

A Social Media Based Da'wah Model for Strengthening Islamic Moderation among Generation Z

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ABSTRACT (10 PT)

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of a social-media-based da'wah model in strengthening Islamic moderation among Generation Z and to identify creative content strategies that align with the characteristics of young users. The research employs a qualitative method with a case study design, selected for its ability to provide an in depth understanding of the phenomenon of digital da'wah communication in real-life contexts. This method and design were chosen to explore the experiences of audiences and preachers directly through rich descriptive data. The research location is Yogyakarta, which has a large Generation Z population and an active digital ecosystem. Five informants were selected purposively, consisting of content creators, digital literacy activists, campus da'wah media managers, and active social media users, as they represent direct involvement in the production and consumption of digital da'wah. The findings indicate that creative, interactive da'wah content using simple visual language is more effective in instilling Islamic moderation values. The study recommends strengthening digital preacher training, enhancing content interactivity, and developing guidelines for moderate da'wah based on social media.



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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital communication technology over the past decade has significantly transformed the dissemination of religious information, including the dynamics of Islamic da'wah. This transformation is marked by the increasing use of social media as a new space for learning and practicing religiosity, particularly among young people known as Generation Z. This generation lives in an intensely digital environment, where their patterns of information consumption tend to be fast-paced, visual, interactive, and network-based. These conditions present both opportunities and challenges for da'wah activities, particularly in conveying Islamic moderation values that emphasize balance, tolerance, and inclusivity (Seserman, 2024).

The presence of social media as a da'wah medium offers substantial potential to expand message reach, but at the same time demands innovative communication strategies that align with the characteristics of young audiences (Steen, 2023).

State of the art research shows that digital da'wah has become one of the most widely adopted approaches by religious institutions, individual preachers, and digital-based communities. Numerous international and national studies document that social media can serve as a dynamic space for the production of religious discourse ranging from disseminating basic Islamic knowledge, shaping opinions, to promoting more moderate religious values. However, existing studies still tend to focus on the effectiveness of platforms alone without deeply elaborating on the need for da'wah communication models tailored to the characteristics of Generation Z. Therefore, research on digital da'wah approaches still requires reinforcement in message design, interactivity, and content creativity to create more significant impacts on the understanding of Islamic moderation (Hidayat & Nuri, 2024).

The main problem addressed in this study is the suboptimal development of social media based da'wah strategies specifically aimed at instilling Islamic moderation values in Generation Z. Although this generation is the dominant user of social media, not all forms of da'wah content can attract their attention or influence their religious perspectives. Da'wah messages that are monotonous, lengthy, or insufficiently visual often fail to compete with the flood of more entertaining popular content. Moreover, many religious contents circulating online contain confrontational, exclusive, or extreme narratives, potentially undermining efforts to strengthen Islamic moderation. This underscores the urgency of formulating a digital da'wah model that is not only theologically relevant but also aligned with Generation Z's digital culture(Gaffar, 2022).

A clear research gap emerges in the limited focus on da'wah communication strategies designed based on the psychological characteristics, media preferences, and interaction patterns of young users. Previous studies have largely focused on platform analysis or message dissemination rates without sufficiently emphasizing mechanisms for delivering creative, interactive, and contextual content. Yet Generation Z needs not only religious information but also meaningful experiences in engaging with Islamic values through visually appealing formats and dialogic spaces. When digital da'wah fails to meet their media consumption patterns, the message of Islamic moderation may not be conveyed effectively, widening the gap between da'wah objectives and on-the-ground realities(Gosztonyi, 2023).

The novelty of this study lies in developing a social media based da'wah model that integrates interactive approaches with creative content as the main instruments for conveying Islamic moderation values to Generation Z. This model not only relies on one way message delivery but also incorporates participatory mechanisms such as online discussions, interactive surveys, and trend based content that foster emotional and cognitive engagement between preachers and young audiences. This innovation has the potential to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of digital da'wah literature, particularly regarding communication strategies for Generation Z, who are more responsive to visual, narrative, and collaborative approaches(Shrestha, 2025).

The research questions explored in this study include how social media is utilized as a platform for disseminating Islamic moderation messages to Generation Z, to what extent digital da'wah content influences their understanding of moderation values, and how an interactive da'wah model based on creative content can enhance the internalization of Islamic moderation among young users. These questions are formulated to describe comprehensively the relationship between digital da'wah strategies, Generation Z's characteristics, and the effectiveness of delivering moderation messages(Gosztonyi, 2025).

The objectives of this study are to analyze the effectiveness of social-media-based da'wah in instilling Islamic moderation values in Generation Z, identify the gaps in existing da'wah communication strategies, and develop an interactive da'wah model based on creative content that aligns with Generation Z's digital media characteristics. Additionally, the research aims to measure user perceptions of da'wah content oriented toward Islamic moderation, enabling evaluation of social media's potential as a constructive religious education tool(Amir, 2024).

