

YouTube as a Medium for Accessing Da'wah Information among Students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department at STAIN Bengkalis

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the use of YouTube as a medium for obtaining da'wah information among students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department at STAIN Bengkalis. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study involved in-depth interviews with ten students from the department. The findings reveal that YouTube, as a video-sharing platform, has become a highly effective medium for conveying Islamic messages, particularly among students. With features such as time flexibility and accessibility, students can access da'wah content anytime and anywhere. Key findings from the research include: (1) Digitalization of Da'wah the digital shift enables students to conveniently seek Islamic content such as Friday sermons or religious lectures by prominent preachers like Ustaz Adi Hidayat and Abdul Somad; (2) Interactivity interactive features such as comment sections and live streams allow for real-time dialogue between preachers and audiences. (3) Media Convergence YouTube integrates various media formats including text, audio, and video, making religious content more engaging. (4) Decentralization and Democratization of Information anyone can become a content creator, contributing to da'wah dissemination. (5) Virtuality and Augmented Reality technology facilitates immersive da'wah experiences through platforms like Zoom and live YouTube sessions. And (6) Social Networking YouTube fosters digital da'wah networks that allow for global dissemination of Islamic messages, particularly by relatable young preachers.

KEYWORDS: YouTube, Digital Da'wah, Students

INTRODUCTION

The advancement of communication technology has significantly influenced the lifestyle of the millennial generation. With the emergence of digital communication, particularly smartphones, individuals now enjoy a high degree of mobility in their daily activities. One major factor contributing to this mobility is the proliferation of social media technologies. Today's millennials are highly familiar with social media as a primary source of information. Social media encompasses a wide range of formats including images, videos, audio, and text that allow individuals to access and share information in the digital sphere. It has become an essential component of society's informational and entertainment needs. One of the most frequently used social media platforms for accessing religious content is YouTube.

YouTube offers anyone, anywhere, quick access to news, entertainment, education, tutorials, and much more. A study conducted by *We Are Social* (2023) revealed that most social media users fall within the 18–34 age group. Among users aged 18–24, males accounted for 18%—a higher percentage than females, who made up 15%. In the 25–34 age bracket, male users reached 19%, again outnumbering female users at 14%. In this digital era, YouTube's user base continues to grow, with young people comprising the majority of its audience. However, YouTube is not limited to younger users; its appeal extends to children, adults, and the elderly alike. In addition to religious content, YouTube channels provide a wide variety of other information and entertainment. It ranks among the top three most accessed social media platforms globally.¹

YouTube channels serve as an accessible and effective medium for communicating da'wah (Islamic preaching) and religious knowledge. Its global reach enables da'wah messages to be disseminated to broader audiences without geographic limitations. Furthermore, the diverse content formats—short videos, vlogs, lectures, or animations—allow for more creative and relatable da'wah delivery. When used wisely and in line with Islamic principles, YouTube can serve as a powerful tool for Islamic communication in the digital age.

The growing trend of young Muslims using YouTube for da'wah purposes represents a fascinating development in contemporary religious outreach. As a generation deeply engaged with digital technology, their use of YouTube is inseparable from their daily routines of information-seeking. Several reasons explain this growing reliance on YouTube: its ease of access via

¹ <https://wearesocial.com/id/blog/2024/01/digital-2024/>

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smartphones and other devices at any time and place makes it a primary option for young people seeking Islamic content. Moreover, engaging content formats—often delivered by young or popular preachers—offer da'wah messages in relaxed, interactive, and relatable styles. The use of vlogs, podcasts, animations, and short videos increases appeal. The audiovisual nature of YouTube combines visuals, audio, and sometimes music to enhance comprehension and memorability of religious messages.

YouTube also enables direct interaction: features such as live chat and comments allow users to engage in real-time discussions with content creators. The presence of prominent preachers like Ustaz Adi Hidayat, Ustaz Abdul Somad, and other young Islamic figures makes young audiences feel more connected and receptive. Observations conducted by the researchers show that students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department at STAIN Bengkalis frequently watch religious content from channels such as those of Ustaz Abdul Somad, Gus Muwafiq, Ustaz Adi Hidayat, Felix Siau, and Ustaza Mumpuni Handayani.

