

## EMPOWERING STUDENTS'S DIGITAL SKILLS IN DA'WAH CONTENTS THROUGH E-CAMPAIGNS

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<b>Abstract</b>	<p><i>Empowering students has become one of the primary goals of education in the 21st century. The implementation of digital skills connects student engagement, empowerment, achievement, and success. Da'wah can be done in various diverse ways, one of which is using social media. Thus, the present study aims to examine how digital skills empower students through the development of da'wah contents and students' creativity skills in disseminating da'wah through e-Campaigns. This study employed a case study design on undergraduate students who develop da'wah contents for electronic campaign purposes. The method of data collection involves observation of students' critical journal reflection, log diary, video skills assessment, and web-based skills. Analysis was conducted thematically to examine how digital skills permitted students to establish e-Campaigns on da'wah. Survey questionnaires were disseminated before and after course where students answered questions from the stimuli, and subsequently personal enhancement ensued from the list of questions. The study found that empowering digital skills improved students from lower-order to higher-creativity order in designing e-Campaign on da'wah. This study contributes to the understanding of how digital skills empowerments can be used to enhance students' creativity and can serve as a reference for educators and instructional designers in understanding the needs of technology to immense support in automating various critical tasks.</i></p> <p><i>Keywords: Multimedia Design, Digital Skills, Social Media, Da'wah Content, e-Campaign.</i></p>
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### INTRODUCTION

Digitisation of da'wah, therefore, has become a great opportunity for Muslims. To combat a lack of information and combat a misinformation about Islam and the Prophet (PBUH), Muslim preachers need to make use of digital spaces with correct information on Islam from authentic sources. Contemporary challenges have proven to be more sophisticated, non-centered, and complex than the challenges faced by previous generations. Technological innovation, upsurge of corporate monopolies, the proliferation of Artificial Intelligence (AI), faster and more subtle forms of communication, and data sharing have inevitable implications for the Islamic way of life. Da'wah is no exception to these global cyberculture changes. The internet has turned the scales in our favour as learning Islam has now been greatly facilitated (Sadhriany et al., 2022). One of them can be seen through empowering digital skills in da'wah contents through e-campaigns. To remain relevant and address the

needs of the current Muslim community, da'wah needs to adapt dynamically through the current digitisation of society, which may lead to a major cultural shift.

With the beginning of the internet era, Muslims have entered a period where individuals have achieved chance, freedom, and autonomy in expressing their opinions. This autonomy has affected the basic etiquette of social communication and engagement. Technology advancements have eliminated time and space limits hence, da'wah can now be done through electronic interfaces. While the dissemination of Islamic messages through digital web-based platforms allows the message of Islam to have a global reach, how can the practice of da'wah be made more efficient while meeting the demands, especially of the younger generations (Rouet, 2020). The influence of social media on youth has taken place in this digital era. One of the apparent situations is where the internet environment has become a platform that is able to provide exposure for young people to disseminate da'wah. This exposure can be seen to have the potential of giving significant impact on their understanding of Islam through social media contents and interaction using several established applications such as TikTok and Instagram.

Before modernisation, da'wah could be seen as interpersonal communication. In the twentieth century, da'wah utilised the medium of television and radio channels to deliver da'wah. The development of the internet led to the progressive growth of social media. Smart phones and tablets enable their global reach and can be seen as ways of da'wah being used, relevant to current trends. Then, since the last decade, digital da'wah utilises platforms such as social media applications, and websites that have helped in spread da'wah to its audiences.

### **Digital Da'wah Transformation**

There are 4.8 billion social media users worldwide, representing 59.9% of the global population and 92.7% of all internet users. There were 150 million new social media users between April 2022 and April 2023, a 3.2% increase year over year. If we break those numbers down, it equals approximately 410,000 new social users every day and 4.7 every second. People use an average of 6.6 different social networks each month. The average time spent on social media daily is 2 hours and 24 minutes. The world collectively spends 11.5 billion hours on social media platforms daily. TikTok is the most popular social platform in terms of time spent. On average, global users with an Android device spend 31 hours and 32 minutes on TikTok monthly (Kemp, 2023). The ability of social media to carry out conventional mass media functions with features that allow interactional communication with audiences makes social media the most suitable medium to convey da'wah and reach out to more people. This technology uses very specific algorithms that enable users to reach specific audiences and purposes based on their locations or interests.

