



The challenges of da'wah in the era of artificial intelligence

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ABSTRACT

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into religious communication has transformed the practice of digital da'wah, yet studies that comprehensively examine both its opportunities and ethical challenges from an Islamic communication perspective remain limited. This study aims to analyze the potential, challenges, and ethical implications of AI in digital da'wah while addressing this research gap by synthesizing current scholarly evidence. The novelty of this study lies in its integrative analysis that connects AI adoption, Islamic communication ethics, and strategies for sustainable digital da'wah. This study employed a qualitative approach using library research as its research design. Data was collected through a documentation study of peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles, books, conference proceedings, and other scientific documents relevant to the research topic. The selected literature was analyzed systematically using predefined inclusion criteria to ensure its relevance and credibility. Data analysis was conducted using the content analysis method through the stages of data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that AI has considerable potential to expand access to religious information and enhance the effectiveness of digital da'wah. Nevertheless, AI also poses risks, including a crisis of religious authority, the dissemination of unverified information, the commercialization of da'wah, and the diminishing humanistic dimension of religious communication. Therefore, strengthening digital literacy, improving technological competencies among da'i (Islamic preachers), implementing Islamic communication ethics, and fostering collaboration between religious scholars and technology developers are essential to ensure that the utilization of AI remains aligned with Islamic values. These findings contribute to the growing discourse on AI in religious communication by providing a conceptual framework for integrating technological innovation with Islamic ethical principles, thereby offering practical and theoretical guidance for future digital da'wah initiatives.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has fundamentally transformed the way people access, produce, and disseminate information, including religious knowledge. The widespread adoption of generative AI technologies has enabled users to obtain instant responses to religious questions, generate Islamic educational content, translate religious texts, and personalize learning experiences. Consequently, AI has become a crucial issue for contemporary Islamic da'wah because it is reshaping how religious messages are communicated, who delivers them, and how religious authority is perceived in the digital era. In this study, Artificial Intelligence refers primarily to generative AI technologies and AI-powered digital applications, including large language model (LLM)-based chatbots, automated translation systems, religious consultation chatbots, recommendation algorithms, and AI-assisted content generation platforms that are increasingly employed in digital da'wah.

In the context of Islamic da'wah, Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents a wide range of new opportunities. Various AI-based platforms enable individuals to access religious information quickly and conveniently. AI-powered chatbots, religious consultation applications, automated translation of Islamic texts, and generative technologies capable of producing da'wah content have become integral components of the transformation of Islamic communication in the digital era (Tiara & Nabila, 2025). Recent studies further indicate that AI technologies are increasingly utilized by Muslim communities, Islamic educational institutions, and da'wah organizations to develop multilingual religious content, provide instant religious consultation, automate content production, and improve audience engagement across digital platforms, demonstrating that AI has moved beyond an experimental technology to become an emerging component of contemporary da'wah practices. Furthermore, AI's ability to process large amounts of data and personalize information allows da'wah messages to be delivered more effectively according to the needs and preferences of diverse audiences (Habibullah, 2023).

Nevertheless, the development of AI brings not only opportunities but also significant challenges. Numerous studies indicate that the application of AI in religious contexts raises complex issues (Edlyn et al., 2025). One of the primary concerns is the validity of religious information generated by AI (Maulidna et al., 2025). Unlike Islamic scholars (ulama), who possess scholarly competence, established methodologies for legal reasoning (*istinbāt al-aḥkām*), and clear chains of knowledge transmission (*sanad*), AI systems operate based on available datasets and lack the capacity to fully comprehend spiritual, social, and contextual dimensions of religious teachings (Khairunnisa, 2024).

Moreover, the ease of access to AI technologies has the potential to alter how individuals acquire religious knowledge. Whereas religious scholars traditionally served as the primary source of religious guidance, many people now increasingly rely on digital platforms and AI systems to obtain answers to religious questions. This phenomenon raises concerns regarding the shifting of religious authority and the emergence of instant and superficial understandings of Islam that may lack depth and critical reflection (Ula & Muhid, 2025). Another significant challenge is the presence of algorithmic bias and digital misinformation. AI systems are fundamentally developed based on data collected from various sources. If these datasets are unrepresentative or contain biases, the resulting information may also be biased. In the context of da'wah, such conditions can influence public understanding of Islamic teachings and potentially reinforce ideological polarization within religious communities (R. E. Saputra & Irfanda, 2025).