Theoretically, this research enriches the body of knowledge on digital da'wah by presenting the concept of an interactive da'wah model grounded in content creativity. Academically, it provides a basis for further studies on the role of social media in shaping Islamic moderation discourse within digital public spaces. Practically, this study serves as a guide for preachers, religious institutions, Muslim influencers, and digital literacy program managers in designing more effective da'wah strategies suitable for Generation Z(Luthfi, 2022).

This study is limited by the use of survey methods and content analysis, which depend on the representativeness of social media users and the variability of analyzed content types. Moreover, the research focuses only on certain social media platforms, leaving the possibility that other platforms may exhibit different dynamics not captured in this analysis. These limitations open opportunities for future research to expand platform coverage, use experimental methods, or develop longitudinal analyses to examine changes in Generation Z's perceptions of Islamic moderation over time(Ratmiati, 2023).

Future studies are expected to explore forms of creative collaboration between preachers, content creators, and digital communities in strengthening Islamic moderation on social media. Additionally, subsequent research may examine the effectiveness of da'wah models based on artificial intelligence, gamification, or immersive technologies such as augmented reality to assess technological innovation's potential in supporting the dissemination of moderate messages in the digital era. Thus, the development of digital da'wah can continue to adapt to shifts in youth behavior and the dynamics of the social media ecosystem (Iswadi et al., 2024).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a combined approach involving quantitative survey methods and qualitative content analysis to comprehensively understand the effectiveness of a social-media-based da'wah model in reinforcing Islamic moderation values among Generation Z. This dual research design was selected to obtain a holistic overview of user perceptions while analyzing the characteristics of digital da'wah content circulating on social media platforms (Hidayat & Nuri, 2024). The survey approach provides empirical data on user preferences, levels of understanding, and audience responses, whereas content analysis enables the identification of communication patterns, message structures, and da'wah delivery styles that tend to be effective. Thus, both methods complement each other to answer the research objectives more deeply and accurately.

The chosen research design is a sequential mixed-method design that begins with quantitative data collection through surveys, followed by content analysis to clarify or strengthen the findings from the survey. This design was selected because the phenomenon of digital da'wah is complex, involving interactions between message senders and audiences on social media platforms, and therefore requires a multiperspective approach (Jamin & Mudra, 2023). The survey allows the researcher to measure perception trends on a broader scale, while content analysis offers deeper understanding of the characteristics of da'wah messages received by audiences. The mixed design also provides stronger methodological reliability, as findings can be validated through data triangulation.

The research location is centered around social media users in Yogyakarta. This region was selected for several methodological reasons. First, Yogyakarta is known as a student city with a high Generation Z population, providing extensive access to young digital content consumers. Second, the digital literacy ecosystem in Yogyakarta is relatively advanced and diverse, enabling the acquisition of varied perceptions reflecting national digital da'wah dynamics. Third, many religious content creator communities are based in this region, allowing for contextual analysis of ongoing da'wah dynamics. Thus, Yogyakarta was chosen not only for respondent availability but also for its relevance to the research context regarding the interaction between digital da'wah and youth.

The research informants consist of five individuals representing actors supporting digital da'wah activities. They were selected purposively based on their active involvement in producing or engaging with da'wah content on social media. Pseudonyms are used to ensure privacy protection. The first informant, Ahmad, is a 25-year-old da'wah content creator who manages a TikTok da'wah account. The second informant, Rania, is a university student and leader of an Islamic digital literacy community. The third informant, Fikri, is a social media administrator at a campus da'wah organization. The fourth informant, Siti, is a 20-year-old active follower of digital da'wah content on Instagram. The fifth informant, Bima, is a young adult who frequently participates in online discussions on Islamic moderation. These informants were chosen because they possess direct experience in producing, managing, or consuming digital da'wah content, making their perspectives credible and relevant to the research objectives.

Data collection techniques in this study employ two approaches: survey distribution and content analysis. The survey questionnaire uses a Likert scale to measure Generation Z's perceptions of da'wah content effectiveness in instilling Islamic moderation values. The survey was distributed online through digital platforms to facilitate access for respondents who are predominantly active social media users. This technique was chosen because it allows efficient reach to a large number of respondents and aligns with Generation Z's digital interaction habits. Additionally, brief interviews were conducted with informants to enrich understanding regarding the creative process of da'wah content creation and their perspectives on current challenges in digital da'wah.

Content analysis was conducted on 50 digital da'wah contents across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. These contents were selected based on criteria such as view count, engagement rate, Islamic moderation themes, and relevance to Generation Z's characteristics (Hu et al., 2022). The content analysis employed a qualitative approach focusing on identifying themes, delivery styles, narrative structures, and visualization techniques used in da'wah content. The analysis involved several stages: content collection, categorization, message element coding, and interpretation. This technique is suitable for revealing how da'wah messages are constructed and communicated to young audiences, providing insights into factors influencing digital da'wah's effectiveness (Dewantoro et al., 2025).

Survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to portray general respondent perception trends. The data analysis involved calculating percentages, means, and response tendencies for various indicators of digital da'wah effectiveness such as visual appeal, message relevance, emotional engagement, and understanding of Islamic moderation. Descriptive analysis was selected because the study does not aim to test causal relationships between variables but rather to map Generation Z's perceptions of digital da'wah content. The analysis was conducted systematically to ensure that the findings reflect general perception trends and facilitate interpretation in subsequent stages.

