

# RECONCEPTUALISING DA'WA

## A Study of Tuan Guru' Perceptions and Motivations in Adopting Digital Da'wa

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**Abstract:** Traditionally, *da'wa* (Islamic preaching) has been conducted face-to-face in mosques or communities through sermons and personal interactions. However, the advent of digital technology has significantly transformed these practices. Digital *da'wa* facilitates the dissemination of religious messages via social media, websites, and mobile applications, allowing messages to transcend geographical boundaries. This study explores the perceptions and motivations of *Tuan Guru* in Lombok regarding the adaptation of digital *da'wa*. Employing a qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with *Tuan Guru* in Lombok, supplemented by observations and documentation. The study identifies four themes reflecting *Tuan Guru*'s perceptions of digital *da'wa*: general views, effectiveness, accessibility and interactive convenience, and content quality and delivery. Similarly, four themes emerged regarding their motivations: expanding the reach of *da'wa*, adapting to contemporary trends, fulfilling religious and moral obligations, and seeking economic opportunities. This research provides a robust empirical analysis, offering valuable insights for developing more effective and contextually relevant digital *da'wa* strategies in the modern era.

**Keywords:** Digital *Da'wa*, *Tuan Guru*, Lombok.

### Introduction

*Da'wa*, which means “to invite” or “to call”, is one of the primary activities in Islam aimed at spreading religious teachings to the community.<sup>1</sup> Traditionally, *da'wa* has been conducted through face-to-

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<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad bin Mukrim bin Ali Abū al-Faḍl Jamāluddīn bin Manẓūr, *Lisān Al-'Arab*, Volume 14 (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1414), 259; Ken Chitwood, "Da'wah", in *Encyclopedia of Latin American Religions*, ed. Henri Gooren (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017).

face interactions, sermons in mosques, religious study groups, and other community activities.<sup>2</sup> However, with the advance of digital technology, new methods for delivering *da'wa* have emerged through digital platforms such as social media, websites, and mobile applications.<sup>3</sup> For instance, Instagram has significantly increased the reach and scalability of *da'wa* within Muslim communities compared to conventional methods.<sup>4</sup>

With the increasing use of the internet and social media among Muslims, the potential of digital *da'wa* is becoming increasingly recognised. The digital *da'wa* has changed the *da'wa* considerably.<sup>5</sup> Initially, this was conducted mainly by celebrities,<sup>6</sup> but later by numerous Muslim preachers.<sup>7</sup> They come from many spectrum of Islamic understanding from conservative<sup>8</sup> to moderate.<sup>9</sup> Digital

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<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Choirin et al., "Muballigh in the Digital Age Based on Insights from Indonesian Phenomenon: Leveraging Digital Learning for the Promotion of Islamic Values," *Al-Balagh: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 9, no. 2 (2024): 172. See also Kathleen Marie Moore, *Da'wa in the United States, The Oxford Handbook of American Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Sadrhriany Pertiwi Saleh et al., "Digital Da'wah Transformation: Cultural and Methodological Change of Islamic Communication in the Current Digital Age," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis* 5, no. 8 (2022): 235–38, <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijmra/v5-i8-18>.

<sup>4</sup> See Eva F Nisa, "Creative and Lucrative Da'wa: The Visual Culture of Instagram amongst Female Muslim Youth in Indonesia," *Asiascape: Digital Asia* 5 (2018): 74–75, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22142312-12340085>. See also Harry Febrian, "Visualizing Authority: Rise of the Religious Influencers on the Instagram," *Social Media and Society* 10, no 4 (2024).

<sup>5</sup> B. Zaid et al., "Digital islam and Muslim millennials: how socialmedia influencers reimagine religious authority and islamic practices," *Religions* 13, no. 4 (2022), 335.

<sup>6</sup> Moch. Khafidz Fuad Raya, "Digital Religion: The Packaging And Persuasion of Celebrity Preachers In Contemporary Indonesia," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 23, no. 67 (2024), 80 – 94.

<sup>7</sup> Shaimaa El Naggar, *Muslim identities in contemporary elevelangists' online discourse* (New Delhi: Palgrave MacMillan, 2024).

<sup>8</sup> See, Ardiansyah, Heri Firmansyah, and Ahmad Fathan Aniq, "The Adaptation Of Cyber Salafism Da'wah In Hadith Ahkh Aln r Salafism Daber Sa'umdat Al-Ahkmadat Al-Aalafism Daber Salafism," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 25, no. 1 (2025), 263-284. See also A. Subakir, "Challenging the Mainstreams: Broadcasting Salafi Da'wah on Indonesian TV Channels," *Ulumuna* 28, no. 2 (2024), 681-709.

<sup>9</sup> Zaini Dahlan et al., "Celebrity Ulama': Opportunities for the Commodification of Religion and the Values of Islamic Education Das'ad Latif," *Cogent Arts and Humanities* 12, no. 1 (2025), 1-24.

platforms facilitate the dissemination of religious messages to a broader audience, unrestricted by geographical boundaries.<sup>10</sup> These platforms contribute to the development of Islamic preachers' creativity in delivering *da'wa* through verbal communication, writing, images, and other methods that are more appealing to contemporary society.<sup>11</sup> However, the adoption of digital technology in *da'wa* also presents challenges, such as authenticity issues, the risk of misinformation, and the digital literacy gap among religious leaders.<sup>12</sup>

In the global context, digital *da'wa* (Islamic preaching) plays a crucial role not only in disseminating Islam in predominantly Muslim countries but also in nations where Muslims are a minority. The internet and social media enable *da'wa* messages to reach Muslim communities worldwide, who might otherwise lack simple access to traditional religious resources.<sup>13</sup> In the era of globalisation, digital *da'wa* can facilitate interfaith dialogue and enhance cross-cultural understanding, thereby strengthening the solidarity of the global Muslim community and providing a platform for sharing religious experiences and practices.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, by modernising preaching methods and fully utilising all available technologies, we can harness social networks and digital platforms as media for *da'wa* to combat both extremism and liberalism.<sup>15</sup>

For the Sasak communities inhabiting Lombok Island, Indonesia, the title *Tuan Guru* refers to an Islamic figure who holds various traditional roles.<sup>16</sup> A *Tuan Guru* is both a leader and an Islamic

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<sup>10</sup> Choirin et al., "Muballigh in the Digital Age, 169.