Da'wah etymologically denotes 'a call or invitation'. Thus, it is a call to the truth of Islam (Saputra et al., 2021). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "*The religion (of Islam) is good advice.*" (Hadith. Muslim. 55). The Qur'an encourages every Muslim, male or female, to become a *dā'i/dai'yah* (caller to Islam). A Da'iyah's behavior, speech, and thought process must completely represent the message of Islam and invite people towards ethical behavior (*yad'ūn ilā 'l-khayr*) to serve the Creator. From a language point of view, the word da'wa comes from the Arabic word, which means calling, asking, guiding, or calling, inviting others to follow, join, and understand (Riyardi et al., 2021). The concept of da'wah can be understood as an attempt to introduce, teach, and convey religious beliefs to other people or groups. Historically, Islam spread throughout the world through da'wah (Nur & Makmur, 2019). Practically, da'wah should be delivered using the best communication techniques and approaches. This approach includes building a balanced discourse, including the use of appropriate media for delivering the requirements and necessities of the receiving audience.

Transformation presents many opportunities on the one hand, but also challenges, and obstacles in delivering da'wah. It becomes crucial to understand existing challenges and deliberate appropriate da'wah strategies and methods that are applicable to society

nowadays. Da'wah in the twenty-first century needs to be customised to the needs of the globalised culture.

### **Islamic Da'wah Through Social Media**

Digital Da'wah through social media has been going on since the emergence of digital proliferation, which developed along with the development of information technology. The presence of many Islamic Da'wah sites and applications, such as MyQuran.com, Sunnah.com, SmartHadith, SmartHalalApps, and other Da'wah platforms has generated millions of visits. Preachers can readily access and evaluate the effectiveness of the information they share through the audience's feedback, comments, and reactions, which are not presented in conventional media. Information shared on social media can be easily seen and reached by anyone. Thus, preachers must be educated on the best practices of using social media for da'wah dissemination. Creative content creation in the form of infographics, short videos, quotes, and status updates facilitates Islamic awareness for lay audiences. The digital da'wah transformation needs to take place from the roots, for example, at the institute level, where Islamic studies students should be trained by IT professionals on how to effectively use digital technologies in da'wah (Sadhriany et al., 2022).

Children today are exposed to violence and indecency via video games and cartoon portrayals, hence, preparing the next generation of Muslims and the betterment of ummah in general must be the core focus of Muslim scholars. Islam-based educational video games, computer applications, and animations need to be developed for this interest group. Efforts to create, develop, translate, and upload contents related to Islam must be carried out referring to Islamic institutes or to whom we recognise as the experts on the field. The transformation of da'wah through social media, easily accessible through digital devices, shows that a new era of information and communication technology (ICT) has changed all aspects of life. Thus, the digitisation of da'wah is much needed and can be delivered through empowering digital skills in da'wah contents through e-campaigns. Digital da'wah will also need to address and tackle the dynamics of the virtual world and the ethical enigmas of the technological revolution (Abdul, 2019). Social media has created a virtual space (cyberspace) for people to share ideas and contents.

The Quran warns us about how most people's is not rightly guided. With the advent of media and the internet, corrupt lifestyles have multiplied globally. The critical role of digital da'wah, then, would be one of the ways to create a global awakening from this virtual reality that invades their mind spaces. The utilisation of modern technology for da'wah dissemination can have a positive impact on society. The development of da'wah activities through media portrayal utilising social media will be able to raise awareness in communities.

Social media can be used as a medium for spreading goodness by transferring knowledge through interactive learning tools. In the field of student education or the wider community, it can be easier to understand the context. In the health sector, social media is a medium for disseminating information about health and health consultations. Whereas in the field of politics, social media can be used as a forum platform for the delivery of ideas or even become an effective media campaign and an alternative means of social education for the community (Restu et al., 2019)

### **Da'wah Contents Through e-Campaigns**

Da'wah activities can be classified into two parts: (i) Da'wah *Billisan* and (ii) Da'wah *Bilhal*. In the perspective of Da'wah communication, there are two forms of Da'wah communication, namely verbal interpretation, including verbal vocal and non-vocal verbal. In verbal vocal means an attempt to convey Islamic messages directly using verbal. While non vocal verbal communication is done using writing and other image symbols, for example, writing in magazines, animated films, and performing arts. Meanwhile, Da'wah *Bilhal* is a tangible da'wah activity by offering all power and energy to foster, upgrade, and improve the physical environment, improve social engagements, and its intermediaries

