



Da'wah in the Algorithmic Ecosystem: A Critical Review of Islamic Communication Strategies on TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts Platforms

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Abstract

The rapid growth of algorithm-driven platforms has transformed Islamic communication and digital da'wah. TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts now function as algorithmic ecosystems that shape the visibility and reception of religious messages through recommendation systems, engagement metrics, and platform logic. This study critically examines Islamic communication strategies within these ecosystems and their implications for religious authority, prophetic communication, and digital da'wah. Using a qualitative library research approach, 31 scholarly articles published between 2018 and 2025 and indexed in Scopus, DOAJ, and Sinta were purposively selected and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings show that algorithmic platforms have shifted da'wah from message-oriented to engagement-oriented communication, encouraging concise, visual, emotional, and interactive content. While this transformation expands the reach of Islamic teachings, it also creates challenges, including fragmented religious authority, commercialization, and algorithmic bias. To address these issues, this study proposes the Prophetic Algorithmic Da'wah Communication Model (PADCM), which integrates prophetic values, digital literacy, algorithmic awareness, religious authority, and ethical communication. The model offers a conceptual framework for strengthening effective, responsible, and sustainable da'wah within contemporary digital ecosystems.

Keywords: Algorithmic Communication; Digital Da'wah; Instagram Reels; Prophetic Communication; Religious Authority; Social Media; TikTok; YouTube Shorts.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital communication technology has transformed nearly every aspect of social life, including how people acquire, produce, and distribute religious knowledge. This transformation is evidenced by the massive growth of short-form video consumption, with platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts collectively reaching billions of active users globally. Alongside this trend, digital religious content consumption has surged significantly; current digital demographic trends indicate that a large majority of millennial and Gen Z Muslims now rely on these bite-sized, algorithmic feeds as a primary source for daily Islamic literacy. In the context of Islamic da'wah, this change is marked by a shift in communication from traditional pulpits, religious study groups, radio, and television to these algorithm-based social media platforms. These three platforms are no longer simply a means of disseminating information, but have evolved into communication ecosystems that regulate visibility, distribution, and interaction patterns between da'wah communicators and audiences through complex algorithmic mechanisms. (Anwar & Husna, 2025; Hasanah, 2024).

These changes demonstrate that digital da'wah today takes place in a different communication environment than in the era of conventional mass media. While previously the effectiveness of da'wah was largely determined by rhetorical skill, the credibility of religious scholars, and access to broadcast media, in the algorithmic era, the success of message dissemination is also influenced by indicators of user engagement, watch time, video completion rate, frequency of content sharing, and even automated recommendation patterns developed by digital platform artificial intelligence systems (Basit, 2024; Syam, 2024). Thus, algorithms can no longer be viewed as merely technical instruments but have become non-human actors that play a role in determining the dynamics of religious communication in the digital space.

This phenomenon presents a paradox in contemporary da'wah practices. On the one hand, social media opens up enormous opportunities for the spread of Islamic teachings because it can reach audiences across regions, generations, and even countries quickly and efficiently. Da'wah is no longer limited by physical space or time, allowing various community groups to access Islamic materials at any time through their digital devices. This situation makes social media a strategic instrument in strengthening religious literacy in modern society (Arifin, 2024; Budiantoro, 2019).

On the other hand, algorithmic logic drives a competition for attention (an attention economy) among Islamic content creators. Content that garners high engagement tends to be more frequently recommended by platform systems, while long-form, in-depth, and academic material often loses out to shorter videos that are more emotional, sensational, or entertaining. This attention economy specifically drives message simplification, where complex theological nuances are frequently stripped of their context to satisfy algorithmic visibility criteria (Anwar & Husna, 2025; Basri, 2025). Furthermore, it poses a direct challenge to da'wah ethics, as the pressure to go viral can incentivize clickbait or sensationalism over the fundamental principles of hikmah (wisdom) and responsible communication (Syam, 2024). Ultimately, platform governance and algorithmic visibility mechanisms also reconstruct religious authority, shifting digital legitimacy away from institutionally trained scholars toward charismatic influencers who excel at manipulating audience engagement metrics (Abdullah, 2024). As a result, some Islamic communicators have begun to adapt their communication style to the algorithm's preferences in order to achieve wider reach. This situation has the potential to shift the orientation of Islamic preaching from conveying the substance of teachings to optimizing the performance of digital content (Fealy & White, 2018; Basit, 2024).



The transformation of Islamic preaching communication has also influenced the construction of religious authority in the digital space. Previously, a preacher's legitimacy was generally established through scientific credentials, formal education, Islamic preaching experience, and recognition from religious institutions. However, in the social media ecosystem, religious authority is increasingly influenced by indicators of digital popularity such as the number of followers, views, audience engagement rate, and the ability to produce content that aligns with the characteristics of the platform's algorithm. This phenomenon has given birth to a new group of religious influencers who gain social legitimacy through digital exposure despite their diverse academic backgrounds (Abdullah, 2024; Kurniawan, 2024).

This shift has significant consequences for the process of religious interpretation in the digital public sphere. Audiences no longer obtain Islamic knowledge solely from religious scholars or religious institutions with academic authority, but also from independent content creators promoted by algorithms based on user behavioral preferences. This situation has led to the fragmentation of religious authority, as each user group receives different content recommendations based on their individual digital interaction histories. Ultimately, algorithms contribute to the formation of personalized, segmented communication spaces, and can even strengthen echo chambers in religious discourse (Rahman, 2024; Irawan, 2024).