<sup>11</sup> Munawara, Andre Noevi Rahmanto, and Ignatius Agung Satyawan, "Challenges and Opportunities for Mahasantri Da'wah through Social Media," *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 7, no. 4 (2020), 360, <http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v7i4.1593>.

<sup>12</sup> Ahmad Munawar Ismail, Wan Kamal Mujani, and Ahmad Aiman Zuhaily, "Methods of Da'wah and Social Networks in Dealing with Liberalism and Extremism," *Islamiyyat* 40, no. 2 (2018): 134–36.

<sup>13</sup> Dadan Suherdiana and Enjang Muhaemin, "The Da'wah of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah in Social Media of Facebook," *Ilmu Dakwah: Academic Journal for Homiletic Studies* 12, no. 2 (2018): 195, <https://doi.org/10.15575/idajhs.v12i1.617>.

<sup>14</sup> Hafiz Mubarak et al., "The Technological Revolution and the Dynamics of Islamic Da'wah," *At-Tajdid: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran Islam* 6, no. 1 (2022): 50–51.

<sup>15</sup> Ismail, Mujani, and Zuhaily, "Methods of Da'wah and Social Networks, 132–33.

<sup>16</sup> Fahrurrozi, "Tuan Guru and Social Change in Lombok, Indonesia," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 46, no. 135 (2018): 117–134, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.145-2487>.

preacher.<sup>17</sup> *Tuan Guru* also plays the roles of educator, guardian of traditional culture, mediator, and social stabiliser during times of tension within the local community.<sup>18</sup> According to Kingsley, *Tuan Guru* has a significant influence on the Lombok community,<sup>19</sup> similar to the influence of religious leaders elsewhere in Indonesia on many aspects including education,<sup>20</sup> jurisprudence,<sup>21</sup> and gender.<sup>22</sup> Given this high level of influence held by *Tuan Guru*, digital *da'wa* creates a strong synergy in spreading Islamic values, reinforcing traditional culture, and maintaining social stability in the digital era.

Previous studies revealed various perspectives and practices of digital *da'wa* within different Muslim communities. Suherdiana and Muhaemin investigated Nahdlatul Ulama's and Muhammadiyah's digital *da'wa*.<sup>23</sup> Zaman explored the *da'wa* strategies of young Nahdlatul Ulama kiai in Jepara during the digital era.<sup>24</sup> Kadir studied contemporary approaches to *da'wa* from a Malaysian perspective.<sup>25</sup> Hadiyana used a netnographic approach to analyse the millennial generation's responses to the *da'wa* content on Fahrurrozi Dahlan's

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>18</sup> Jeremy Jacob Kingsley, *Tuan Guru, Community and Conflict in Lombok, Indonesia* (Melbourne: The University of Melbourne, 2010); Jamaluddin, "Sejarah Sosial Islam di Lombok Tahun 1740-1935, Studi Kasus Terhadap Tuan Guru" (Dissertation, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2012). See also A. Ahyar et al., "Culture-Based Da'wah and Education Values: A Study of TGH. M. Najamuddin Makmun's Work," *Ulumuna* 28, no. 1 (2024), 108-135.

<sup>19</sup> Kingsley, "Tuan Guru, Community and Conflict in Lombok.

<sup>20</sup> Dahlan, "Celebrity Ulama", 1-24

<sup>21</sup> Aida Humaira et al., "Betawi Ulama's Perception of The XXI Century Against Contraception Law Controversy in Population Control," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 6, no. 2 (2022), pp. 934-953

<sup>22</sup> Muhammad Jihadul Hayat, "Preaching Islamic Legal Rules on Screen: Conservatism on Islamic Family Law in Digital-Based Dakwah Program Mamah dan Aa Beraksi," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 60, no. 2 (2022), 427-466.

<sup>23</sup> Suherdiana and Muhaemin, "The Da'wah of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah in Social Media, 195.

<sup>24</sup> Wahyu Khairuz Zaman, "Strategi Dakwah Kiai Muda Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara Di Era Digital," *International Conference of Da'wa and Islamic Communication* 1 (2022), 11-26.

<sup>25</sup> Firdaus Khairi Abdul Kadir et al., "Contemporary Approach in Da'wah Mission towards Non-Muslim Community: Malaysia Perspectives," *Geintec* 11, no. 3 (2021): 850-60.

YouTube channel.<sup>26</sup> Likewise, Zuhriya and Rohimah discuss preaching of several well-known Muslim preachers compiled by Instagram account named @edhnx.<sup>27</sup> Mutia explored the creativity of Muslim content creators in Lombok in their *da'wa* communication on social media.<sup>28</sup> Ahyar, Imtihan, and Mokhtar examined the cultural *da'wa* of TGH. Najamudin in Lombok, which was conducted conventionally to communicate the principles of Islam while preserving and strengthening the traditional heritage of the Sasak community.<sup>29</sup> A study conducted by M.S. Udin and Lukman Hakim provides insightful views on the Sasak Muslims' belief in *Tuan Guru's karamah* (charisma) amid the emerging trend of cyber *da'wa*.<sup>30</sup> Meanwhile, a researcher who specifically discusses the digital *da'wa* of *Tuan Guru* is Nazar Naamy, a professor in the field of the sociology of *da'wa*.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, these studies do not delve deeply into the perceptions and motivations underlying the practices of digital *da'wa*. Furthermore, a significant gap found in Naamy's study is the absence of empirical data, depicting a seemingly less comprehensive analysis supported by inadequate evidence.

