Evaluation of Digital Da'wah and Counseling Programs in the Modern Era

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Abstract: The development of digital technology has significantly transformed the way Islamic preaching (*da'wah*) and counseling are delivered to the public. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of digital da'wah and counseling programs in the modern era by examining communication strategies, audience engagement, and their impact on religious understanding and behavior. The research employs literature review, observation of digital platforms (such as social media, podcasts, and online counseling applications), and interviews with Islamic preachers and counselors. The findings indicate that digital-based da'wah and counseling possess great potential to expand the reach of religious messages, enhance interactivity, and adapt approaches to the needs of younger generations. However, challenges remain, including content authenticity, digital literacy among audiences, and the risk of disseminating unverified information. In conclusion, the effectiveness of digital da'wah and counseling programs depends on the integration of Islamic values, counselor professionalism, and the ethical as well as innovative use of technology.

Keywords: digital da'wah, Islamic counseling, social media, communication technology, program evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Advances in digital technology have brought significant changes in the modern era in various aspects of life, including religious practices and social services. It is well known that the paradigm of preaching is no longer limited to traditional lectures and sermons. Instead, the dissemination of religious messages is now increasingly linked to the use of modern communication technologies such as social media, online video platforms, and instant messaging applications (Y. Rahmawati et al., 2024). One manifestation of this change is the emergence of digital da'wah and counseling, which utilize online platforms to spread religious teachings and provide spiritual guidance (Pratiwi, 2024). The modern digital era is characterized by wider and faster access to information through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, which have now become the main means of daily communication, both for personal and professional purposes (Azraf & Abdullah, 2024).

Digital da'wah, as an evolution of conventional da'wah from the pulpit, has opened up new opportunities for spreading religious messages more widely and effectively through technology (Nawaffani, 2023). This creates a great opportunity for digital da'wah and counseling to take

advantage of the interactive features and wide reach of social media to spread religious values and provide spiritual guidance to the millennial generation (Pratiwi, 2024) (Harahap et al., 2024).

In line with this, the digitization of da'wah and counseling has also become an inevitable phenomenon along with the massive adoption of technology in various levels of society (Wahid, 2024). This development is driven by high internet penetration, making the digital space a new and essential medium for the delivery of Islamic teachings and the provision of spiritual guidance services. In this context, da'wah is no longer limited to the physical pulpit of the mosque, but extends to digital media, creating a new form of da'wah that is adaptive and professional (Nawaffani, 2023). Based on the 2025 report from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the national internet penetration rate has reached 80.66%, or around 229.4 million active users, which confirms the urgency of developing digitally integrated da'wah and counseling programs (Rohmah Karim & Septiana, 2022).

This adaptation requires comprehensive evaluation to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of these programs in the context of an ever-evolving digital society (Burham, 2023b). The evaluation of digital da'wah programs must not only measure the effectiveness of message delivery, but also how the message is received and interpreted by a diverse digital audience (Burham, 2023a). Such da'wah and counseling strategies are important to ensure that religious messages are not only conveyed but also able to inspire and guide individuals in facing the challenges of the digital era, including issues such as the spread of false information and a lack of digital literacy among the public (R. Rahmawati & Ghazali, 2023) (Hariyadi, 2023). In addition, the use of digital media in preaching and counseling must carefully consider the characteristics of the audience, especially the millennial generation, so that the preaching material can be presented in a humanistic, easy-to-understand, and relevant manner.

Therefore, it is important to evaluate these programs to understand their impact and effectiveness, especially in responding to the spiritual needs of millennials who dominate the digital realm (Pratiwi, 2024). The use of digital media must also consider existing challenges, such as cybersecurity issues, data privacy, and the potential misuse of information, which require a strong framework to protect users and ensure the integrity of religious messages (Hamsin et al.,

Specifically, this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness and challenges of digital da'wah and religious counseling programs, given the complexity of modernization and the increasingly technology-integrated behavior of society. This approach focuses on an in-depth analysis of the integration of technology and spirituality, as well as assessing how digital dakwah plays a role in spreading the message of Islam in the modern era (Kasir & Awali, 2024). In particular, this study will examine how the evaluation of digital da'wah and counseling functions as an effective means of da'wah communication, considering the dynamics of digital audiences and the ethical and data security challenges that may arise (Hamsin et al., 2023).