Beyond the issue of authority, changes in the digital media ecosystem also present challenges to the ethics of Islamic communication. The characteristics of short-form video platforms encourage the simplification of messages, the use of provocative titles (clickbait), the exploitation of conflict as a means of content attraction, and the emergence of a style of language that tends toward sarcasm to increase user engagement. Although this strategy has proven algorithmically effective, this approach does not always align with Islamic communication principles, which prioritize wisdom, gentleness, honesty, and moral responsibility in conveying the message of da'wah (Nugraha, 2024; Amrullah, 2024). Therefore, the effectiveness of digital communication needs to be balanced with a strong ethical foundation so that da'wah does not lose its normative orientation.

From an Islamic communication perspective, the prophetic communication paradigm offers a relevant conceptual framework for responding to these dynamics. Prophetic communication positions communication activities as a process of social transformation based on the values of humanization, liberation, and transcendence. The values of humanization direct da'wah to honor humanity through polite and dialogical communication. Liberation encourages communication that frees society from ignorance, disinformation, and various forms of deviation. Transcendence, on the other hand, positions all da'wah activities as part of worship oriented toward Allah SWT, not solely toward achieving digital popularity (Ilham, 2023; Lubis, 2023; Ananda, 2024).

The urgency of prophetic communication is growing as developments in artificial intelligence technology begin to integrate into social media algorithms. AI-based recommendation systems are capable of automatically determining message distribution based on user behavior analysis. In this context, da'wah communicators are required not only to master the substance of Islam but also to understand the characteristics of digital technology to effectively convey messages without sacrificing Islamic ethical values. Therefore, adapting to technology must go hand in hand with strengthening the prophetic communication paradigm as the moral foundation of contemporary da'wah communication (Ahyani et al., 2024; Hamzah, 2024).

Several previous studies have examined various aspects of digital da'wah, from the transformation of da'wah on the YouTube Shorts platform, the use of TikTok as a da'wah medium, Islamic communication in the digital space, to social media-based da'wah communication strategies (Alfian, 2024; Budianto, 2024; Syam, 2024; Arifin, 2024). Other studies have also discussed the typology of digital da'wah preachers, global trends in digital da'wah research, and the dynamics of religious authority in the social media era (Fakhruroji, 2024; Fakhruroji & Rozi, 2024; Mubasyaroh, 2020). However, most of these studies still position algorithms merely as the technical background of digital media, focusing predominantly on platform usage rather than examining algorithmic logic as a primary variable that actively dictates Islamic communication strategies. This gap is significant because failing to analyze algorithms as structural actors leaves a critical void in understanding how recommendation systems fundamentally alter message production, audience reception, and the construction of digital religious authority. To address this limitation, this study offers a distinctive contribution by proposing the Prophetic Algorithmic Da'wah Communication Model (PADCM). Unlike previous approaches, PADCM explicitly integrates algorithmic literacy with prophetic communication ethics, providing a comprehensive conceptual framework to ensure da'wah remains technologically adaptive without compromising its theological substance and normative values.

Based on this gap, this study seeks to offer a different perspective by positioning platform algorithms as an integral part of the da'wah communication process. This research not only examines how TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are utilized as da'wah media, but also analyzes how algorithmic logic shapes communication strategies, constructs religious authority, influences audience behavior, and demands the reconstruction of an Islamic communication paradigm based on prophetic values. As a conceptual contribution, this research develops the Prophetic Algorithmic Da'wah Communication Model (PADCM) that integrates prophetic communication, algorithmic literacy, digital religious authority, audience behavior, and Islamic communication ethics as a strategic framework for da'wah in the digital media ecosystem.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with library research methods, aiming to develop a conceptual synthesis of Islamic communication strategies within the algorithmic ecosystems of the TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts platforms. To ensure methodological transparency, the literature search was conducted across academic databases including Scopus, DOAJ, and Sinta, utilizing keywords such as "digital da'wah," "prophetic communication," "algorithmic visibility," and "religious authority." The search was limited to publications between 2018 and 2025 to capture recent platform developments. Inclusion criteria required articles to be peer-reviewed and focused on Islamic communication within digital media, while non-academic sources and purely technical computing papers were excluded. This process yielded a final corpus of 31 publications for analysis. This approach was chosen because the research problem is not oriented toward testing causal relationships through field data, but rather toward a critical analysis of theoretical developments, previous research findings, and conceptual dynamics regarding digital da'wah communication, platform algorithms, prophetic communication, and the transformation of religious authority. Through library research, this study seeks to identify research gaps, integrate various scientific perspectives, and generate new conceptual constructs relevant to the development of Islamic communication in the digital media era (Harahap et al., 2024; Hasibuan et al., 2024).



Specifically, this research is designed as a critical literature review. Rather than merely summarizing past studies narratively or rigidly following a quantitative PRISMA systematic flow, a critical review was selected to actively evaluate, synthesize, and construct new analytical frameworks (such as the PADCM) from the selected literature. The research data sources are entirely secondary data derived from scientific journal articles relevant to the research focus. The literature was selected purposively based on its relevance to the research scope, namely digital da'wah communication, prophetic communication, social media algorithms, the transformation of religious authority, audience behavior, and Islamic communication ethics. The literature selection process was conducted by considering the substantive relevance, conceptual contribution, and relevance of each article to the research objectives. This allows the resulting synthesis to provide a comprehensive overview of the development of Islamic missionary communication within the algorithm ecosystem (Fakhrurroji, 2024; Latif, 2024). Operationally, the research was conducted through five main interrelated stages, starting with literature identification and developing a conceptual model as the research output. These stages are presented in Table 1.