Although previous studies have extensively discussed various aspects of digital *da'wa* in different contexts, they have yet to address *Tuan Gurus'* perceptions and motivations in utilising digital *da'wa* in Lombok. The strategies proposed in those studies tend to be theoretical and less practical without considering *Tuan Gurus'* motivations and challenges. This study offers a critical perspective by

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<sup>26</sup> Endang Hadiyana, "Respons Generasi Milenial Pada Konten Dakwah YouTube Fahrurrozi Dahlan Channel (Analisis Netnografi)" (Master Thesis, UIN Mataram, 2023).

<sup>27</sup> Luluk Fikri Zuhriyah and Afifatul Rohimah, "Domination of Public Sphere and Reputation of Preacher in Social Media," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 18, no. 1 (2024), 69-97.

<sup>28</sup> Tika Mutia, "Da'wahtainment: The Creativity of Muslim Creators in Da'wah Communication on Social Media," *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah* 32, no. 2 (2021): 147-63, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jdr.v32i2.15536>.

<sup>29</sup> Ahyar, Nurul Imtihan, and Wan Khairul Aiman bin Wan Mokhtar, "Culture-Based Dakwah and Education Values: A Study of TGH. M. Najamuddin Makmun's Work," *Ulumuna* 28, no. 1 (2024): 108-35.

<sup>30</sup> M.S. Udin and Lukman Hakim, "The Fuzzy Sacredness Aura and Cyber-Based Da'wah: Redrawing *Karamah* of *Tuan Guru* within the Belief System of Sasak Muslims," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 14, no. 2 (2020): 457-476.

<sup>31</sup> Nazar Naamy, "Transformasi Sosial Dakwah *Tuan Guru*: Dari Tradisional Menuju Era Digital," *Jurnal Widya Balina* 6, no. 1 (2021): 188-97.

examining their perceptions and motivations for adopting a digital approach to *da'wa*. Thus, the novelty of this research lies in its in-depth exploration of Tuan Gurus' perceptions and motivations for embracing digital *da'wa* in Lombok, which previous studies have not fully explored.

This study provides a robust empirical analysis for developing more effective and practical digital *da'wa* strategies in the modern era. Two key research questions guide this study: 1) What are Tuan Gurus' perceptions about digital *da'wa*? 2) What motivates Tuan Gurus to use digital *da'wa* to disseminate Islamic messages? The study aims to identify and analyse Tuan Gurus' perceptions of digital *da'wa*, including their views and understanding of the concept and practice of digital *da'wa*. Additionally, this study explores the motivations of Tuan Gurus to use digital *da'wa* by uncovering the reasons driving them to leverage digital platforms to spread Islamic teachings.

This study employed a qualitative approach to achieve a comprehensive understanding of Tuan Gurus' perceptions and motivations. It included selected Tuan Gurus from various institutions and regions in Lombok Island as informants, to ensure a broad range of experiences and viewpoints. This study involved nine esteemed Tuan Gurus who are actively engaged in preaching on digital platforms (see table 1). The data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. Each interview, guided by a structured interview protocol, lasted approximately 60 minutes and focused on exploring Tuan Gurus' motivations and perspectives regarding the adaptation of digital *da'wa*. Additionally, their digital *da'wa* activities were observed, and relevant documents, including online sermon texts, social media posts, lecture videos, and other digital *da'wa* materials were collected. Triangulation was employed to ensure the validity of the data. The thematic analysis of the data facilitated the identification of key themes and patterns within the qualitative data.

**Table 1. List of Informants and Digital Platforms Used**

| No. | Informant's Name                             | Digital Platform Utilised   |
|-----|--|---|
| 1   | Prof. Dr. TGH.<br>Fahrurrozi Dahlan,<br>M.A. | Facebook:<br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/fahrurrozi.aburaziqi">https://www.facebook.com/fahrurrozi.aburaziqi</a><br>Instagram:<br><a href="https://www.instagram.com/fahrurrozidahlanchannel/?locale=th-TH&amp;hl=en">https://www.instagram.com/fahrurrozidahlanchannel/?locale=th-TH&amp;hl=en</a><br>Youtube: |

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|---|---------------------------------------|---|
|   |                                       | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/fahrurrozidahlanchanel">https://www.youtube.com/c/fahrurrozidahlanchanel</a>   |
| 2 | Dr. TGH. Subki Sasaki, M.H.I.         | Blog: <a href="https://karyailmiahrozy.blogspot.com/">https://karyailmiahrozy.blogspot.com/</a><br>Youtube: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@ppbsnurulmadinah">https://www.youtube.com/@ppbsnurulmadinah</a><br>Instagram: <a href="https://www.instagram.com/subki_sasaki/?locale=th-TH&amp;hl=en">https://www.instagram.com/subki_sasaki/?locale=th-TH&amp;hl=en</a> |
| 3 | TGH. Hamdani Khairul Fikri, M.A.      | Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/hamdani.khaerulfikri/videos">https://www.facebook.com/hamdani.khaerulfikri/videos</a>   |
| 4 | Prof. Dr. TGH. Zaidi Abdad, M.Ag.     | Youtube: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@Zaidichanel_BQ-Serunimataram/videos">https://www.youtube.com/@Zaidichanel_BQ-Serunimataram/videos</a>  |
| 5 | TGH. L. Ahmad Syarqawi Ramdhani, M.A. | Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/@AhmadSyarqawionline">https://www.facebook.com/@AhmadSyarqawionline</a><br>Youtube: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@al-abrornwtv">https://www.youtube.com/@al-abrornwtv</a>   |
| 6 | TGH. Lalu Anas Hasyri                 | Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/tgh.laluanashasyri">https://www.facebook.com/tgh.laluanashasyri</a><br>Youtube: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@al-abrornwtv">https://www.youtube.com/@al-abrornwtv</a>   |
| 7 | TGH. Qamrullah, M.H.I.                | Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/fahriah.zada/videos">https://www.facebook.com/fahriah.zada/videos</a><br>Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/kam.rullah.33">https://www.facebook.com/kam.rullah.33</a>  |
| 8 | TGH. Sohiebuddin, M.H.I.              | Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61569317652526">https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61569317652526</a><br>Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100081839787595">https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100081839787595</a><br>Youtube: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@imk-">https://www.youtube.com/@imk-</a>  |
| 9 | Prof. Dr. TGH. Musywar, M.Ag.         | Youtube: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@islamkita3983/videos">https://www.youtube.com/@islamkita3983/videos</a>  |