In many cases, popular preachers and religious institutions also use YouTube as a broadcasting tool for live-streamed religious events. The platform enables rapid and convenient access to religious activities happening around the world. YouTube thus reinforces its position as a new form of communication technology, particularly within the context of da'wah. To conduct effective and efficient da'wah in the modern age, preachers must adopt strategic delivery methods that align with digital consumption patterns. The growth of communication technology has transformed traditional da'wah, enabling it to reach broader and more diverse audiences.

In today's era, YouTube makes it easier for the public to access da'wah content. Users can conveniently view Islamic sermons either live or on-demand from the comfort of their homes using mobile phones, laptops, or smart TVs. YouTube offers the advantage of quick access to relevant content, aligned with the viewer's schedule. Ultimately, the use of YouTube in da'wah presents both an opportunity and a challenge in the effort to spread Islamic teachings more broadly and creatively. This study, therefore, aims to examine how students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department at STAIN Bengkalis utilize YouTube as a source of da'wah information.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents previous studies that serve as references and foundations for the present research. Several scholarly works are examined to provide context and support for the investigation of YouTube as a medium for da'wah communication:

1. "Da'wah through YouTube Social Media" by Evi Novitasari (2021)

This study explores YouTube's role in disseminating Islamic teachings through video lectures and its impact on students of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting. Using a qualitative approach, the study highlights YouTube's effectiveness in delivering religious messages, especially to young audiences. It emphasizes the relevance of utilizing social media platforms such as YouTube for da'wah in the digital age. The study suggests that, with proper content strategies, YouTube can not only convey Islamic teachings effectively but also inspire young Muslim students to become more active in digital da'wah efforts.²

2. "YouTube as a Medium for Da'wah" by Abu Hasan Al-Asy'ari (2020)

This research investigates the development of technology and the role of YouTube in spreading Islamic messages across different segments of society. The study argues that YouTube holds significant potential as a da'wah medium in the digital era, particularly for reaching younger generations who are highly engaged with digital content. The author concludes that the effectiveness of YouTube for da'wah depends on the preacher's ability to present appealing and authentic Islamic messages. Furthermore, the research recommends collaboration between scholars, content creators, and Muslim communities, along with professional training for preachers to optimize the use of digital technology in an ethical and impactful manner.³

3. "The Use of YouTube as a Da'wah Medium During the Covid-19 Pandemic" by I Makna A'raaf K., Prihantoro N. P., Sifa Larasati, M. Fais Noor M., and Hisny Fajrussalam (2021)

Published in *Aplikasia: Jurnal Aplikasi Ilmu-Ilmu Agama*, Vol. 21 No. 2, this article explores YouTube's potential as an effective da'wah platform during the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors examine how YouTube was employed by religious figures and organizations to deliver Islamic teachings to broader audiences, overcoming physical and temporal limitations. The study underscores that YouTube, when used with a solid understanding of audience needs and technological dynamics, is a powerful tool for da'wah. However, it also stresses the importance of maintaining Islamic values and ethical standards in digital content. The article presents strategic insights into how digital platforms like YouTube can be leveraged effectively for modern Islamic outreach.⁴

² https://etheses.iainponorogo.ac.id/8887/1/SKRIPSI%20EVI%20NOVITASARI%20211016007.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

³ https://www.academia.edu/43806665/YOUTUBE_SEBAGAI_MEDIA_DAKWAH?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁴ https://media.neliti.com/media/publications/359535-penggunaan-aplikasi-youtube-sebagai-medi-f22f69e3.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach. Qualitative descriptive research prioritizes data collection that focuses more on images or words rather than numerical values. According to Barselon, content analysis is a research method used to objectively, systematically, and qualitatively depict the actual content of communication. Three primary data collection techniques were used in this research:

1. Observation

Observation involves direct monitoring of the subject or object by the researcher concerning the research problem. It serves as a means to validate data gathered through interviews. In this study, the researchers conducted direct observations of YouTube usage for accessing da'wah information among students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department at STAIN Bengkalis to ensure data validity.

