

DIGITAL DA'WAH AND ISLAMIC COUNSELING: CHALLENGES, INNOVATIONS, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS IN THE ERA OF SOCIETY 5.0

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Abstract: The rapid development of digital technology has transformed how Islamic preaching (da'wah) and counseling are conducted, accessed, and perceived in contemporary society. From mosque-based sermons and face-to-face counseling sessions, these activities have evolved into digital practices mediated by social media platforms, mobile applications, and artificial intelligence (AI). This study aims to analyze the transformation, challenges, and future prospects of digital da'wah and Islamic counseling in the modern era. Using a qualitative descriptive approach with the library research method, this study collects and analyzes data from books, journal articles, and credible electronic sources related to Islamic communication and digital counseling. The results show that digital transformation provides extensive opportunities for accessibility, creativity, and interactivity in disseminating Islamic messages and offering psychological guidance. However, it also presents significant challenges, including technical limitations, ethical issues, reduced emotional connection, misinformation, and the influence of social media algorithms. Despite these challenges, digital da'wah and counseling have great potential to build inclusive, humanistic, and value-based communities. The integration of Islamic ethics such as amanah (trust), hikmah (wisdom), and akhlaq (morality) with technological literacy, artificial intelligence, and big data analytics is essential to ensure that digital religious communication remains authentic and spiritually meaningful. Therefore, this study concludes that digital da'wah and counseling are not only adaptive responses to technological change but also strategic efforts to strengthen faith, psychological well-being, and moral civilization in the era of Society 5.0.

Keywords: Digital Da'wah, Islamic Counseling, Social Media, Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, Society 5.0

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has transformed patterns of human interaction in various aspects of life, including in the fields of *da'wah* (Islamic preaching) and counseling. The emergence of social media, messaging applications, and even platforms based on Artificial Intelligence (AI) has shifted the way people communicate, seek information, and build relationships. This change has influenced the methods of *da'wah* and counseling, which were previously conducted primarily through face-to-face interactions, to now being carried out online. Digital *da'wah* has become a new alternative in spreading Islamic teachings that is more adaptive to the needs of millennial and Generation Z audiences, who are deeply familiar with the digital world.

Through platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, Islamic messages can be packaged in shorter, more visual, and interactive formats, allowing them to reach a wider audience across geographical boundaries. Not only *da'wah*, but counseling practices have also undergone significant transformation. Digital counseling enables counselors to provide psychological assistance services through applications, chat, or video calls, thereby overcoming the limitations of time, distance, and cost (Habibullah, 2023).

On one hand, digitalization opens a more creative and inclusive space for *da'wah* and provides counseling services that are more easily accessible at any time. In *da'wah*, the challenges include information overload, the rise of provocative religious content, and low levels of digital literacy among the public. In digital counseling, the main challenges involve ethical concerns, data privacy, and the limited ability to build emotional closeness between counselor and client.

On the other hand, technological development also presents great opportunities. Digital *da'wah* innovation can be achieved by utilizing creative multimedia, big data, and artificial intelligence, allowing for personalized content tailored to audience needs. Similarly, in counseling, the use of online counseling applications and AI-based platforms can expand service reach to remote areas (Fauzi, 2025). Based on this background, this article discusses three main aspects: obstacles, innovations, and future prospects of digital *da'wah* and counseling. This is not only to understand existing challenges but also to formulate strategies for developing *da'wah* and counseling that are more effective, humanistic, and relevant to the dynamics of modern society.

Although studies on digital *da'wah* and counseling have been widely conducted by previous researchers, most tend to focus on one aspect for instance, the effectiveness of social media in *da'wah* or ethical issues in online counseling (Barri et al., 2025). Few studies have integrated both comprehensively to examine shared challenges, opportunities for innovation, and future prospects in the context of modern technological development. Moreover, much of the existing research emphasizes the technical use of platforms, while discussions on ethical, psychological, and sociocultural implications are often underexplored. Therefore, this study is important to provide a more holistic understanding of the obstacles, innovations, and prospects of digital *da'wah* and counseling, while emphasizing the integration of Islamic values amidst technological advancement.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using the library research method. This approach was chosen because the focus of the research is to analyze the phenomenon of digital *da'wah* and digital counseling as forms of Islamic adaptation to technological advancement. The research data were obtained through a review of literature in the form of books, scholarly articles,

national and international journals, and relevant electronic documents related to the themes of digital *da'wah* and online counseling.

The data collection technique was carried out through documentation, namely by gathering various credible and up-to-date written sources. The collected data were then analyzed using content analysis, which involved reading, understanding, classifying, and interpreting the contents of the literature sources. This analysis aimed to identify patterns, concepts, and comparisons between conventional and digital *da'wah*, as well as between face-to-face and online counseling. To enhance data validity, the researcher employed source triangulation, comparing information from multiple literature sources, both academic and practical. The findings of this study are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the opportunities, challenges, and effective strategies in developing digital *da'wah* and digital counseling in the modern era, ensuring that these practices remain aligned with Islamic values and the needs of contemporary society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the literature review, digital *da'wah* is understood as the process of delivering Islamic teachings through digital media such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, podcasts, and Islamic propagation applications. This method of delivery allows religious messages to reach a wider audience across generations and transcend geographical boundaries. Meanwhile, digital counseling or *cyber counseling* refers to counseling services conducted through online media such as video calls, online counseling applications (e.g., Riliv and Kalm), instant messaging, or artificial intelligence (AI)-based chatbots (Pratama & Nur, 2023). These services are considered effective because they overcome spatial, temporal, and financial barriers while providing flexible access for individuals with high mobility or those living in remote areas.