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### ***Tuan Guru's Perceptions of Digital Da'wa***

The data analysis reveals four main themes through which the *Tuan Gurus* perceive digital *da'wa*: general views on digital *da'wa*, effectiveness of digital *da'wa*, accessibility and interactive convenience, and content quality and delivery.

### ***General Views on Digital Da'wa***

The interviews with several informants revealed a strong positive outlook on digital *da'wa*. They emphasised the importance of social media as a tool for expanding religious outreach. Hamdani Khairul Fikri highlighted how social media provided a broader and faster experience in delivering religious messages.<sup>32</sup> Zaidi Abdad also accentuated the role of social media in engaging the younger generation.<sup>33</sup> Subki Sasaki stressed that preachers needed to adapt to digital technology.<sup>34</sup> Fahrurrozi Dahlan reinforced the idea that a combination of digital and traditional approaches (a hybrid approach) could extend the reach of *da'wa* and enhance its effectiveness.<sup>35</sup> Lalu Anas Hasyri and Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi further asserted that digital *da'wah* is a necessity of the times, driven by technological advancements and shifts in the communication patterns of modern society.<sup>36</sup>

According to the Media Richness Theory, media enriched with various features, such as text, images, and video, are more effective in conveying complex messages,<sup>37</sup> including *da'wa*. Social media's media richness has made it a crucial digital platform for spreading religious teachings, especially to younger and more global audiences.<sup>38</sup> Social media serves as a more flexible and rapid means of spreading *da'wa*, capable of reaching audiences in diverse geographical locations, both locally and internationally.

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<sup>32</sup> Tuan Guru Haji (TGH) Hamdani Khairul Fikri, Chairman of the Da'wa Institution-NU in West Nusa Tenggara, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>33</sup> TGH. Zaidi Abdad, Head of Pondok Pesantren Dar Zayd Mataram, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>34</sup> TGH. Subki Sasaki, Head of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Madinah Kuripan, West Lombok, *Interview*, 2024

<sup>35</sup> TGH. Fahrurrozi Dahlan, Deputy Chairman of the Nahdlatul Wathan Organization, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>36</sup> Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi, Sheikh (lecturer) in Ma'had Darul Qur'an wal Hadits Almajidiyyah Asyasyafi'iyah Nahdlatul Wathan, *Interview*, 2025; Lalu Anas Hasyri, the head of the Pondok Pesantren Darul Abror, Nahdlatul Wathan, Gunung Rajak, East Lombok, *Interview*, 2025.

<sup>37</sup> Richard L. Daft and Robert H Lengel, "Organizational Information Requirements, Media Richness and Structural Design," *Management Science* 32, no. 5 (1986), 560.

<sup>38</sup> Mohammed Isah Shehu, Muhammad Fuad Bin Othman, and Nazariah Binti Osman, "The Social Media and Islam," *Sabel Analyst: Journal of Management Sciences* 15, no. 4 (2017): 76–77.

Media Affordances Theory is also relevant in the digital *da'wa* context, as the affordances of digital platforms, such as interactivity and the ability to share content, allow it to become more engaging and effective.<sup>39</sup> The affordances of digital platforms, such as the ability to reach broad and efficient audiences, enable religious leaders to communicate more effectively with their followers.<sup>40</sup> It is argued that this approach highlights the importance of technological adaptation in modern religious practices. Digital media provide religious leaders with opportunities to use technology to deliver religious messages more engagingly and to tailor them to the needs of their audiences, including the younger generations, who are considered digital natives.

### ***Effectiveness of Digital Da'wa***

According to Hamdani Khairul Fikri, Lalu Anas Hasyri, Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi, and Fahrurrozi Dahlan, the effectiveness of digital *da'wa* closely relates to the ability to use digital platforms to disseminate religious messages to broad and diverse audiences. Hamdani Khairul Fikri emphasised that digital *da'wa* offers a wider and faster reach compared to traditional methods, allowing religious messages to reach more people in a shorter period.<sup>41</sup> Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi and Lalu Anas Hasyri also highlighted the effectiveness of digital *da'wah* due to its convenience in terms of time, distance, cost, and psychological aspects, as well as its lack of requirement for a specific venue, making it more practical and efficient.<sup>42</sup> Qamarullah highlighted the inclusive nature of digital *da'wa*, pointing out that platforms, such as Facebook, are tailored to engage wide audiences, promoting a more equitable and widespread distribution of religious teachings.<sup>43</sup> Fahrurrozi Dahlan

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<sup>39</sup> W Russell Neuman, Bruce Bimber, and Matthew Hindman, 'The Internet and Four Dimensions of Citizenship', in *The Oxford Handbook of American Public Opinion and the Media* (Oxford University Press New York, NY, 2011), 22–42.

<sup>40</sup> Qurban Hussain Pamirzad, Ghulam Ahmad Susyal, and Mujiburrahman Joya, "The Intersection of Media Affordance and Religion: A Thematic Analysis of the Islamic Coverage of the Taliban's Official Organ Shariat Newspaper," *Journal of Islamic Communication Studies* 2, no. 1 (2024): 73–74.