The advancement of AI technologies has also created opportunities for the misuse of information through deep-fake technology, voice manipulation, and the automated production of content that is difficult to distinguish from authentic materials. This phenomenon poses serious concerns within religious life because it may be exploited to spread misinformation, manipulate statements made by religious figures, or shape misleading public opinions (Umara et al., 2025).

Several previous studies have examined the utilization of digital technology in Islamic da'wah. Maharani et al., (2025) argued that digital technology enhances the effectiveness of disseminating da'wah messages to broader audiences. Likewise, Jaya & Pratama, (2025) explained that AI has the potential to strengthen the dissemination of Islamic values through various digital platforms. Another study conducted by Sopiyan et al., (2025) found that the application of AI in da'wah communication can improve the accessibility of religious information.

Although these studies have demonstrated the benefits of AI for digital da'wah, most have focused primarily on its technological opportunities and communication effectiveness. Limited attention has been devoted to examining how AI simultaneously transforms religious authority, the validity of Islamic knowledge, communication ethics, and the broader practice of contemporary da'wah. Existing studies tend to discuss these issues separately, resulting in a fragmented understanding of the implications of AI for Islamic communication.

To address this research gap, this study develops an integrated analysis that connects AI utilization with Islamic communication ethics, the transformation of religious authority, the validity of AI-generated religious information, and adaptive da'wah strategies. This integrative perspective constitutes the novelty of the present study because it extends existing discussions beyond technological adoption toward a comprehensive understanding of the ethical and communicative consequences of AI in Islamic da'wah. Accordingly, this study aims to examine how Artificial Intelligence transforms contemporary da'wah by analyzing its opportunities, ethical challenges, impacts on religious authority and communication, and proposing adaptive strategies grounded in Islamic values. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of digital da'wah and Islamic communication studies while providing practical guidance for Islamic preachers (da'i), religious institutions, policymakers, and technology developers in fostering responsible AI utilization that remains aligned with Islamic values.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach using an *integrative library research design* to examine the challenges of Islamic da'wah in the era of Artificial Intelligence (AI). An integrative library research approach was selected because it enables researchers to synthesize findings from diverse empirical and conceptual studies, identify emerging patterns, reveal research gaps, and develop comprehensive conceptual insights regarding complex and interdisciplinary issues such as AI, Islamic communication, and digital da'wah.

The research drew upon both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles addressing topics such as digital da'wah, Islamic communication, Artificial Intelligence, technology ethics, and the transformation of religious authority in digital environments. These sources were selected from reputable national and international academic publications. Secondary sources included scholarly books, conference proceedings, research reports, policy documents, and other relevant references that provided theoretical and contextual support for the analysis.

Data collection was carried out through a systematic documentation process involving the identification, selection, organization, and critical examination of literature relevant to the study objectives. Attention was given to the relevance, credibility, and scholarly contribution of each source to ensure the reliability and comprehensiveness of the collected data. This process enabled the researcher to capture a wide range of perspectives concerning the evolving relationship between Islamic da'wah and AI-driven technological developments.

The analysis consisted of several sequential stages. First, all selected articles were read repeatedly to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their content. Second, an initial coding process was conducted by identifying meaningful statements related to AI utilization, opportunities, ethical challenges, religious authority, information validity, and digital da'wah. Third, similar codes were grouped into broader analytical categories. Finally, these categories were

