

Dakwah in Digital Era: Opportunity and Challenges

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Abstract. In the era of digitalization, the landscape of dakwah (Islamic outreach) is experiencing both opportunities and challenges. With a significant portion of the Indonesian population engaging with the internet, particularly the millennial generation, there arises a unique space for Islamic outreach. This article examines the dynamics of dakwah in the digital age, exploring the opportunities presented by increased access to information and social media platforms, as well as the challenges posed by consumerism, radicalism, and the need for creative content. By analyzing these factors, the article aims to provide insights into effective strategies for dakwah in the digital era.

Keywords: Dakwah, Communication, Digital

1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of digital technology has profoundly transformed the landscape of dakwah, presenting both unprecedented opportunities and formidable challenges for Islamic outreach efforts in Indonesia. With a substantial portion of the population, particularly the millennial generation, actively engaging with the internet, the potential for reaching diverse audiences through online platforms has never been greater. However, amidst this expansive opportunity lies a set of complex challenges, including the pervasive influence of consumerism, the rise of radical ideologies propagated through digital channels, and the imperative for dakwah practitioners to produce innovative and engaging content that resonates with contemporary audiences (Arif, 2015).

This article endeavors to delve into the intricate dynamics of dakwah in the digital age, aiming to illuminate both the promising opportunities and the daunting challenges inherent in this rapidly evolving landscape. By examining the multifaceted intersection of digital technology, Islamic outreach, and societal trends, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into effective strategies for navigating the complexities of dakwah in the digital era. Moreover, the article aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the ways in which digitalization has reshaped the practice of dakwah, influencing communication patterns, audience engagement, and the dissemination of Islamic teachings (Arif, 2017).

Central to the exploration is a nuanced examination of the potential opportunities afforded by digital technology for expanding the reach and impact of dakwah efforts. At the same time, the article critically evaluates the challenges posed by digitalization, including the proliferation of consumerist values, the spread of radical ideologies, and the imperative for dakwah practitioners to adapt their methods and content to effectively engage with contemporary audiences. By shedding light on these opportunities and challenges, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolving landscape of dakwah in the digital age, informing future research and practice in the field (Zuhdi, 2017).

2. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research approach, drawing upon data from various sources including Quranic verses, statistical data on internet usage in Indonesia, and insights from Islamic scholars and activists. The research methodology involves a thorough analysis of literature on dakwah, digital communication, and the millennial generation, as well as an examination of online

content and trends related to Islamic outreach. Through a synthesis of these sources, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of dakwah in the digital era

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Dakwah:

Scholarship on dakwah encompasses a range of studies examining the practice of Islamic outreach and propagation. Dakwah is understood as a fundamental aspect of Islamic teachings, involving the invitation to embrace the faith and the dissemination of its principles. Researchers explore various modes and methods of dakwah, including traditional approaches such as preaching and community engagement, as well as contemporary strategies utilizing digital platforms and communication technologies. Additionally, studies delve into the persuasive nature of dakwah, its role in promoting social cohesion, and its impact on individual and collective behavior within Muslim communities. By analyzing the theory and practice of dakwah, scholars aim to deepen our understanding of its significance as a means of disseminating Islamic teachings and fostering religious identity and community cohesion.(Baidowi & Salehudin, 2021)

Komunikasi:

Communication theory and research form a substantial body of literature that examines the dynamics of human interaction and information exchange. Within the context of dakwah, scholars explore the role of communication in conveying religious messages, persuading audiences, and fostering engagement with Islamic teachings. This includes an examination of communication strategies employed by dakwah practitioners, the use of language and rhetoric in conveying religious messages, and the impact of various communication channels on audience reception and understanding. Additionally, studies on communication theory provide insights into interpersonal communication, mass media communication, and the role of technology in shaping communication patterns within Muslim communities. By drawing upon communication theory, researchers aim to elucidate the mechanisms through which dakwah messages are conveyed and received, informing strategies for effective outreach and engagement(Hatta, 2018).