Library Research Stages

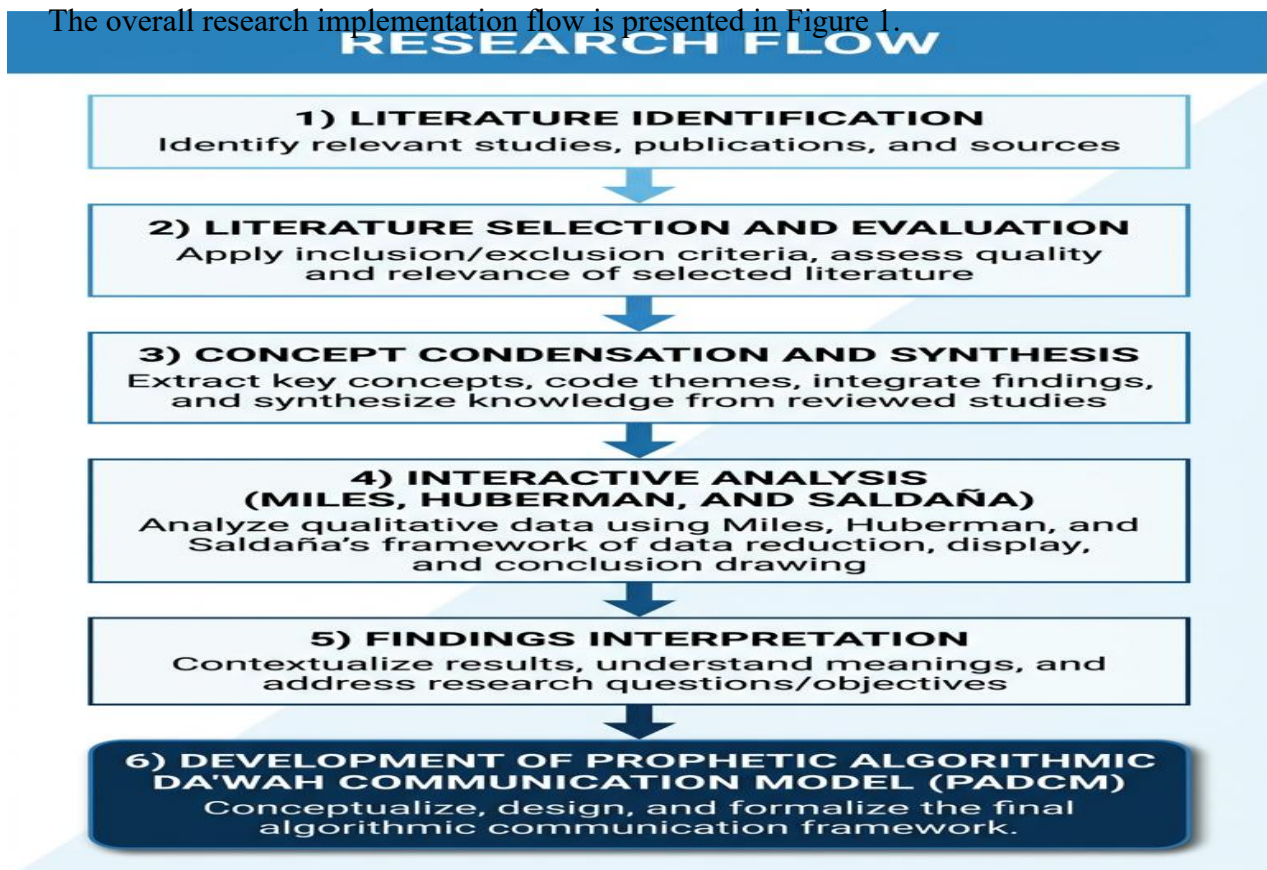
Research Stage	Research Activities	Output
Literature Identification	Inventorying scholarly articles on digital da'wah communication, prophetic communication, platform algorithms, social media, and digital religious authority	Collection of relevant literature
Literature Selection	Selecting articles based on thematic relevance, scholarly quality, and alignment with research focus	Literature meeting research criteria
Data Condensation	Grouping, coding, and synthesizing key concepts into research themes	Conceptual research themes
Data Display	Constructing analytical narrative synthesis and inter-concept relationships	Research analytical framework
Conclusion Drawing	Formulating final synthesis and developing conceptual research model	Prophetic Algorithmic Da'wah Communication Model (PADCM)

Based on these stages, the research process does not stop at literature collection but is directed at establishing relationships between concepts to produce a comprehensive theoretical synthesis. Therefore, each article is analyzed based on its focus, research approach, key findings, and conceptual contribution to the development of Islamic communication. This approach allows this research not only to describe the results of previous research but also to reconstruct the relationships between platform algorithms, da'wah communication strategies, prophetic communication, the transformation of religious authority, and audience behavior within a unified analytical framework.

Data analysis utilizes the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which encompasses four stages: data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. In the data collection stage, all literature that meets the criteria is collected as a source of research data. The data condensation stage is carried out through a process of

reduction, categorization, and synthesis of various key concepts related to platform algorithms, prophetic communication, digital da'wah communication, and religious authority. Furthermore, data display is used to systematically structure the relationships between concepts, facilitating interpretation of the dynamics of Islamic communication within the algorithmic ecosystem. The final stage, conclusion drawing and verification, is conducted to generate a conceptual synthesis and verify the interrelationships between findings, resulting in a conceptual model that serves as the primary contribution of the research.

The overall research implementation flow is presented in Figure 1.