<sup>41</sup> TGH. Hamdani Khairul Fikri, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>42</sup> TGH. Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi, *Interview*, 2025; TGH. Lalu Anas Hasyri, *Interview*, 2025,

<sup>43</sup> TGH. Qamarullah, Member of the Indonesian Ulema Council of Mataram, *Interview*, 2025.

emphasised that a hybrid approach can significantly expand *da'wa's* reach and enhance its effectiveness.<sup>44</sup>

Media enriched with interactive features can improve clarity and deliver more impactful messages, according to the Media Richness Theory.<sup>45</sup> Media enriched with features, such as videos and multimedia used in digital *da'wa*, can enhance audiences' understanding and engagement, thereby making the *da'wa* more effective.<sup>46</sup> The Media Affordances Theory also emphasises that digital platforms' features, such as sharing and accessibility, allow digital *da'wa* to reach more people in a more personal and direct manner.<sup>47</sup> Ibrahim's study in Nigeria, for example, demonstrated how religious leaders, such as cyber imams, used digital infrastructure and social media algorithms to extend their reach, attract followers, and reinforce their religious authority online.<sup>48</sup> By leveraging this technology, preachers can disseminate religious teachings more broadly and deeply to more diverse audiences.

Moreover, the concept of "networked religion" enables religious messages to transcend physical boundaries and create a global network of believers.<sup>49</sup> Digital *da'wa* that leverages social media is highly effective in reaching a wider and more diverse audience. This technology facilitates the reception of religious messages, particularly among younger generations. As explained in Media Richness and Media Affordances Theory, social media, with its rich interactive features and high accessibility, is capable of enhancing audiences'

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<sup>44</sup> TGH. Fahrurrozi Dahlan, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>45</sup> Daft and Lengel, "Organizational Information Requirements, Media Richness and Structural Design, 560.

<sup>46</sup> Rizki Briandana et al., "Da'wah Communication and Social Media: The Interpretation of Millennials in Southeast Asia," *International Journal of Economics and Business Administration* 8, Special Issue (2020): 222–23.

<sup>47</sup> Neuman, Bimber, and Hindman, "The Internet and Four Dimensions of Citizenship, 22–42.

<sup>48</sup> Murtala Ibrahim, "Islam in the Digital Infrastructure: The Rise of Islamic Cyber Practices in Northern Nigeria Practices in Northern Nigeria," *Religion, State & Society* 52, no. 2–3 (2024): 120–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09637494.2024.2353956>.

<sup>49</sup> Eva F Nisa, "Internet and Muslim Women," *Handbook of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Lives*, ed. Ronald Lukens-Bull and Mark Woodward (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 1023–41, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-32626-5\\_71](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-32626-5_71). See also Christopher Helland, "Digital Religion," in *Handbook of Religion and Society* (London: Springer, 2016), 177–96.

understanding and engagement. Therefore, a hybrid approach that combines traditional and digital methods can strengthen *da'wa*.

### ***Accessibility and Interactive Convenience***

The accessibility and interactive convenience offered by digital platforms have been the key drivers for the *Tuan Guru* in adopting digital *da'wa*. Hamdani Khairul Fikri emphasised that social media makes *da'wa* accessible anytime and anywhere, allowing religious messages to reach broader audiences without time or place limitations.<sup>50</sup> Subki Sasaki pointed out that social media enables quicker and more direct interaction between the *Tuan Guru* and their audiences.<sup>51</sup> Lalu Syarqawi highlighted that direct interaction via comments and online dialogues strengthens the pertinence of religious messages, ensuring that they resonate more effectively with modern audiences who value swift and interactive communication.<sup>52</sup>

According to Media Richness Theory, media enriched with interactive features, such as digital platforms, deliver messages more clearly and with greater impact. Rich media overcomes differences in frames of reference and clarifies ambiguous issues, making them highly effective in conveying complex *da'wa* messages.<sup>53</sup> By leveraging these interactive features and accessibility, the *Tuan Guru* communicate more effectively and personally with broader and more diverse audiences.

Studies on digital religion indicate that digital platforms have transformed the way people interact with religion, expanding access and creating more dynamic interactions. Research by Campbell and Vitullo revealed that digital platforms, such as social media, extended the reach of religion and shape dynamic virtual communities. Individuals engage in online religious practices through social media, which not only complement their offline religious experiences but also broaden the definition of religious communities within the digital

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<sup>50</sup> TGH. Hamdani Khairul Fikri, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>51</sup> TGH. Subki Sasaki, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>52</sup> TGH. Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi, *Interview*, 2025.

<sup>53</sup> Daft and Lengel, 'Organizational Information Requirements, Media Richness and Structural Design, 560. See also Linda Klebe Trevino, Robert H Lengel, and Richard L Daft, "Media Symbolism, Media Richness, and Media Choice in Organizations: A Symbolic Interactionist Perspective," *Communication Research* 14, no. 5 (1987): 553–74.

context.<sup>54</sup> Consequently, digital platforms have expanded the reach and impact of religion in modern society.

Furthermore, social media's interactive features empower audiences to engage with content wherever and whenever they are. In particular, Generation Z prefers content that is accessible anytime, anywhere, and not restricted by a fixed schedule like linear television.<sup>55</sup> The accessibility of digital *da'wa* creates significant opportunities to spread Islamic messages to wider audiences, especially Generation Z. Using social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, preachers can reach audiences in various locations without geographical limitations.

### ***Content Quality and Delivery***

The quality of content and its delivery method are critical in determining the effectiveness of digital *da'wa*. Zaidi Abdad emphasised the potential of platforms such as TikTok for conveying *da'wa* messages in a concise and engaging format, particularly relevant in this digital era.<sup>56</sup> Fahrurrozi Dahlan underlined that the strength of digital *da'wa* is heavily dependent on the quality of content and the ability of the preachers to demonstrate ethical conduct in their *da'wa*.<sup>57</sup> Musyawwar highlighted that platforms like YouTube also play a crucial role in presenting *da'wa* messages in a brief and condensed format, increasing the likelihood that the message will be more easily remembered and understood by the audience.<sup>58</sup>

According to the Media Richness Theory, enriched media enhance communication effectiveness. Media richness includes high-quality video content. The published content should contain high-quality

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<sup>54</sup> Heidi A Campbell and Alessandra Vitullo, "Assessing Changes in the Study of Religious Communities in Digital Religion Studies," *Church, Communication and Culture* 1, no. 1 (2016): 83–84, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23753234.2016.1181301>.