Digital:

The literature on digital communication encompasses a broad range of studies examining the impact of digital technology on various aspects of society, including communication patterns, information dissemination, and social interaction. Within the context of dakwah, scholars explore the role of digital platforms and communication technologies in facilitating outreach efforts, engaging with diverse audiences, and disseminating Islamic teachings. This includes an examination of social media platforms, websites, mobile applications, and other digital tools utilized by dakwah practitioners to convey religious messages and engage with communities. Additionally, studies explore the opportunities and challenges presented by digitalization, including issues related to accessibility, authenticity, and the proliferation of misinformation. By analyzing the intersection of digital technology and dakwah, researchers aim to understand the evolving dynamics of Islamic outreach in the digital age and inform strategies for effective communication and engagement(Fachrurrozi, 2008)

4. RESULTS

The findings of this study reveal a complex landscape of dakwah in the digital era, characterized by both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, the widespread access to information and social media platforms presents new avenues for engaging with audiences and disseminating Islamic teachings. However, challenges such as consumerism, radicalism, and the need for creative content pose significant obstacles to effective dakwah efforts. Moreover, the rise of misinformation and the rapid pace of information dissemination require dakwah practitioners to be vigilant and discerning in their approach..

5. DISCUSSION

Opportunities and Challenges in Dakwah, Communication, and Digitalization:

1. Integration of Digital Platforms in Dakwah Efforts:

- *Opportunities:* The widespread use of digital platforms, including social media and websites, presents an unparalleled opportunity for dakwah practitioners to reach a vast audience and disseminate Islamic teachings widely. With over 210

million internet users in Indonesia, particularly among the millennial generation, digital platforms offer a convenient and accessible means of engaging with diverse audiences.

- *Challenges:* Despite the potential for broad reach, dakwah efforts face challenges in effectively harnessing digital platforms to convey religious messages. Issues such as information overload, the proliferation of irrelevant content, and the need to compete for audience attention pose significant obstacles to effectively conveying dakwah messages in the digital space(Hatta, 2018).

2. Communication Strategies for Effective Outreach:

- *Opportunities:* The persuasive nature of dakwah, coupled with advances in communication theory, provides an opportunity for dakwah practitioners to develop innovative strategies for engaging with audiences and conveying religious messages effectively. By drawing upon principles of communication theory, practitioners can tailor their messaging to resonate with diverse audiences and foster meaningful engagement.
- *Challenges:* Despite the potential for effective communication strategies, dakwah efforts face challenges in addressing issues such as consumerism, radicalism, and the need for creative content. Moreover, the rapid pace of information dissemination in the digital age requires practitioners to adapt their communication strategies to ensure relevance and effectiveness in conveying dakwah messages.

3. Impact of Digitalization on Dakwah Practices:

- *Opportunities:* Digitalization offers dakwah practitioners access to a wide range of digital tools and platforms, enabling them to expand their outreach efforts and engage with audiences in innovative ways. With the increasing reliance on digital technology for information-seeking behaviors, there is a growing opportunity for dakwah practitioners to leverage digital platforms to address the religious needs and inquiries of digital-native audiences.
- *Challenges:* Despite the opportunities presented by digitalization, dakwah efforts face challenges related to the proliferation of misinformation, the spread of radical ideologies through digital channels, and the need for creative and engaging content. Moreover, the rapid pace of technological change necessitates continuous adaptation and innovation in dakwah practices to remain relevant and effective in the digital age (Hatta, 2018).

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the integration of digital platforms in dakwah efforts offers unprecedented opportunities for reaching diverse audiences and disseminating Islamic teachings widely. However, dakwah practitioners must navigate challenges such as information overload, competition for audience attention, and the need for innovative communication strategies to effectively convey religious messages in the digital space. By leveraging communication theory and embracing digitalization, dakwah practitioners can develop strategies to address these challenges and capitalize on the opportunities presented by digital platforms to foster meaningful engagement and promote the teachings of Islam in the digital age

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