As shown in Figure 1, this study employs an iterative analysis process. Each stage proceeds dynamically through reading, comparing, interpreting, and verifying various literature until a consistent relationship pattern is obtained. This approach allows researchers to more comprehensively identify the dynamics of da'wah communication within the algorithmic ecosystem while simultaneously producing a conceptual synthesis that not only explains the phenomenon of digital da'wah transformation but also offers the Prophetic Algorithmic Da'wah Communication Model (PADCM) as a new conceptual framework that integrates prophetic communication, platform algorithms, digital religious authority, audience behavior, and Islamic communication ethics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Literature Synthesis on Da'wah in the Algorithmic Ecosystem

The results of this study stem from a systematic synthesis of the reviewed literature, explicitly differentiating literature-backed evidence from our original analytical interpretation. To ensure structural transparency, the findings are organized across five thematic pillars: digital da'wah

practices, platform algorithms, digital religious authority, prophetic communication, and artificial intelligence integration (as summarized in Table 2).

Based on the synthesis, it was found that the development of digital da'wah research over the past few years has shown an increasingly strong trend toward three main issues. First, changes in the characteristics of social media driven by algorithmic systems have shifted the strategy for disseminating da'wah messages from a material-based approach to an approach based on optimizing audience engagement. Second, this transformation has resulted in a shift in the construction of religious authority, which is no longer solely built through scientific legitimacy but is also influenced by digital popularity and algorithmic visibility. Third, various studies confirm that prophetic communication is becoming an increasingly relevant paradigm for maintaining the ethical orientation of da'wah amidst the dominance of social media logic and the development of artificial intelligence (Anwar & Husna, 2025; Basit, 2024; Nurdin et al., 2024). To clarify the results of this synthesis, Table 2 presents a summary of the various literature that serves as the conceptual foundation for this research.

Table 2. Research Literature Synthesis

Literature Review Synthesis

Study Group	References	Findings Synthesis
Digital Da'wah	Budiantoro (2019); Arifin (2024); Hasanah (2024); Alfian (2024); Budianto (2024)	Da'wah has transformed from conventional to digital communication utilizing short-video social media as a space for disseminating Islamic messages.
Platform Algorithms	Anwar and Husna (2025); Basri (2025); Syam (2024)	Algorithms are the main factor determining distribution, visibility, and reach of da'wah content through user behavior-based recommendation mechanisms.
Digital Religious Authority	Abdullah (2024); Mubasyaroh (2020); Kurniawan (2024); Rahman (2024); Irawan (2024)	Religious authority shifts from institutional legitimacy to digital legitimacy influenced by popularity, audience interaction, and social media exposure.
Prophetic Communication	Ilham (2023); Lubis (2023); Ananda (2024); Asnawi et al. (2024); Aziz (2024); Samsuddin (2023)	Values of humanization, liberation, and transcendence become the ethical foundation of da'wah communication to maintain message substance amid digital media dynamics.
Artificial Intelligence	Ahyani et al. (2024); Hamzah (2024)	AI expands da'wah communication effectiveness but also demands increased digital literacy and Islamic communication ethics.
Digital Da'i Typology	Fakhruroji and Rozi (2024); Fakhruroji (2024); Fadilah (2024)	Digital preachers develop into new communication actors combining scholarly competence, communication skills, and adaptation to digital technology.

Table 2 reveals key convergences, nuances, and underlying theoretical tensions across the reviewed literature. A primary similarity among these studies is the shared consensus that algorithm-driven platforms have fundamentally shifted da'wah from traditional, monologue-based preaching to interactive, engagement-oriented communication. However, notable differences emerge in their analytical lenses: while platform-centered research primarily examines technical media adoption and content formats (Alfian, 2024; Budianto, 2024), sociological inquiries focus on the shifting dynamics of digital religious legitimacy (Abdullah, 2024; Kurniawan, 2024), and normative scholars prioritize Islamic ethical frameworks (Ilham, 2023; Lubis, 2023). Crucially, an unresolved contradiction exists within the current literature regarding algorithmic impact. While functionalist studies view algorithmic recommendation systems as neutral instruments that



democratize message reach (Basit, 2024), critical perspectives argue that platform governance inherently commercializes religious discourse, encourages sensationalism, and destabilizes authentic scholarly authority (Rahman, 2024; Fealy & White, 2018). Because existing research remains fragmented across these isolated debates, a unified analytical framework is required to reconcile how platform algorithms simultaneously dictate communication strategies, transform religious authority, and mandate a prophetic ethical anchor.

Based on this synthesis, this study views platform algorithms as not merely information distribution technologies but also as part of the communication structure that influences message production processes, communication strategies, patterns of religious information consumption, and the formation of the legitimacy of da'wah communicators. Therefore, the following discussion focuses on analyzing the transformation of da'wah communication strategies within the algorithmic ecosystem and its implications for Islamic communication on TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts.

Transformation of Islamic Communication Strategy in the Algorithmic Ecosystem

The transformation of digital communication technology has fundamentally changed the landscape of Islamic da'wah, moving from a communicator-centered communication system to one influenced by algorithmic logic. In the era of conventional media, the success of da'wah was generally determined by the preacher's scholarly competence, personal credibility, rhetorical quality, and access to broadcast media. In contrast, in the contemporary social media ecosystem, the success of message distribution is no longer entirely in the communicator's control, but rather influenced by automated recommendation systems that operate based on user behavior analysis. To illustrate this structural shift, a clear comparison can be observed across three main dimensions: content form, audience interaction, and authority markers. First, regarding content form, traditional da'wah relied on long-form, comprehensive thematic lectures; conversely, algorithmic platforms necessitate bite-sized, vertically formatted videos that prioritize immediate visual hooks and emotional appeal to maximize viewer retention. Second, audience interaction has shifted from passive reception or structured Q&A sessions to hyper-interactive, real-time engagement, where immediate metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and completion rates directly dictate a video's algorithmic visibility. Third, the markers of religious authority have been reconstructed; while conventional legitimacy depended on institutional affiliations, formal Islamic education, and scholarly lineage (sanad), algorithmic authority is frequently signaled by digital metrics, including follower counts, viral reach, and platform verification badges. This shift demonstrates that algorithms have evolved from mere technical tools into communication structures that actively regulate the relationship between message, communicator, media, and audience (Anwar & Husna, 2025; Basri, 2025).