From the results of the literature analysis, the obstacles in digital *da'wah* and counseling can be categorized into four aspects. Technical barriers include limited internet connectivity, inadequate devices, and low technological literacy among some *da'i* and counselors. Ethical barriers involve issues of client data confidentiality, the use of inappropriate or insensitive language, and the potential for excessive commercialization that may undermine the quality of services. Psychological barriers manifest in digital fatigue, decreased empathy due to limited non-verbal communication, feelings of isolation, and the risk of trauma if personal data are leaked. Meanwhile, socio-cultural barriers include generational gaps in communication styles, low levels of digital literacy, and the risk of radicalization due to the spread of unverified religious information (Faridah & Melati Amir, 2025).

In addition to these challenges, this study also identifies various innovations in digital *da'wah* and counseling. Social media has been utilized as a creative space for spreading religious and psychological messages through short videos, podcasts, infographics, and Islamic educational content. Cross-disciplinary collaboration among counselors, information technology experts, communication specialists, and data analysts enables the creation of more relevant, credible, and socially responsive services. Another recent innovation is the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and big data. AI contributes to developing Islamic chatbots and pre-counseling features, while big data assists in mapping public needs and trends, allowing *da'wah* and counseling strategies to be designed with greater precision (Agfa & Fahri, 2024).

The future prospects of digital *da'wah* and counseling indicate vast opportunities, particularly in the Society 5.0 era. These services are projected to reach communities in frontier, outermost,

and underdeveloped regions (3T areas) and even across national borders, fostering positive virtual communities grounded in Islamic values and mental well-being. Another promising prospect is the transformation of the roles of *da'i* and counsellors from merely being preachers or face-to-face therapists to becoming professional, ethical, and media-literate digital content creators. Furthermore, guidance and counseling (BK) services in schools play an essential role in supporting the advancement of digital *da'wah* and counseling by integrating Islamic digital literacy education and helping students address psychological challenges in the modern era (Umi, 2023).

The results of this study indicate that digital *da'wah* and digital counseling are adaptive responses to the evolution of digital society. However, their effectiveness largely depends on the ability of *da'wah* practitioners and counselors to overcome the emerging challenges. Technical barriers, for instance, remain a major issue in Indonesia, as there are still gaps in internet infrastructure in several regions. Studies emphasize that the low level of digital literacy among the public increases the risk of misuse of *da'wah* messages, which can lead to disinformation. Ethical barriers, especially those related to client privacy, are also highly critical. It has been highlighted that violations of confidentiality in digital counseling can diminish client trust and have serious consequences for their mental health. From a psychological perspective, the limited non-verbal interaction in digital services makes it difficult for counselors to build rapport (emotional closeness between counselor and client), even though such emotional closeness is one of the key factors determining the success of counseling. Socio-cultural barriers are equally significant, as differences in communication styles across generations require *da'i* and counselors to be more adaptive in crafting their messages (Ibad, 2024).

On the other hand, the emergence of various innovations presents strategic opportunities. The use of social media has proven its role not only as a *da'wah* channel but also as a space for the formation of virtual communities that can strengthen users' religious identity. In the counseling domain, online applications such as Riliv and Kalm provide more inclusive and cost-efficient services, although they still face challenges in building emotional connection. The application of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and big data also opens possibilities for *da'wah* and counseling that are more personalized, responsive, and needs-based. It has been asserted that big data can identify socio-religious trends, allowing *da'wah* messages to become more relevant, while AI can function as an initial service before clients meet counselors directly (Ahmad Muhamad Mustain Nasoha et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the utilization of these technologies must be guided by Islamic ethical values to avoid dehumanization or excessive commercialization.

The future prospects for digital *da'wah* and counseling are highly promising, particularly with the development of the Society 5.0 concept, which emphasizes the integration of technology and human values. In this context, digital *da'wah* and counseling are directed toward more humanistic, personalized, and community-based service models. The transformation of the roles of *da'i* and counselors is also inevitable they are required to become digital content creators who possess media literacy competence while maintaining professionalism and ethical integrity. Schools, through guidance and counseling (BK) services, can serve as strategic platforms to support this transformation, as BK helps students recognize their potential, develop talents, and address personal or social problems with the assistance of professional counselors. Thus, digital *da'wah* and counseling not only address the spiritual and psychological needs of modern society but also become an integral part of the education system, shaping individuals who are religious, mentally healthy, and adaptable to social change (Najwa Nathania Narada et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

The transformation of Islamic da'wah and counseling in the digital era represents an adaptive response to social change and the advancement of communication technology. The shift from traditional mosque-centered preaching to digital-based da'wah on social media platforms signifies a new paradigm in the dissemination of Islamic values. Likewise, Islamic counseling, which was once conducted face-to-face, has evolved into online services that reach the wider community more efficiently, effectively, and flexibly.

The findings indicate that digital da'wah and counseling present strategic opportunities to expand accessibility, enhance message delivery, and build inclusive religious communities that remain relevant to contemporary needs. However, this development is also accompanied by multidimensional challenges including technical, ethical, psychological, and socio-cultural barriers that may affect the quality of interaction and the authenticity of religious messages.

Therefore, the success of digital da'wah and counseling depends not only on technological proficiency but also on the ability of preachers and counselors to integrate Islamic values such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), *bikmah* (wisdom), and *akhlaq* (ethics) into digital practices. Efforts toward Islamic digital literacy, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and the integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and big data should be directed toward supporting human-centered, ethical, and credible approaches to Islamic da'wah and counseling. Ultimately, digital da'wah and counseling should serve as instruments for strengthening spirituality, expanding knowledge, and building a moral and ethical digital civilization. Through the synergy between *fatwa* as a moral authority and algorithms as modern instruments, Islam can continue to act as a transformative force in addressing the challenges and needs of society in the era of Society 5.0.

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