synthesized into overarching themes representing the major issues discussed across the literature. The themes were subsequently interpreted considering Islamic communication theory and contemporary da'wah studies to construct an integrated conceptual understanding of AI's implications for Islamic preaching.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation was employed by comparing evidence from multiple scholarly publications representing different disciplinary perspectives. The consistency of coding and thematic interpretation was maintained through repeated comparison between studies and continuous refinement of categories throughout the analytical process. This procedure minimized potential bias while strengthening the credibility and comprehensiveness of the study. Consequently, the research provides a robust synthesis of current scholarly knowledge regarding the opportunities, challenges, and ethical implications of Artificial Intelligence for contemporary Islamic *da'wah*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study indicate that the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed the practice of Islamic da'wah by creating both significant opportunities and complex challenges in religious communication. The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become one of the major drivers of communication transformation in the digital era. This technology has not only changed the ways people access and disseminate information but has also influenced religious practices, including Islamic da'wah activities (Nijhum, 2025). Within the context of religious communication, AI enables the production, distribution, and consumption of religious information to occur more rapidly, broadly, and personally than through conventional communication media (Fahma, 2025). The analysis suggests that AI has shifted da'wah from conventional communication practices toward more interactive, personalized, and technology-driven forms of religious engagement. The emergence of this technology demonstrates that Islamic da'wah has entered a new phase characterized by the integration of Islamic values and digital technological advancement.

This transformation is evident in the increasing utilization of AI-based platforms in da'wah activities. Various AI applications assist in preparing sermon materials, translating Islamic literature, managing da'wah-related social media accounts, and providing religious consultation services through chatbots (Nijhum, 2025). According to Sauma, (2026), AI has created new opportunities in the production of religious messages by enhancing communication efficiency and expanding the reach of da'wah to global audiences. This finding is consistent with Rahmitha et al., (2026) who argues that AI can strengthen the dissemination of Islamic values through digital media that are more adaptive to the needs of younger generations. These findings reinforce previous studies while highlighting that AI not only improves communication efficiency but also changes the patterns through which religious knowledge is produced and accessed.

From a da'wah perspective, improved access to religious information represents one of the most significant benefits of AI development. Individuals who previously faced limitations in accessing Islamic educational institutions can now obtain religious information more conveniently through the internet. Nurhayati et al., (2025), explains that AI technology facilitates more flexible religious learning, allowing users to access Islamic educational materials anytime and anywhere. This condition indicates that AI has substantial potential to support the enhancement of religious literacy within society.

In addition to improving information accessibility, AI enables the personalization of da'wah (Rahmitha et al., 2026). Artificial intelligence systems can analyze user behaviour and preferences, allowing religious messages to be tailored to individual needs. Communication theory suggests that message personalization enhances communication effectiveness because recipients perceive the information as more relevant to their circumstances (Saputra & Hidayat, 2025).

Consequently, AI's ability to segment audiences represents a strategic opportunity for the development of contemporary da'wah.

Despite these advantages, the findings indicate that AI development also presents several complex challenges. One of the most significant concerns is the transformation of religious authority. Within the Islamic tradition, *ulama* occupy a central position as authoritative sources for understanding religious teachings. Their authority is established through extensive education, mastery of Islamic sciences, and social legitimacy gained from the community (Sudirman et al., 2026). However, digital technological advancement has created new patterns of religious knowledge acquisition. Many individuals now prefer to use search engines or AI-powered chatbots to obtain answers to religious questions because they are perceived as faster and more convenient. This study indicates that the transformation of religious authority is one of the most critical implications of AI adoption in digital da'wah. This phenomenon can be explained through the concept of digital religion proposed by Campbell (2021). According to this perspective, digital technologies have transformed the way religious authority is constructed and recognized. Whereas authority was previously concentrated in individuals or institutions, authority within digital environments has become more distributed and increasingly dependent on technological systems that provide information. In the context of da'wah, this situation has the potential to reduce the role of *ulama* as primary religious references and replace it with algorithm-based systems.

The shift in authority becomes even more problematic because AI lacks the capacity to perform *ijtihad* in the manner of qualified Islamic scholars. AI processes information based on existing data patterns and does not possess the ability to understand social, cultural, and spiritual contexts comprehensively (Nawir et al., 2026). Rohman & Al-Athiriyah, (2025) emphasizes that the use of AI in religious contexts may result in textual and partial interpretations if it is not accompanied by guidance from competent religious authorities. Consequently, excessive dependence on AI may affect the quality of religious understanding within society.