2. Interviews

Interviews are interactions between two parties exchanging information and ideas through questions and answers, allowing the construction of meaning on specific topics. This study involved ten informants selected from students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department at STAIN Bengkalis. The researchers interviewed four students from the Communication and Broadcasting program, four from the Da'wah Management program, and two from the Sociology of Religion program.

3. Documentation

Documentation is a crucial data collection technique that involves gathering information from various written or recorded sources related to the subjects or respondents. These documents can include writings, images, or significant works created by individuals or institutions. Documents may be personal (e.g., letters, autobiographies, diaries) or official (e.g., decrees, instructions, records of institutional activities). This technique complements other data sources by providing additional contextual information.⁵

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing platform founded in 2005 by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim. This platform allows users to upload, watch, share, and comment on videos online. In 2006, YouTube was acquired by Google, making it one of the most popular services for video content worldwide. YouTube was first launched in February 2005. The first video uploaded was "Me at the Zoo," which was uploaded by one of YouTube's founders, Jawed Karim. In November 2006, Google acquired YouTube for approximately 1.65 billion US dollars in stock. Since then, YouTube has undergone various developments, including the launch of monetization features, YouTube Live for live streaming, and YouTube Premium, which offers an ad-free experience. YouTube's role has expanded widely as a tool for marketing, education, and social campaigns. According to statistical data, YouTube has billions of active users every month, making it one of the most visited websites globally. With a wide range of content categories such as education, entertainment, vlogs, music, and product reviews, YouTube has become a digital ecosystem that supports content creators from diverse backgrounds.

Definition of Information

Information is data that has been processed so that it has meaning and relevance to support decision-making processes. According to Burch and Strater (1974), information is data that has been processed into a form meaningful to the recipient and has real value or perceived value in the actions and decisions made. Meanwhile, Davis and Olson (1985) explain that information is data processed into a more useful and meaningful form for the recipient. Gordon B. Davis (1974) defines information as data processed into a form that is meaningful to the recipient and useful for decision-making at a particular time. According to Bambang Hartono (1999), information is the result of processing or data manipulation that produces something useful for certain purposes. From these definitions, it can be concluded that information is the result of data processing that provides meaning and relevance to users to fulfill specific objectives.⁶

Definition of Da'wah

Da'wah comes from the Arabic word da'wah, which means a call, invitation, or summons. Terminologically, da'wah is understood as the process of inviting people to the path approved by Allah SWT, namely Islam, through certain methods and ways, with the goal of attaining happiness in this world and the hereafter. The Qur'an describes da'wah as an important mission for Muslims, as stated in Allah's command in Surah An-Nahl, verse 125: "Invite (all) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best."⁷ Da'wah has objectives that encompass individual, social, and universal aspects, namely:

⁵ Noor Juliansyah, *Metodologi Penelitian Skripsi, Tesis, Disertasi, dan Karya Ilmiah*, (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2011), hlm. 253.

⁶ Burch, J. G., & Strater, F. R. (1974). *Information Systems: Theory and Practice*.

⁷ Dalam Surat An-Nahl ayat 125

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Guiding individuals toward faith and piety to Allah SWT, Building an Islamic society based on the values of truth, justice, and balance. And spreading the mercy of Islam to all humanity, regardless of religion or belief.

New Media Theory

New media theory is an approach that explains the development of communication technology and its impact on society, culture, and communication patterns. The term "new media" refers to digital-based media that differ from traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television. New media includes the internet, social media, mobile applications, and network-based platforms that enable active user interaction and participation. The basic concepts of new media are:

a) Digitalization

Digitalization is the core of new media. This process allows information (text, images, audio, video) to be converted into digital formats, which are easy to store, process, and share globally. According to Lev Manovich (2001), digitalization creates media that are more interactive and flexible compared to traditional media.

b) Media Convergence

Henry Jenkins (2006) explains that new media promotes "media convergence," which is the merging of various forms of media into a single platform. For example, smartphones not only serve for verbal communication but also function as devices to access news, entertainment, and social media.

c) Interactivity

New media enables two-way communication between users and information providers. This interactivity creates a more personal and dynamic experience, different from the one-way communication model in traditional media.

d) User Engagement and Participation

In new media, users are not only consumers of information but also producers (prosumers). Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok allow individuals to create and distribute their own content.

e) Globalization and Connectivity

New media removes geographical boundaries and allows real-time global communication. Manuel Castells (2009) describes this as a "network society" where human relationships and interactions are largely facilitated by digital networks.