From an Islamic communication perspective, this shift demonstrates that da'wah no longer occurs solely through interpersonal interactions or mass communication but has entered the digital communication space with its very different characteristics. TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts have developed machine learning-based content distribution mechanisms that prioritize relevance to user behavior over chronological order of publication. As a result, the likelihood of a da'wah message being accepted by the public depends heavily on the content's ability to meet algorithmic indicators such as viewer retention rate, interaction frequency, viewing duration, number of comments, and the intensity with which the content is shared with other users (Basit,



2024; Syam, 2024). Thus, da'wah communication strategies have shifted from an orientation focused on message delivery to an orientation focused on optimizing message distribution.

This shift in orientation cannot be understood simply as a technical adaptation to developments in digital media, but rather as a transformation of the communication paradigm. While previously communicators had relatively significant control over the message delivery process, in the algorithmic ecosystem, some of this function has shifted to digital systems that determine the priority of information distribution. This situation creates a new relationship between humans and technology, where algorithms indirectly act as gatekeepers, determining which content receives widespread exposure and which content is lost in the digital information flow. Therefore, algorithms can be understood as non-human communication actors that have a significant influence on the effectiveness of contemporary da'wah (Anwar & Husna, 2025; Basri, 2025).

This phenomenon explains why the characteristics of Islamic preaching messages on short video platforms have undergone quite a dramatic shift. Islamic preaching material, previously delivered through lengthy lectures, is now often packaged into short videos with a more concise communication structure, more engaging visuals, and the use of narratives that maintain audience attention from the first second. This adaptation is a consequence of algorithmic logic that prioritizes content with high levels of user engagement. In other words, the effectiveness of Islamic preaching communication is no longer solely determined by the quality of religious argumentation, but also by the communicator's ability to understand the characteristics of digital distribution on each platform (Hasanah, 2024; Alfian, 2024).

However, this shift in communication strategy presents a complex dilemma. On the one hand, simplifying Islamic preaching material into short videos allows for the dissemination of Islamic values to communities that previously lacked access to formal religious studies. The short video format is easier to consume for the digital generation, accustomed to quickly obtaining information via mobile devices. This condition expands the reach of preaching while increasing the opportunity for interaction between preachers and very heterogeneous community groups (Budianto, 2024; Mahmud, 2024).

On the other hand, the dominance of algorithmic logic has the potential to reduce the substance of religious messages. The complexity of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), creed, and ethics is often simplified into easily consumed pieces of information, but loses its academic context. It's also not uncommon for content to gain popularity not because of the quality of its argumentation, but because of its ability to evoke audience emotion through provocative titles, controversial video clips, or sensational communication styles. This phenomenon demonstrates that algorithms tend to prioritize the intensity of interaction over the depth of substance, thus presenting new challenges for the practice of da'wah communication in the digital space (Fealy & White, 2018; Nugraha, 2024).

In this context, prophetic communication is becoming an increasingly important approach as a normative foundation for digital da'wah strategies. Prophetic communication does not place communication effectiveness solely on success in gaining public attention, but on the ability to convey the values of humanization, liberation, and transcendence in every process of message delivery. The value of humanization encourages preachers to develop communication that respects human dignity and avoids exploiting audience emotions. The value of liberation guides da'wah (Islamic outreach) to free society from disinformation, polarization, and digital manipulation. Meanwhile, the value of transcendence ensures that all communication activities remain oriented

toward devotion to Allah SWT, not solely toward achieving algorithmic popularity (Ilham, 2023; Lubis, 2023; Ananda, 2024).

Analysis of various studies shows that the success of Islamic communication strategies in the algorithmic era cannot be sufficiently measured by the number of views, followers, or engagement rate. These indicators only illustrate the effectiveness of message distribution but do not reflect the success of da'wah in building comprehensive religious understanding. Therefore, the effectiveness of da'wah communication needs to be measured more multidimensionally, taking into account the quality of the message's substance, the credibility of the communicator, its adherence to Islamic communication ethics, its adaptability to the characteristics of digital platforms, and its impact on changing audience knowledge, attitudes, and behavior (Amrullah, 2024; Karim, 2024).

Based on this synthesis, this study argues that the transformation of Islamic communication strategies in the algorithmic era should not be interpreted as a mere process of adapting da'wah to technological demands. Rather, this transformation must be understood as a negotiation process that positions digital technology as an instrument for disseminating messages, while the values of prophetic communication remain the normative foundation that guides all da'wah activities. Thus, the primary challenge of Islamic communication in the social media era is not simply how to achieve broad algorithmic reach, but how to maintain a balance between the effectiveness of digital communication and the integrity of da'wah values. This synthesis serves as the basis for a more specific analysis of how the characteristics of algorithms on TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts shape communication patterns, audience behavior, and the construction of religious authority within the digital da'wah ecosystem.

