p>
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e. Podcast (Spotify, Apple Podcast)

Da'wah Strategy	Excellence	Utilization Example
<p>Create podcasts with in-depth and casual topics, discussing religious issues or daily life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An audio format that is easily accessible anytime and anywhere. • It can be more intimate and personalized. 	<p>- A podcast about Islam.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Image. 5 Podcasts about Islam</i></p> <p>- Interviews with Islamic scholars or practitioners on Islamic living.</p>

f. whatsapp

Da'wah Strategy	Excellence	Utilization Example
<p>Form a group to share da'wah materials, discussions, and questions and answers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct and more personalized communication. • More accessible to a wide range of people. 	<p>- WhatsApp group for Q&A discussions on Islamic law.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Fig. 6 WhatsApp group for Q&A discussion on Islamic law</i></p> <p>- Send audio or video lectures to group members.</p>

g. Blogs and Websites

Da'wah Strategy	Excellence	Utilization Example
<p>Write in-depth long articles on relevant religious themes or social issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More in-depth and informative content. • Accessible at any time. 	<p>- Article on the nature of faith in Allah</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Fig. 6 Article on the nature of faith in Allah</i></p>

		- A personal blog of a preacher discussing tafsir and fiqh.
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Table 1. strategies and advantages of digital platforms in digital da'wah along with examples of utilization

This table shows the various digital platforms that can be used in a digital da'wah strategy, their advantages, and examples of their utilization. Each platform has unique characteristics that can be utilized for da'wah purposes, ranging from a more visual approach on Instagram to more in-depth content on YouTube or blogs. Choosing the right platform according to the target audience and the purpose of da'wah will make the message delivered more effective.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that da'wah in the digital era has a major impact on the spread of Islamic teachings. Changes in the way of delivering da'wah, which were initially limited to direct lectures, can now be done through various digital platforms that allow for wider reach and more flexible access. By using digital technology, da'wah can be delivered in a format that is more creative, interesting, and in accordance with the characteristics of millennial and generation Z audiences.

However, while digital da'wah has a lot of potential, there is a big challenge in maintaining the quality and accuracy of the messages delivered. Dissemination of unverified information or information that is not in line with Islamic teachings can mislead the audience. Therefore, it is important for preachers to build personal branding, use digital platforms wisely, maintain the accuracy of information, and involve the audience in the preaching process so that religious messages can be received correctly and effectively.

With the right approach, digital da'wah can be an effective tool in improving religious understanding and shaping better religious behavior in society, especially among the younger generation.

THANK-YOU NOTE

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