<sup>55</sup> Jose Antonio Cortés Quesada, T B Ugarte, and G F Cortina, "Audio-Visual Consumption of Millennials and Generation Z: Preference for Snackable Content," *Doxa. Comunicación* 1, no. 36 (2023): 5–6.

<sup>56</sup> TGH. Zaidi Abdad, *Interview*, 2024. TGH. Fahrurrozi, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>57</sup> TGH. Fahrurrozi Dahlan, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>58</sup> Musyawwar, *Interview*, 2024. TGH. Fahrurrozi, *Interview*, 2024. TGH. Mu'ammarr Nasrullah, *Interview*, 2024.

messages, as quality content has a significant impact on *da'wa* effectiveness.<sup>59</sup>

According to Serbanescu, Generation Z prefers learning through digital videos, so the content should be high quality. Additionally, as social media users, Generation Z favours brief, concise, and clear contents. Generation Z has a strong preference for 'snackable content', which is easily digestible in a short timeframe. We attribute this behaviour to their deeply interconnected digital lifestyle, which includes technology and social media.<sup>60</sup> Generation Z is also more inclined to enjoy content that can be quickly consumed, such as short videos intended to fill leisure time without requiring a significant time commitment.

Furthermore, preachers must pay close attention to their delivery's ethics. The use of courteous and easily understandable language is effective in communication and preserves integrity of *da'wa*, ensuring that it remains aligned with high moral and religious values.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, the quality of content editing, the material, and content delivery determine the essence of digital *da'wa*.

### **Motivation for Digital *Da'wa* of Tuan Guru**

Based on the analysis of the data, the motivations of *Tuan Gurus* in using digital *da'wa* include the reach and effectiveness of *da'wa*, adaptation to contemporary trends, religious and moral motivations, and economic incentives.

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<sup>59</sup> Muhammad Talhah Ajmain "Dawah in the Digital Age: Utilizing Social Media for the Spread of Islamic Teachings," *Journal of Current Social and Political Issues* 1, no. 1 (2023): 1–7, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15575/jcspi.v1i1.444>; Muhammad Choirin et al., "Muballigh in the Digital Age Based on Insights from Indonesian Phenomenon: Leveraging Digital Learning for the Promotion of Islamic Values," *Al-Balagh: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 9, no. 2 (2024): 167–90.

<sup>60</sup> Qesada, Ugarte, and Cortina, "Audio-Visual Consumption of Millennials, 3–4.

<sup>61</sup> Shakhzod Tokhirov and Nada Ramadhana, "From New Media to New Piety: The Construction of Muhammadiyah Digital Piety Ideas," *Digital Muslim Review* 1, no. 2 (2023): 68–83; Maulidatus Syahrotin Naqqiyah and Ali Nurdin, "Da'i Credibility in the Post-Truth Era: A Study of Da'i in Surabaya," *Ilmu Dakwah: Academic Journal for Homiletic Studies* 13, no. 2 (2019): 250–67; Lukman Hakim, "The Importance of Da'wa Ethics in Social Media: A Quranic Perspective," *QOF* 7, no. 1 (2023): 103–16.

### ***A Broader Reach of Da'wa***

The informants indicated that their use of digital sermons aims to expand audience reach. For instance, Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi continued his *da'wa* for the Lombok community through Facebook, even when residing abroad.<sup>62</sup> Lalu Anas Hasyri was motivated to propagate his teachings through digital platforms due to requests from his students and followers residing in other regions and abroad.<sup>63</sup> Fahrurrozi Dahlan emphasised that digital *da'wa* overcomes geographical and temporal limitations, allowing religious messages to reach audiences without barriers.<sup>64</sup> Additionally, Hamdani Khairul Fikri highlighted the effectiveness of digital media in swiftly responding to public enquiries, thereby providing quicker guidance to the community.<sup>65</sup>

One of the motivations for the *Tuan Gurus* to adopt digital *da'wa* is to expand their reach and enhance the effectiveness of spreading religious messages. This step reflects their awareness of changing communication dynamics and the need to adapt *da'wa* methods to technological advancements. The digital era necessitates that preachers adapt to digital media to deliver their messages more effectively, with digital literacy being key to optimisation.<sup>66</sup> The preachers can reach wider audiences through digital platforms, including younger generations who are more active in the digital space.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, digital *da'wa* aims to meet communities' needs for easier and faster access to information.

Digital *da'wa* offers an effective solution to overcome the geographical and temporal limitations often encountered in traditional *da'wa*. Digital technology allows religious messages to transcend physical locations or specific times, allowing the audience to access *da'wa* materials anytime and anywhere.<sup>68</sup> This technology provides

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<sup>62</sup> TGH. Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi, *Interview*, 2025; *Observation*, Live Streaming of *Da'wa* by TGH. Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi via Facebook from Mecca, 2025.

<sup>63</sup> TGH. Lalu Anas Hasyri, *Interview*, 2025.

<sup>64</sup> TGH. Fahrurrozi Dahlan, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>65</sup> TGH. Hamdani Khairul Fikri, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>66</sup> Rila Setyaningsih, "The Phenomenon of E-Dakwah in the New Normal Era: Digital Literacy of Virtual Da'i in Da'wah Activities," *International Journal of Islamic Thought and Humanities* 02, no. 01 (2023): 66–67, <https://doi.org/10.54298/ijith.v2i1.60>.