Platform Algorithms as New Actors in Islamic Communication

The transformation of Islamic missionary communication in the digital media era is influenced not only by changes in social media user behavior but also by the presence of algorithms as a mechanism that determines information distribution. From a classical communication perspective, media is understood as a channel connecting communicators with audiences. However, on artificial intelligence-based digital platforms, this function has expanded because algorithms no longer simply convey messages but also select, sort, recommend, and even personalize content based on each user's characteristics. Thus, algorithms have evolved into communication actors capable of determining the likelihood of a message being accepted, ignored, or even completely removed from the user's information space (Anwar & Husna, 2025; Basri, 2025).

These changes indicate that the Islamic missionary communication process has entered a different phase than conventional mass communication. While in traditional broadcast media, message distribution is controlled by media institutions through editorial gatekeeping, in social media, this function is carried out by automated computing systems based on analysis of user behavior data. This system utilizes various indicators such as viewing duration, interaction intensity, search patterns, user location, viewing history, and content preference tendencies to determine the material deemed most relevant to each individual. As a result, two users following the same Islamic preaching account may receive different content recommendations because the algorithm adapts information distribution to their individual digital behavioral characteristics (Basit, 2024; Syam, 2024).

This phenomenon shifts the paradigm of Islamic communication from a uniform distribution model to highly personalized religious communication. Islamic preaching messages are no longer received by all users in the same format, but are instead restructured by the algorithm according to



each individual's digital behavioral profile. On the one hand, this personalization increases the opportunity for users to obtain religious material tailored to their interests and needs. However, on the other hand, this mechanism has the potential to limit information diversity because users tend to consistently receive content similar to their previous preferences. In digital communication studies, this condition is often associated with the formation of filter bubbles and echo chambers, namely information spaces that reinforce certain views while reducing the opportunity for users to encounter more diverse religious perspectives (Anwar & Husna, 2025; Rahman, 2024).

Another implication of algorithmic dominance is evident in the shift in da'wah content production strategies. Preachers no longer solely consider theological and rhetorical aspects when developing material, but must also consider the platform's technical characteristics to ensure optimal message reach. Video titles, content duration, visual design, music usage, publication timing, keyword selection, and even audience interaction patterns are all part of the communication strategy that increasingly determines the success of message distribution. In other words, the success of digital da'wah is the result of the interaction between the quality of religious content and the communicator's ability to understand the platform's algorithmic logic (Hasanah, 2024; Alfian, 2024).

While adapting to algorithms is an unavoidable necessity, the orientation of da'wah communication must not shift to merely pursuing digital popularity. Algorithmic logic is fundamentally designed to maximize user engagement, while the primary goal of da'wah is to convey Islamic values correctly, wisely, and for the benefit of the community. This difference in orientation can create tension when platform success is primarily measured by the number of views, comments, or shares of content, while the success of da'wah lies in changing people's knowledge, attitudes, and behavior toward Islamic values. Therefore, algorithmic effectiveness cannot be used as the sole measure of the success of da'wah communication (Amrullah, 2024; Karim, 2024).

This situation also influences how society builds trust in Islamic communicators. In the digital space, algorithms indirectly contribute to shaping perceptions of credibility by increasing the visibility of certain accounts. Content that is consistently recommended to users tends to gain more followers, interactions, and social legitimacy than content of high scientific quality but with less algorithmic distribution. Thus, algorithms play a role in the construction of digital religious authority by determining who is more frequently present in public communication spaces. This phenomenon explains why digital popularity is increasingly associated with religious authority, although the two are not always aligned (Abdullah, 2024; Kurniawan, 2024; Mubasyaroh, 2020).

From a prophetic communication perspective, the existence of algorithms should not be positioned as a threat to Islamic preaching, but rather as an instrument that must be managed ethically. The prophetic paradigm positions technology as a means to expand public welfare, not as an end in itself. Therefore, the use of algorithms should be directed towards strengthening the quality of messages, expanding public access to Islamic literacy, and fostering constructive dialogue in the digital space. Adaptation to platform characteristics remains necessary, but must be within the values of *ṣidq* (honesty), *amanah* (responsibility), *tablīgh* (correct delivery), and *fatānah* (wisdom) as the foundation of prophetic communication (Ilham, 2023; Lubis, 2023; Asnawi et al., 2024).

The results of this research synthesis indicate that algorithms cannot be understood solely as technological innovations, but as communication structures that shape patterns of production, distribution, consumption, and legitimacy of religious messages in the digital space. This position

makes algorithms a central variable in contemporary da'wah communication because they influence both communicator strategies and audience behavior. Based on this, the subsequent analysis focuses on how the specific characteristics of TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts generate distinct communication patterns and how these differences influence the effectiveness of Islamic da'wah strategies within the algorithmic ecosystem.

Characteristics of the TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts Algorithms in Islamic Communication Strategies

Although TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts all promote short-form vertical video formats, these three platforms are engineered with distinct algorithmic architectures and recommendation systems, resulting in varying characteristics of Islamic da'wah communication. TikTok operates primarily on real-time behavioral filtering that prioritizes immediate engagement metrics such as watch duration, video completion rate, and re-shares over established follower networks. In contrast, Instagram Reels blends interest-based recommendations with social graph dynamics, prioritizing content based on previous account interactions and affinity networks. Meanwhile, YouTube Shorts leverages deep candidate generation and neural ranking models integrated within YouTube's broader ecosystem, linking short-form engagement directly to users' long-form search and watch histories. These structural differences fundamentally influence how religious messages are produced, distributed, consumed, and legitimized in the digital space. Therefore, the effectiveness of Islamic communication strategies cannot be built through a uniform approach but must be tailored to the specific recommendation mechanisms and platform logic of each ecosystem (Basit, 2024; Hasanah, 2024; Anwar & Husna, 2025; Basri, 2025).