(Bambang, 2010). On the other hand, Suparta states that there are some other essential things in the communication of da'wah other than the communicator and communication itself, namely (i) the communicator of da'wah (*da'i*), (ii) the communicating of da'wah (*mad'u*), and (iii) the material of da'wah (Munzier & Harjani, 2023). Meanwhile, in Safei statements, another two crucial components were added, namely (i) method, and (ii) media (Agus. 2001).

From the description above, Da'wah communication comprises five components namely: (i) the Da'wah Communicator, who is a preacher who can convey the message of Da'wah to the audience. (ii) Communicating with da'wah, who is a listener of da'wah that is related to thinking and feeling. (iii) Da'wah material, which is conveyed through preaching activities such as lectures or discourses. Da'wah material is sourced and quoted from the Qur'an and Al-Hadith, or Sunnah. (iv) Da'wah method, which involves the technique or method of delivering da'wah messages from the Da'wah communicator to the Da'wah communicants. And (v) Da'wah media, which can be seen as an intermediary tool or platform to deliver da'wah messages accurately and very effectively to the Da'wah communicants. Therefore, social media can be seen as an online medium that facilitates the relationship between societies, and da'wah can be delivered in the form of an e-campaign in creating awareness to society.

TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are where Da'wah can be disseminated through e-campaigns regarding Islamic knowledge and science to an extensive community (Nur Hanis & Siti Nur Syafikah, 2017). Ali (2017) states there are various advantages in finding information through social media, as there are unlimited reliable resources as well as delivering da'wah knowledge using these platforms. Da'wah through media can change how da'wah can be reached globally because of the existing development. In the first, the dai may highlight and campaign the preface of verbal, and in the presence of social media advancements, da'wah can subsequently be done either at home, in the office, or even while shopping or on vacation in a particular area using social media. Thus, the rapid development of information technology has offered a shift in da'wah through good knowledge education through e-campaign. In the process of da'wah, social media plays an essential role and is considered useful as a means of da'wah.

From the presentation of the experts, researchers can see that mass media in the social aspect becomes a strategic thing in social communication activities. Social media is a vehicle for the continuation of educational knowledge and other information dissemination. The emergence of the new normal era brought many changes in various aspects of life, including e-da'wah activities. Adaptation of the implementation of da'wah online, also called e-da'wah, and campaigns is an innovation that can be done so that da'wah activities can continue to run (Rila, 2023). The use of digital media in e-da'wah activities requires the dai's digital literacy skills. Digital literacy is often used as a variant of media literacy, with research focusing more on its functional or critical dimensions (Polizzi, 2020). Digital literacy refers to the practical skills needed to use digital technology or applications, including operational skills, information navigation skills and social and creative skills. In this study, what is meant by digital literacy is the ability and knowledge to students in utilising computers, and other digital tools to deliver e-da'wah and e-campaign.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Empowering students has become one of the primary goals of education in the 21st century. The implementation of digital skills connects student engagement, empowerment, achievement, and success. Da'wah can be done in various diverse ways, one of which is using social media. Thus, the present study aims to examine how digital skills empower students through the development of da'wah contents and students' creativity skills in disseminating da'wah through e-campaigns.

The method of data collection involves observation of students' critical journal reflection, log diary, video skills assessment, and web-based skills (TikTok application). An analysis was conducted thematically to examine how digital skills permitted students to

establish e-campaigns on da'wah. Survey questionnaires were disseminated before and after the course where students answered questions from the stimuli, and subsequently, personal enhancement ensued from the list of questions. This study used a qualitative approach to explain events naturally experienced by the research subject. The method used is descriptive, which can systematically describe a situation or condition of the subject related to the study area based on the phenomenon that occurs. This research informants consist of (i) University Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) students who enrolled in the Da'wah Electronic and Campaign Course, (ii) Sekolah Menengah Agama Persekutuan Labu (SMAP LABU) students (Form 5) and (iii) Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama Sheikh Haji Mohd Said (SHAMS) students (Form 5).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Students:**

e-dakwah and campaign activity capable of changing attitudes and thinking styles about the importance of revitalizing da'wah and digital campaigns. e-da'wah and campaign activities help students be more sensitive to the current situation. e-da'wah and campaign activities increase students' knowledge and interest in carrying out da'wah activities and the digital campaigns. e-dakwah activity improve students' skills in developing da'wah activities through social and digital media platforms.