<sup>67</sup> Usman and Haidir Fitra Siagian, "Indonesian Younger Generation's Acceptance of Digital Da'wah," *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah* 35, no. 1 (2024): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.240-14/jdr.v35i1.28975>.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

significant advantages, especially in reaching Muslim communities in remote areas or abroad that may be difficult to access through conventional *da'wa* methods.<sup>69</sup>

Moreover, with digital *da'wa*, the preachers can disseminate religious messages to international Muslim communities, which were previously difficult to reach through traditional *da'wa*. This approach not only strengthens position of *da'wa* within the country, but it also extends its influence on a global scale. Furthermore, digital *da'wa* fosters cross-country relationships and facilitates the global dissemination of religious values.

### ***Adapting to Contemporary Trends***

Contemporary trends compel *Tuan Gurus* to adopt digital preaching to remain recognised in the modern era. Fahrurrozi Dahlan emphasised that digital *da'wa* is both a necessity and a demand of the times, with technology as the primary means of accessing information. Without this technological adaptation, religious message risks losing its reach, particularly among the younger generations, who increasingly rely on digital media.<sup>70</sup> Subki Sasaki and Zaidi Abdad also underlined the importance of digital *da'wa* in engaging with the youth. Abdad added that digital media increased relevance of *da'wa* and accessibility to this demographic.<sup>71</sup> In this context, Hamdani Khairul Fikri highlighted that the use of social media not only invigorated preachers' enthusiasm, but also ensured the continuity and relevance of religious messages in the digital era.<sup>72</sup> Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi acknowledged his deep inspiration from contemporary senior scholars, such as Sheikh Ramaḍān Al-Būḩī and Sheikh 'Alī Jum'ah, who adapt *da'wah* to digital platform trends.<sup>73</sup>

The use of digital *da'wa* by *Tuan Gurus* was a strategic move to maintain the relevance of *da'wa* in the present day. Amidst significant changes in how society, particularly the younger generations, accessed and received information, the sustainability of religious messages

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<sup>69</sup> Athik Hidayatul Ummah, "New Media and Women's Da'wah Movement in the Post Covid-19 Era," *Hikmatuna: Journal for Integrative Islamic Studies* 7, no. 2 (2021), 127.

<sup>70</sup> TGH. Fahrurrozi Dahlan, Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi, and Lalu Anas Hasyri, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>71</sup> TGH. Zaidi Abdad, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>72</sup> TGH. Hamdani Khairul Fikri, *Interview*, 2024; Qamarullah, *Interview*, 2025.

<sup>73</sup> TGH. Ahmad Syarqawi, *Interview*, 2025.

became increasingly important. Without adapting to technological advancements, *da'wa* risked losing its audience among the more educated youth inclined to seek religious guidance through digital platforms.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, adapting to contemporary trends expanded the reach of *da'wa* and enabled Tuan Guru to serve a broader audience, especially among tech-savvy youth.

However, while digital media can extend the reach of *da'wa*, it is crucial to question whether this adoption was made for the right reasons or merely for the sake of relevance. There is a risk that an excessive focus on popularity and trends could compromise the depth and authenticity of religious messages. Too much emphasis on digital relevance could turn *da'wa* into easily accessible content, losing its true spiritual values. Therefore, Tuan Guru should ensure that the adoption of digital *da'wa* genuinely strengthens the purpose of *da'wa*, rather than simply follows the trend, so that religious messages remain authentic and meaningful in this digital era.

### ***Religious and Moral Motivations***

Religious and moral motivations drove *Tuan Gurus* to adopt digital *da'wa* to disseminate moderate and inclusive Islamic values, ensuring that Islamic teachings reached broader audiences. Fahrurrozi Dahlan emphasised the unrestricted spread of Islamic teachings through digital *da'wa*.<sup>75</sup> Subki Sasaki affirmed that *da'wa* content creation was a religious obligation.<sup>76</sup> Qamarullah regarded digital *da'wah* as a form of perpetual charity (*'amal jariyah*), the rewards of which would persist indefinitely.<sup>77</sup> Lalu Anas Hasyri and Lalu Syarqawi emphasised that *da'wa* must be grounded in religious directives and a sense of responsibility towards the community (*ummah*).<sup>78</sup>

According to informants, digital *da'wa* is a response to technological advances and a moral and spiritual obligation to disseminate moderate and inclusive Islamic teachings. Tuan Guru perceive digital *da'wa* as a means to transcend geographical and social boundaries, ensuring that the compassionate messages of Islam reach wider audiences. Authenticity, integrity, and moral motivation are

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<sup>74</sup> Nisa, "Creative and Lucrative Da'wa, 70–72.

<sup>75</sup> TGH. Fahrurrozi Dahlan, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>76</sup> TGH. Subki Sasaki, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>77</sup> TGH. Qamarullah, *Interview*, 2025.

<sup>78</sup> TGH. Lalu Anas Hasyri, *Interview*, 2025; Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi, *Interview*, 2025.

prioritised in conveying the truth of religious messages, ensuring that digital *da'wa* is conducted with sincere intent and a focus on the quality of the message rather than popularity or material gain.<sup>79</sup> As a result, maintaining a balance between adapting the message and preserving its authenticity and core values is critical to ensuring that digital *da'wa* continues to have a profound impact, aligned with the moral motivations.