Another major concern is the validity of religious information generated by AI systems. The quality of AI-generated information largely depends on the datasets used to train algorithms. If these datasets are unreliable or contain certain biases, the resulting information may also be inaccurate (Fahrudin, 2025). Many AI systems continue to face challenges related to data bias and limitations in understanding the complexity of Islamic teachings. Unlike previous studies that mainly emphasized the benefits of AI, the present analysis demonstrates that information validity remains a fundamental issue that must be addressed before AI can be widely adopted in religious communication. These findings suggest that AI cannot yet serve as an authoritative source for addressing religious issues that require comprehensive legal and ethical considerations (Uthman & Fahm, 2025).

In addition to information validity, algorithmic bias represents another important challenge. Amin, (2025) argues that digital technologies are not entirely neutral because they are shaped by interests, values, and structural frameworks. Within social media environments, algorithms tend to prioritize content with high engagement levels rather than content with strong academic or educational quality. As a result, controversial or sensational religious content often receives greater exposure than moderate and educational content. This situation has the potential to intensify religious polarization in digital spaces.

Another challenge is the growing risk of misinformation and manipulation of religious information. AI's ability to generate text, images, and videos automatically creates opportunities to produce content that appears authentic but may not correspond to reality (Hayati et al., 2025). Indra (2026) explains that AI-based deepfake technology can be used to manipulate statements made by religious leaders, produce fabricated sermons, and spread religious misinformation. If left unaddressed, this phenomenon may reduce public trust in credible religious sources.

From an Islamic perspective, the dissemination of false information contradicts the principle of *tabayyun* as emphasized in Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat verse 6. This principle highlights

the importance of verifying information before accepting or disseminating it (Pratiwi et al., 2025). Therefore, strengthening digital literacy has become an essential strategy for responding to AI development. Individuals must possess the ability to evaluate information critically and understand the technological mechanisms operating within digital environments (Rahman & Aziz, 2023).

Overall, this study confirms previous research regarding the opportunities offered by AI for digital da'wah while extending the discussion by emphasizing that the transformation of religious authority, information validity, and Islamic communication ethics constitute interconnected challenges that should be addressed simultaneously. Theoretically, these findings contribute to the development of Islamic communication studies by demonstrating that AI should be understood not merely as a technological tool but also as a communication medium that reshapes the interaction between religious authority, religious messages, and Muslim audiences. Practically, the findings provide recommendations for Islamic preachers (*da'i*), religious institutions, and technology developers to promote the responsible and ethical use of AI in accordance with Islamic values.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that AI presents both opportunities and challenges for Islamic da'wah. The success of AI-assisted da'wah depends largely on the ability of Muslims to utilize technology wisely and responsibly. AI should be positioned as a supporting tool that enhances the effectiveness of da'wah communication rather than as a substitute for the roles of *ulama* and *da'i*. Through strengthening digital literacy, improving technological competencies, and implementing Islamic communication ethics, AI can be utilized as an adaptive instrument for da'wah development while remaining oriented toward the welfare (*maslahah*) of the Muslim community.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into Islamic da'wah has reshaped religious communication by creating new opportunities for expanding access to Islamic knowledge, improving communication effectiveness, and supporting more adaptive digital da'wah practices, while simultaneously introducing challenges related to religious authority, information validity, algorithmic bias, misinformation, and communication ethics. Rather than functioning as a replacement for *ulama* and *da'i*, AI should be positioned as a complementary technological tool whose utilization must remain guided by Islamic ethical principles and human religious authority. The findings contribute to the development of Islamic communication and digital da'wah studies by emphasizing that the successful integration of AI depends on balancing technological innovation with the preservation of religious credibility, ethical communication, and the values of *maslahah*. Practically, this study provides a conceptual reference for Islamic preachers, religious institutions, and technology developers in designing responsible AI-assisted da'wah initiatives. Future research is encouraged to employ empirical approaches to investigate AI implementation in diverse da'wah contexts, examine its influence on religious behavior and authority in digital environments, and develop AI governance models informed by Islamic values and the principles of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* to support sustainable and ethical digital da'wah.

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