Implementation of e-dakwah and campaign activity is important to create awareness through digital preaching and campaigning knowledge. e-dakwah and campaign activity facilitates students' application of da'wah elements in the development of digital campaigns in the future. The development of the Electronic Da'wah and Campaign module is useful in strengthening the students' understanding of Da'wah and Digital Campaign activities. Educational institutions and society need to apply da'wah elements to social campaign activities.

### **USIM, SMAP LABU and SHAMS Teachers:**

Da'wah Electronic and Campaign Course provides social and digital education to students in the form of taught material (modules) and projects to train students to learn and analyse cases and social issues to improve students' knowledge and digital media abilities. There is a need to encourage students to optimise the usage of social media that they might not be aware of, and one of them is to create good messages or da'wah elements in campaign activities that can benefit their generations and society as a whole.

### **Dean and Head of Curriculum:**

Not all students can filter information on social media correctly. Information obtained by students through social media needs to be discussed and becomes a discussion space between students and teachers. Fostering a sense of community social awareness can also foster a sense of community and by bringing people together to work towards common goals. By understanding and recognising the issues that affect society, individuals can come together to take collective action and create positive change.

Table 1: Results for Triangulation of Information Data  
(Source: Data processed by Researchers, 2023)

Based on the table above, the role of e-da'wah through social media (e-campaign) in creating social awareness by applying digital skills knowledge obtained from the course modules played a big part in each student's development. Intangible ideas and creative activities that later lead to tangible outcomes are based on the results that students can explore and adapt to with the digital training given. The student's digital literacy capabilities have enabled Da'wah Electronic and Campaign Course activities to be carried out optimally. The

competency of students that can achieve critical understanding, which is the ability to analyse and produce media content extensively and completely. The criteria for this critical understanding include the ability to understand the developed content as well as the function of the media used (TikTok). Students have knowledge of the media itself, including the media rules or regulations. Criteria for critical understanding also include the ability to distinguish the truth of news site content and the ability to check the sources of the featured material or subjects. Based on the results of the interviews, it is known that the research subjects can create da'wah content through an e-campaign approach.

Schools and institutions certainly play an active role in improving students' education related to skills development and digital implementation in related courses or areas. Schools as well as institutions should instill social education to change the mindset of students to be more interested in creating digital awareness through classroom learning. This may also include sessions through formal education, non-formal education, and community education. Social media can be an effective medium for social education and society awareness because it is one of the platforms that accelerates the dissemination of information and increases understanding for students. After all, indeed, in this era of globalisation and the digital age, it is easier for students to access the internet. Researchers found that research subjects were able to take advantage of their TikTok account to present more creative and innovative e-da'wah and campaigns as an alternative to da'wah models in the new normal era. Implementation of e-dakwah and campaign activity can be seen through project completion, where students are able to create awareness through digital campaigning knowledge based on video skills assessment and web-based skills.

Survey questionnaires were disseminated before and after the course, where students answered questions from the stimuli, and subsequently, personal enhancement ensued from the list of questions. The study found that empowering digital skills improved students' creativity in designing e-campaigns on da'wah using TikTok applications.

## **CONCLUSION**

The development of information technology has led to a shift in Islamic preaching from conventional to a more contemporary method, such as by utilising social media. Da'wah of Islam in the modern era has many dimensions, not only discussing Islam but all issues of life, including creating social awareness in society. New ethical dilemmas must be addressed by Muslim intellectuals. This study contributes to the understanding of how digital skills empowerment can be used to enhance students' creativity and can serve as a reference for educators and instructional designers in understanding the needs of technology to provide immense support in automating various critical tasks. Modern civilisation has led to serious transformations in various aspects of life, including the alteration of da'wah by utilising the potential technology as a tool and medium for sending messages. With the current computerisation and automation of media, it is imperative to ensure that the method of conducting da'wah is relevant to the current era and must conform completely to the ideals of the Quran and Sunnah.

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