TikTok has developed a recommendation system that relies heavily on real-time user behavior analysis. This platform's algorithm prioritizes viewing duration, video completion rate, frequency of replays, and the intensity of interactions in the form of comments, likes, and content shares. These characteristics mean that a video's distribution opportunity is not solely dependent on the number of followers on an account, but rather on user response to the content displayed on the For You page. In the context of da'wah, this mechanism opens up a relatively large opportunity for new da'wah (Islamic preachers) to achieve broad reach if they are able to produce content relevant to audience preferences. However, the same mechanism also drives intense competition for attention, so religious messages are often packaged concisely, emotionally, and highly visual to maintain user attention from the first second (Budianto, 2024; Mahmud, 2024).

Unlike TikTok, Instagram Reels operates within a social media ecosystem that places greater emphasis on social connections (social graph). The algorithm considers not only the quality of interactions with a video, but also the closeness of the relationship between the user and the content creator, their previous interaction history, and the relevance of the content to interests cultivated through activity across Instagram services. Therefore, a da'wah communication strategy through Instagram Reels tends to be more effective when supported by a consistent digital identity, personal branding, and ongoing interaction with followers. In such circumstances, the credibility of the communicator becomes a factor that strengthens algorithmic distribution because audiences not only consume the message but also build long-term relationships with the da'wah figures in the digital space (Mustofa, 2024; Mahmud, 2024).

Meanwhile, YouTube Shorts was developed as part of the YouTube ecosystem, which has long been oriented towards consuming long-form videos. Despite its short video format, YouTube's algorithm still considers the continuity of user behavior across all platform services, including



search activity, viewing history, watch time, and the tendency for users to shift from short videos to longer-form videos. These characteristics provide an opportunity for Islamic preachers to build an interconnected content ecosystem, utilizing Shorts as a gateway to capture audience attention before directing them to more in-depth study through regular videos. Thus, YouTube Shorts serves a strategic function not only as a medium for distributing short-form information but also as a means of building a sustainable religious learning process (Alfian, 2024; Hasanah, 2024).

These differences in algorithmic characteristics demonstrate that Islamic preaching communication strategies cannot solely focus on reproducing the same content across multiple platforms. Each medium has a distinct distribution logic and therefore requires a different communication approach. TikTok emphasizes speed in capturing public attention, Instagram Reels emphasizes the continuity of social relationships between communicators and audiences, while YouTube Shorts offers the opportunity to integrate short-form content with more comprehensive religious learning. Therefore, the success of digital da'wah communication is greatly influenced by the communicator's ability to understand the characteristics of each platform without neglecting the substance of the message being conveyed (Arifin, 2024; Basit, 2024).

To clarify these differences, the results of the research synthesis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of Platform Characteristics in Islamic Communication Strategies

Platform Algorithm Comparison for Digital Da'wah

Analysis Aspect	TikTok	Instagram Reels	YouTube Shorts
Algorithm Characteristics	Behavior-based recommendation (For You Page)	Social graph and user interest-based	Watch history, search, and YouTube ecosystem integration
Dominant Distribution Indicators	Completion rate, watch time, comments, shares, engagement	Follower interaction, account consistency, digital relationship quality	Watch duration, audience retention, content consumption continuity
Communication Character	Very fast, viral, visual, and emotional	Interactive, personal, and community-based	Educational, tiered, and supports content deepening
Da'wah Opportunities	Reaching new audiences widely	Building audience loyalty and trust	Connecting short content with deeper studies
Main Challenges	Substance simplification and virality competition	Dominance of communicator personal branding	Maintaining audience retention toward sustainable learning

Table 3 shows that although the three platforms share the same function as a medium for sharing short videos, each has developed a distinct communication ecosystem. These differences demonstrate that an effective da'wah communication strategy cannot be formulated using a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, da'wah communicators need to develop strategies that adapt to the algorithmic characteristics of each platform without sacrificing the accuracy of Islamic substance and communication ethics. From an Islamic communication perspective, this adaptation does not

constitute a compromise with technology, but rather an effort to optimize the dissemination of da'wah messages to remain relevant to the changing communication behavior of the digital society.

These findings also indicate that algorithms not only influence message reach but also shape how society recognizes, trusts, and selects sources of religious knowledge. Therefore, the following discussion focuses on analyzing the transformation of digital religious authority, specifically how algorithmic logic contributes to the formation of da'wah legitimacy and changes in audience trust patterns within the social media ecosystem.

Transformation of Religious Authority in the Algorithmic Ecosystem

The development of algorithm-based digital platforms has not only transformed the communication strategy of Islamic preaching but also transformed the construction of religious authority in the public sphere. While previously a preacher's legitimacy was established through scientific credentials, academic capacity, and recognition from religious institutions, in the social media era, authority is increasingly influenced by algorithmic visibility, number of followers, level of interaction, and the frequency of content appearing on users' homepages (Mubasyaroh, 2020; Abdullah, 2024). This situation indicates that algorithms play a role in shaping public perceptions of who is considered authoritative in conveying Islamic teachings.

This transformation has given rise to the phenomenon of digital religious authority, namely religious legitimacy constructed through presence and performance on social media. In this context, digital popularity is often an indicator associated with credibility, although it does not always align with the depth of scholarly competence. As a result, the space for Islamic preaching has become more open to various communication actors, from religious scholars and academics to religious influencers, who have the ability to utilize algorithms to reach a broad audience (Rahman, 2024; Kurniawan, 2024).