This section presents the research findings regarding YouTube as a medium for obtaining da'wah information among students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department at STAIN Bengkalis. The data are presented narratively, based on interviews and observations conducted with ten informants from the department. Based on interviews, which commenced after obtaining official research permissions from STAIN Bengkalis, the researchers interviewed ten students from the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department. The main findings are summarized as follows:

1. YouTube as a Medium for Accessing Da'wah Information Among Students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department at STAIN Bengkalis.

YouTube provides easy and flexible access to da'wah content from various scholars, preachers, and renowned da'wah institutions. Launched in 2005, YouTube is the world's largest video-sharing platform, boasting over 2 billion active monthly users. In the digital era, YouTube influences many aspects of life, including da'wah, education, business, and culture. The research identified several key themes answering the research questions:

A. Digitalization in Da'wah

The digitalization process allows students to access da'wah information more conveniently. For example, students frequently use YouTube to find Friday sermon materials or religious lectures by prominent figures such as Ustaz Adi Hidayat and Abdul Somad. This approach helps them overcome time constraints that prevent attending in-person religious gatherings. Digitalization in da'wah refers to the application of digital technology to convey Islamic messages and religious values to the public.

The digital era has opened vast opportunities for preachers to reach broader audiences through social media, websites, apps, and other digital platforms. This transformation from analog or physical forms into digital formats improves efficiency, facilitates access, and supports faster and more accurate data processing. Utilizing YouTube greatly aids access to da'wah content. However, it remains essential that this usage is grounded in Islamic values to ensure that technology becomes a beneficial medium for the community.

B. Interactivity in Da'wah

Interactivity represents an approach involving active participation between preachers and their audiences. It is not merely a one-way communication but opens space for dialogue, questions, and discussions that deepen understanding and foster stronger connections. YouTube enables active interaction between preachers and viewers through comments and live streaming. Audiences can ask questions during live sermons and receive direct responses. This interactive approach broadens da'wah reach, especially among young social media users. Maintaining sincere intentions and ethical conduct in all da'wah activities is critical to aligning with religious teachings. Online media communication offers a practical solution for delivering information to communities effectively.

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C. Media Convergence in Da'wah

Media convergence refers to the integrated use of multiple media platforms to disseminate da'wah messages. It involves employing modern technologies and digital media to spread Islamic values more effectively and extensively. YouTube integrates various media forms—text, audio, and video—making da'wah presentations more engaging. For example, audiences can enjoy sermons enhanced by animations or relevant background music. Da'wah is no longer confined to mosques or radio broadcasts but also extends through social media, podcasts, and mobile apps. Cross-media collaborations enable simultaneous publication of da'wah content across television, websites, and social media, reaching a broader audience. Multimedia content—combining text, images, video, and animation—makes messages easier to comprehend and more appealing, especially to younger generations.

D. Decentralization and Democratization of Information

Decentralization refers to distributing access, control, and management of information among various parties rather than concentrating it in a central authority. Democratization ensures that information access is widespread and equitable, regardless of social, economic, or geographic status. Technology enables anyone to share, access, and contribute to information dissemination. Besides consuming da'wah on YouTube, users can also act as da'wah agents by sharing relevant content. YouTube simplifies access to diverse information, making it one of the most popular platforms among the public. The benefits of decentralization and democratization include extending da'wah reach to previously inaccessible populations, encouraging creative content production by preachers, empowering believers to actively participate in spreading Islamic values, and presenting diverse perspectives aligned with audience needs.