This research is expected to enrich the scientific knowledge in the fields of da'wah, counseling, and information technology, while providing a comprehensive evaluation framework. The findings of this study can serve as a guide for digital da'wah platform managers, counselors, academics, and policy makers in designing, implementing, and evaluating existing programs, so that they can reach a wider audience and provide higher quality spiritual guidance. Therefore, the evaluation of digital da'wah and counseling programs is crucial to ensure that religious messages are conveyed accurately, relevantly, and ethically to an increasingly digitally connected audience (Shofiyatur & Septiana, 2025).

METHOD

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, which is a systematic and structured approach to collecting and analyzing data from various relevant literature sources. The purpose of SLR is to identify, evaluate, and synthesize existing research on a particular topic, in this case related to the evaluation of digital da'wah and counseling. This method provides a comprehensive overview of the existing literature and helps identify gaps or shortcomings in previous research (Faisal & Mitra, 2025). This method was chosen because it allows researchers to intensively investigate contemporary phenomena in the context of real life, particularly related to the evaluation of digital da'wah and counseling programs (Pratiwi, 2024).

The collected data was then analyzed using content analysis techniques, which involved careful reading, grouping by theme, comparison between literature, and interpretation of the study results to produce a complete conceptual overview of the integration of technology and spirituality in digital da'wah and counseling. Furthermore, the results of the literature study show that digital da'wah has become a dominant form of study in Indonesia, with a focus on the use of digital media for the dissemination of religious messages (Burham, 2023a). This indicates a significant shift in traditional da'wah patterns towards a model that is more adaptive to the contemporary digital landscape, where online platforms play a crucial role in disseminating Islamic teachings (Syarif & Hannan, 2022).

Using the SLR approach, this study aims to make a significant contribution to the understanding of the evaluation of digital da'wah and counseling. This study is also expected to provide useful recommendations for dai and da'wah practitioners so that they can utilize technology more efficiently, thereby enabling da'wah messages to be conveyed better and more widely in this digital era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The evaluation of digital da'wah and counseling programs in a broader context can be defined as a systematic and objective process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of a program or intervention. This process aims to provide complete, specific, and useful information for decision makers in improving, discontinuing, or continuing programs based on strong empirical evidence. Specifically, program evaluation is a systematic activity that involves gathering information, analysis, and assessment based on established criteria to aid decision-making and to measure the extent to which a program has achieved its objectives (Faizin & Kusumaningrum, 2023).

In the context of da'wah and counseling, program evaluation focuses on assessing the reach of religious messages and psychological assistance delivered through digital platforms, such as social media, mobile applications, or websites. This approach allows for the identification of success in attracting audience interest through innovative video and audio content, while also analyzing Gen Z's preferences for da'wah delivery. In addition, this evaluation also considers how technology and digital skills can affect accessibility to sharia services and the operational efficiency of an implemented program.

Improving digital literacy among the Muslim community is currently a crucial factor in maximizing the benefits of this digital transformation (Susanti, 2024). Therefore, this evaluation must also measure the extent to which digital programs are able to improve the digital literacy and religious understanding of the audience. In addition, the evaluation must also identify challenges that may arise, such as the digital divide and human resource readiness, which can hinder the

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successful implementation of technology in Islam. The importance of technological innovation in the transformation of Islam in the digital era is emphasized because it shows that evaluations must also analyze adaptation and sustainable development (Suwahyu, 2024). Furthermore, evaluations also need to review the ability of programs to respond to the dynamics of changes in the spiritual and psychological needs of society amid technological disruption, thereby ensuring long-term relevance.