On the other hand, algorithms also shape personalized patterns of religious information consumption through recommendation mechanisms based on user behavior. This situation has the potential to create an echo chamber, a situation where users more frequently receive content that aligns with their preferences, reducing the opportunity to gain more diverse religious perspectives (Irawan, 2024; Anwar & Husna, 2025). Therefore, the primary challenge for da'wah communication is not only expanding the reach of the message but also maintaining the diversity of perspectives, the authenticity of scientific sources, and the quality of the community's religious literacy.

Based on this synthesis, this study confirms that religious authority in the algorithmic era is no longer solely determined by normative legitimacy but also by digital distribution mechanisms that influence the communicator's visibility. Therefore, strengthening prophetic communication is crucial as an ethical foundation to ensure that digital popularity continues to align with scientific integrity and moral responsibility in delivering da'wah.

Prophetic Communication as an Adaptive Strategy in the Algorithmic Ecosystem

The dominance of algorithms in content distribution does not mean that da'wah communication must follow the entire logic of social media without limits. Rather, this situation demands a communication paradigm capable of integrating technological effectiveness with normative Islamic values. In this context, prophetic communication becomes a strategic framework that allows da'wah to remain adaptive to the development of digital platforms without losing its ethical and spiritual orientation (Ilham, 2023; Lubis, 2023).

Prophetic communication positions da'wah activities as a process of social transformation based on the values of humanization, liberation, and transcendence. The value of humanization



directs da'wah practitioners to build polite, dialogical communication that respects human dignity. The value of liberation encourages the delivery of messages that free society from disinformation, hate speech, and polarization that often arise in the digital space. Meanwhile, the value of transcendence emphasizes that the primary goal of da'wah is not to gain popularity or virality, but rather to invite society to strengthen faith and devotion to Allah SWT (Ananda, 2024; Asnawi et al., 2024).

The implementation of prophetic communication also requires preachers to possess adequate digital literacy to understand the characteristics of algorithms without falling into manipulative communication practices. Adapting to short video formats, optimizing engagement, and utilizing artificial intelligence can be done as long as they do not diminish the accuracy of Islamic teachings, do not manipulate audience emotions, and maintain the principles of honesty, trustworthiness, and moral responsibility in conveying messages (Ahyani et al., 2024; Hamzah, 2024; Amrullah, 2024).

Thus, prophetic communication functions as a balancing mechanism between the demands of algorithmic effectiveness and Islamic communication values. This approach demonstrates that the success of digital preaching is measured not only by high engagement or audience reach, but also by its ability to build correct religious understanding, strengthen media ethics, and generate constructive social change. These findings form the basis for this study to formulate a conceptual model that integrates prophetic communication with the characteristics of platform algorithms as an Islamic communication strategy in the digital media era.

Prophetic Algorithmic Da'wah Communication Model (PADCM)

Based on the overall synthesis results, this study offers the Prophetic Algorithmic Da'wah Communication Model (PADCM) as a conceptual contribution that integrates five main components: prophetic communication, algorithmic literacy, digital religious authority, audience behavior, and Islamic communication ethics. This model emphasizes that da'wah communication strategies on TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are not simply oriented towards optimizing algorithms to increase engagement, but must place prophetic values as the foundation in the production, distribution, and evaluation of da'wah messages. Thus, the algorithm is positioned as an instrument to expand the reach of communication, while prophetic communication becomes a normative framework that ensures da'wah maintains scientific integrity, public welfare, and the transcendental goals of Islam amidst the dynamics of the digital media ecosystem (Ilham, 2023; Lubis, 2023; Anwar & Husna, 2025; Basit, 2024).

CONCLUSION

The transformation of algorithm-driven social media has fundamentally shifted Islamic communication from a communicator-centered model to an ecosystem regulated by platform logic. Theoretically, this study contributes to digital communication scholarship by establishing the Prophetic Algorithmic Da'wah Communication Model (PADCM), which bridges the gap between algorithmic mechanics and Islamic normative ethics. Practically, this study provides da'wah practitioners with a framework to optimize short-form platforms (TikTok, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts) through platform-specific engagement techniques without succumbing to sensationalism or compromising theological accuracy. Despite these insights, a primary limitation of this study lies in its library research design, which offers conceptual synthesis rather than empirical measurement across diverse digital audiences. Future research should empirically validate



the PADCM framework using field-based qualitative, quantitative, or algorithmic audit methodologies to advance adaptive, ethical, and sustainable digital da'wah

The research findings indicate that Islamic communication strategies in the digital media era require a balance between adapting to algorithmic logic and consistency with the values of prophetic communication. The success of Islamic preaching is not solely measured by the number of views, followers, or engagement levels, but also by the quality of the message content, the credibility of the communicator, the application of Islamic communication ethics, and its impact on improving public religious literacy and behavior. In this context, this study offers the Prophetic Algorithmic Da'wah Communication Model (PADCM) as a conceptual contribution that integrates prophetic communication, algorithmic literacy, digital religious authority, audience behavior, and Islamic communication ethics as a strategic framework for da'wah in the digital media ecosystem.

This study has limitations due to its use of a library research approach, meaning the findings are still conceptual and have not been tested through empirical data on each platform. Therefore, further research is recommended to develop the PADCM model through field studies, content analysis, surveys, or mixed methods approaches to test its effectiveness in improving the quality of da'wah communication on various social media platforms. Thus, the development of Islamic communication theory in the algorithmic era is expected to not only produce a robust conceptual model but also provide practical contributions to strengthening ethical, adaptive, and sustainable digital da'wah.

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