E. Virtuality and Augmented Reality in Da'wah

Virtuality refers to digitally created environments where interaction, communication, and message dissemination occur without physical constraints. In da'wah, virtuality involves using platforms like social media, websites, and virtual spaces to convey Islamic values. Examples include religious studies via Zoom or YouTube and da'wah on Instagram, TikTok, or Facebook. Augmented reality technologies—such as live streaming and supporting applications—offer immersive da'wah experiences, making the approach more inclusive and effective in reaching modern audiences.

F. Social Networking in Da'wah

Social networking in da'wah involves social relationships that facilitate spreading Islamic values, strengthening brotherhood, and delivering da'wah messages. In the modern era, social networks exist both in physical communities and through digital platforms like social media. Benefits include increased accessibility, enabling messages to reach various societal layers without geographic barriers; two-way interactions allowing audiences to engage with preachers via comments and discussions; and creative delivery methods using videos, infographics, or short stories to captivate attention.

In conclusion, a creative and Islamically sound approach to using YouTube can make it an extremely effective medium for spreading da'wah messages across various groups. YouTube facilitates preachers to deliver sermons without constraints of time and place. However, it is essential that preachers maintain persuasive and positive approaches consistent with the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad to avoid conflicts or negative perceptions regarding Islamic da'wah.

2. YouTube Channels Used for Accessing Da'wah Information

A YouTube channel is a user's dedicated page on the platform where they upload, organize, and share video content with their audience. It functions as a public profile where others can watch videos, subscribe, and interact with the content. Da'wah channels vary according to the style, purpose, and target audience. Through a YouTube channel, users can build communities, disseminate information, and even generate income or promote ideas and works. Many da'wah channels are easily accessible to users seeking Islamic knowledge.

Social media da'wah represents an innovative method for inviting and reminding people to obey Allah's commands and avoid prohibitions through engaging and easy-to-understand content. Some prominent da'wah channels frequently watched by young people today include those of Ustaz Adi Hidayat, Hanan Attaki, and Ustaz Abdul Somad. These preachers use unique and compelling methods that attract young audiences and encourage them to listen attentively to their sermons on YouTube.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study titled *YouTube as a Medium for Accessing Da'wah Information Among Students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Department at STAIN Bengkalis*, the following conclusions can be drawn: This study found that YouTube as a video-sharing platform has become a highly effective medium for delivering da'wah, especially among university students. With features such as flexibility in time and accessibility, students can access da'wah information anytime and anywhere. Some key points from this study are as follows: First, digitalization in da'wah allows students to obtain da'wah information more practically. For example, students often use YouTube to search for Friday sermon materials or religious lectures from well-known figures such as Ustaz Adi Hidayat and Abdul Somad. This helps them overcome time constraints in attending direct religious gatherings.

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Second, interactivity features such as comment sections and live streaming open up a space for dialogue between the da'i (preacher) and the audience. The audience can ask questions directly during the sermon broadcast and receive responses from the preacher. Third, media convergence—YouTube integrates various forms of media such as text, audio, and video, allowing da'wah delivery to be more engaging. For instance, the audience can enjoy sermons accompanied by visuals supported by animations or relevant background music. Fourth, decentralization and democratization of information—With YouTube, anyone can become a producer of da'wah information. The audience is not only a consumer but can also share relevant da'wah content according to the needs of their community.

Fifth, virtuality and reality—this technology offers a more immersive da'wah experience, such as the use of Zoom platforms or YouTube live streaming features that enable audiences from various locations to participate. Sixth, social networks—YouTube, as da'wah infrastructure, creates social networks that allow da'wah messages to be disseminated globally. The audience can find creative and touching da'wah content, especially from young ustaz who deliver messages in a style close to their generation. Moreover, YouTube channels frequently watched by today's youth include sermons by Ustaz Adi Hidayat, Abdul Somad, and Hanan Attaki, which are most popular among students because of their delivery style that is relevant to young people, using a simple, educational, and sometimes humorous approach. These channels have become the primary references for students to deepen their religious knowledge.

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