### ***Economic Motivation***

Although it was not the primary motivation, informants acknowledged the potential incomes from digital *da'wa*. Musyawwar and Qamarullah acknowledged that, in addition to spreading religious teachings, revenues from viewers provided an additional benefit to fund further *da'wa* efforts.<sup>80</sup> Musyawwar explained that the economic motivation behind digital *da'wah* is a secondary consideration, as the process of monetisation to achieve financial gain from digital *da'wa* is considerably challenging.<sup>81</sup> Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi dan Lalu Anas Hasyri asserted that financial gain derived from digital *da'wa* serves as a secondary incentive. Moreover, the monetisation of content to attain financial benefits is inherently complex, and therefore, digital *da'wa* should not be impeded by economic considerations.<sup>82</sup>

It is essential to note that digital *da'wa* also opens up economic opportunities, such as monetisation,<sup>83</sup> endorsement,<sup>84</sup> and donations or

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<sup>79</sup> Abd Mukhid, Udin, and Bustami Saladin, "The Use of Amthāl Communication and Tafsir in Da'wa as a Learning Method for Developing the Islamic Community In Lombok," *Ulumuna* 27, no. 2 (2023), 914. See also Jane I Smith, "Da'wa in the West: Islamic Mission in American Form," in *Mixed Messages: Materiality, Textuality, Missions* (New York: Springer, 2005), 137–54.

<sup>80</sup> TGH. Musyawwar, *Interview*, 2024; TGH. Qamarullah, *Interview*, 2025.

<sup>81</sup> TGH. Musyawwar, *Interview*, 2024.

<sup>82</sup> TGH. Lalu Anas Hasyri, *Interview*, 2025; Lalu Ahmad Syarqawi, *Interview*, 2025.

<sup>83</sup> Rina Juwita, "Streamlining Religiotainment: The Influence of Da'wah Content in Digital Space on the Life of the Samarinda Muslim Community in Indonesia," *Manchester Journal of Transnational Islamic Law & Practice* 19, no. 3 (2023), 128; Latif Fianto and M Abdul Ghofur, "Commodification of Religion: Disruption and Shallowing of Religious Values in the Digital Era," *The SARPASS* 03, no. 01 (2023): 33–44, <https://doi.org/10.15642/sarpass.2023.3.1.33-44>.

<sup>84</sup> Fitri Maghfirah, Fitria Andriani, and Husnul Mirzal, "Social Media as a Medium of Da'wah: Religious Transformation among Online Da'wah Audience on TikTok Platform," *Lentera: Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 5, no. 1 (2021), 81–104; Abdi Ar-Ridho, Rubino, and Efi Brata Madya, "Navigating Digital Frontiers: Analyzing the

gifts from audiences. Although this motivation is not their primary objective, the Tuan Gurus acknowledge the potential income from *da'wa* activities on social media. They view the revenue from digital *da'wa* as a 'side benefit' that they can utilise to fund additional *da'wa* activities. This motive creates a balance between leveraging economic potential and maintaining the primary goal of *da'wa*, which is to convey religious messages with sincere intent.

### **Redefining *Da'wa* in the Context of the Digital Era**

In the contemporary landscape, *da'wa* has undergone a significant transformation from conventional methods to digital platforms. This shift has enabled *da'wa* to reach broader audiences, transcending geographical and demographic boundaries. With increased accessibility, individuals from diverse locations can now engage with religious content more easily, and social media has emerged as a new channel for communicating religious understanding.<sup>85</sup> However, this transformation also raises questions regarding the depth of religious comprehension amidst the rapid and often superficial flow of information.

In the context of the digital era, *da'wa* can be redefined as a strategic effort to disseminate Islamic teachings by leveraging modern technology. Digital platforms not only expand outreach but also enable more dynamic interactions between preachers and their audiences. *Da'wa* activities on social media are not merely about spreading religious messages; they also represent an endeavour to shape virtual public spaces, as involving interaction and influence over public discourse.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, the algorithmic nature of digital media tends to prioritise popular content, which risks compromising the nuance and depth of Islamic teachings. Therefore, preachers must critically evaluate their methods of message delivery to ensure they remain relevant and engaging in line with current trends.

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Strategies and Impact of Islamic Da'wah on Instagram," *Channel: Jurnal Komunikasi* 11, no. 2 (2023): 121–28, <https://doi.org/10.12928/channel.v11i2.474>.

<sup>85</sup> Ansori and Muhammad Iqbal Juliansyahzen, "The Contestation of the Family Law Discourse in the Digital Age: Islam, State, and Gender," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 6, no. 1 (2022), 253, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v6i1.9111>.

<sup>86</sup> Luluk Fikri Zuhriyah and Afifatur Rohimah, "Domination of Public Sphere And Reputation of Preacher in Social Media," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 18, no. 01 (2024), 93, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2024.18.1.69-97>.

Overall, digital *da'wa* serves as a bridge connecting spiritual values with the practical needs of modern society. This approach enables *da'wa* to remain relevant in an era where information is easily accessible and trends are constantly evolving. However, the effectiveness of digital *da'wa* heavily relies on the ability of Islamic preachers to balance tradition with innovation. Without critical reflection, digital *da'wa* risks losing its essence as an endeavour to bring humanity closer to divine values.

### **Conclusion**

This study concludes that the *Tuan Gurus* in Lombok have a positive perception of digital *da'wa*, particularly regarding their general views, its effectiveness, accessibility and interactive convenience, and the quality and delivery of content. The digital *da'wa* conducted by the *Tuan Gurus* is motivated by the reach and effectiveness of *da'wa* as an adaptation to contemporary trends, religious and moral motivations, and economic incentives. Thus, *da'wa* can be reconceptualised as a strategic endeavour to propagate Islamic teachings using contemporary technology, connecting spiritual principles with the demands of modern society while maintaining relevance in an age defined by readily available information and rapidly changing trends.

This study recommends the implementation of targeted support and training initiatives to enhance the digital literacy and content creation skills of *Tuan Gurus* in Lombok. Additionally, it suggests that Islamic institutions and government bodies collaborate to provide the necessary resources and infrastructure. These recommendations aim to ensure that *Tuan Gurus* can effectively utilise digital platforms while maintaining religious and moral principles. The study's limitations include its narrow focus on *Tuan Gurus*' perceptions and motivations, which may overlook other important aspects of digital *da'wa*, such as challenges in implementation. Additionally, the context-specific nature of the study may limit the applicability of its findings to different regions or communities with differing Islamic practices. []

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