The provision of digital da'wah and counseling services in the modern era faces various complex challenges, ranging from technical issues to sociocultural aspects that affect program adoption and effectiveness. These include obstacles related to uneven digital infrastructure, challenges in ensuring data security and user privacy, and the changing dynamics of audience preferences regarding the format and substance of digital content. In addition, institutions face significant challenges in effectively educating and informing audiences about specific content, such as waqf, amid the flood of information.

The following are some of the challenges in providing digital da'wah and counseling services.

1. Limited Access

    One of the main obstacles is the still significant digital divide, where internet access and ownership of technological devices are very difficult to reach in remote areas. This limits the reach of digital da'wah and counseling services, especially in rural areas or areas with limited infrastructure (Subroto et al., 2023). This challenge is exacerbated by the lack of digital literacy among some communities, which hinders their ability to access and utilize digital services optimally. In addition, varying internet connection speeds in different regions are also an obstacle, as not all regions have fast internet connections, which can also affect the quality of the user experience in accessing da'wah and counseling content that requires high bandwidth, such as video streaming or interactive counseling sessions (Hariyadi et al., 2019).

2. Ethical and Privacy Issues

    It is important to understand that ethical and privacy issues in digital services include challenges related to personal data protection and information security, especially in the context of sensitive spiritual guidance. This involves the need for transparent privacy policies, mutual consent between both parties, and the use of the latest encryption technology to protect the confidentiality of personal information shared during counseling sessions (Hamsin et al., 2023).

These measures should be oriented toward continuous improvement, ensuring that any evaluation findings are integrated into the next program development cycle. There are also evaluation-based development measures.

1. Analysis of Evaluation Results

    The analysis of evaluation results must involve a comprehensive interpretation of the collected data, combining quantitative findings on operational efficiency with qualitative insights into user experience and program impact (R. Rahmawati & Ghazali, 2023). This process requires multidisciplinary expertise to identify the root causes of problems and potential improvements, as well as to formulate specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound recommendations for the next program iteration.

2. Improvement Action Planning

    Improvement action planning must be based on established priorities, taking into account available resources and the potential positive impact on the achievement of program objectives. The action plan to be implemented must also include mechanisms for continuous monitoring

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and evaluation of the implementation of improvements. This aims to ensure that the changes made are effective and can deliver the desired results. (Alkhouri, 2024)

3. Implementation and Monitoring

Implementation involves carrying out the formulated action plan, with close supervision of each stage to ensure compliance with established standards and the planned schedule. Continuous monitoring is also crucial for detecting potential deviations or obstacles early on, allowing for adaptive strategy adjustments to optimize results (Komsiyah, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The development of digital technology has driven significant transformation in the practices of preaching and counseling, shifting from conventional pulpits to broader and more efficient online platforms. This study confirms that digital preaching and counseling are not only an inevitable phenomenon, but also an urgent need to reach modern audiences, especially the millennial generation, who are highly integrated with technology. The use of social media and mobile applications opens up great opportunities for the adaptive and professional dissemination of religious values and spiritual guidance, transcending geographical and time constraints.

However, the effectiveness of these programs is highly dependent on systematic and continuous evaluation. Such evaluation must be able to assess the relevance, efficiency, and impact of programs in addressing the spiritual and psychological needs of the community, while also measuring the extent to which programs can improve the audience's digital literacy and religious understanding. A crucial challenge that needs to be overcome is the issue of the digital divide, which limits some people's access to online services, as well as issues of ethics and data privacy that require transparent policies and strict information protection.

To ensure the sustainability and optimization of digital da'wah and counseling programs, a robust evaluation-based development framework is needed. This includes three main steps: comprehensive analysis of evaluation results, planning of measurable and priority-oriented corrective actions, and continuous implementation and monitoring for strategic adaptation. Thus, religious messages can be conveyed accurately, relevantly, and ethically, providing quality spiritual guidance amid the complexities of the digital age. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of da'wah and counseling in the digital age, offering practical guidance for stakeholders to design more effective and responsible programs.

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