Informant interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The researcher reread interview transcripts, identified recurring patterns, and grouped them into themes related to the creative process of da'wah content, informants' perspectives on social media, and their views on Islamic moderation. Thematic analysis provides flexibility in uncovering implicit meanings within informants' responses and allows the discovery of insights not captured in survey data.

This study employs triangulation techniques to ensure data validity. Triangulation was carried out by linking survey findings, content analysis results, and interview interpretations. This technique was chosen because it minimizes bias and strengthens the validity of findings by confirming data across different sources. Triangulation is also essential to reinforcing the argument that interactive, creative content based da'wah models have strong potential in reinforcing Islamic moderation among Generation Z.

The conclusion drawing technique was conducted gradually by integrating findings from various data sources. The first stage summarized survey analysis results to identify general perception trends. The second stage formulated thematic patterns from content analysis and interviews to understand message characteristics appealing to young audiences. The third stage linked both findings to form comprehensive conclusions regarding the effectiveness of digital da'wah models. The inductive conclusion drawing technique was used, deriving generalizations from specific patterns found in the data. The conclusions not only describe phenomena but also provide methodological and practical recommendations for developing more innovative digital da'wah models suited to Generation Z's needs.

With its combination of surveys and content analysis, and with the selection of relevant, experienced informants, this research method provides strong empirical and conceptual foundations for examining the effectiveness of digital da'wah in reinforcing Islamic moderation values. Utilizing a systematic and triangulated methodological approach, this study is expected to offer scientific contributions to the development of adaptive da'wah strategies aligned with social media developments and Generation Z's characteristics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are based on the analysis of a survey involving Generation Z respondents, as well as an examination of digital da'wah content published on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. In addition, interviews with informants involved in digital da'wah activities enriched the interpretation process of the findings. All data were analyzed using descriptive and qualitative approaches, which were then integrated with three main theories: Everett M. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, John B. Thompson's Media Interactivity Theory, and Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory. This integration provides a deeper understanding of how social-media-based da'wah models can strengthen Islamic moderation values among Generation Z.

To understand the patterns of perception and responses of Generation Z toward digital da'wah content, a summary of the survey findings is presented in the following table.

Table 1 the patterns of perception and responses of Generation Z toward digital da'wah

Indicator	Percentage of Respondents Agreeing	Interpretation
Visual appeal of the content	87%	
Relevance of Islamic moderation theme	82%	
Ease of message comprehension	79%	
Interactive engagement	75%	
Influence of preacher figures	68%	

The survey results indicate that visual appeal, relevance of moderation issues, and interactivity are the most influential factors affecting Generation Z's acceptance of digital da'wah messages. These findings directly relate to the main research problem, namely the suboptimal implementation of digital da'wah strategies that align with Generation Z's characteristics. According to Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, creative and easy-to-understand digital da'wah content has a higher level of compatibility with Generation Z's preferences, making it easier to adopt. In this study, this level of adoption is reflected in the high percentage of positive responses toward indicators of visual aesthetics and message simplicity (Khotimah, 2025). Thus, Rogers' theory reinforces the idea that digital da'wah must be packaged as an innovation relevant to young users' media environments (Chalim et al., 2025).

In relation to Thompson's Media Interactivity Theory, the results show that Generation Z does not wish to remain passive message recipients but desires opportunities for collaboration and dialogue within the digital da'wah process (Firdaus & Sidik, 2024). The high percentage of respondents who prioritize interactive engagement affirms that social media functions as a dialogic arena, enabling two way communication between preachers and audiences. This finding addresses previous research gaps that highlighted weak interaction in digital da'wah content, which reduces the effectiveness of conveying Islamic moderation messages (Maemonah et al., 2023). The implementation of interactivity in digital da'wah models is evident through comment features, live streaming, and polling tools that allow users to express opinions or directly ask questions about religious issues they encounter (Gruzd et al., 2023).

Bandura's Social Learning Theory explains the findings related to the influence of preacher figures in the process of internalizing Islamic moderation values among Generation Z. The survey shows that 68 percent of respondents stated that the credibility and communicative style of digital preachers influence their understanding of moderation values. In the analyzed content, preachers who appear friendly, use simple language, and display inclusive religious practices tend to receive higher positive engagement. This finding strengthens Bandura's argument that behavioral models on social media serve as references for young users; thus, strengthening Islamic moderation largely depends on the presence of trusted and admired role models.

The integration of these three theories clarifies that the main research problem ineffective digital da'wah strategies stems from the absence of an approach that combines message innovation, interactivity, and learning through exemplary figures. The findings reveal that Generation Z responds positively to digital da'wah when content is presented creatively, engages users in the communication process, and features preachers with moderate and communicative personalities. This conclusion also bridges the gap in understanding digital da'wah models, which have previously focused more on message dissemination than on the quality and mechanisms of interaction involved.

The research questions regarding the effectiveness of social media in instilling Islamic moderation and how interactive, creative-content-based da'wah models can be developed can be explained as follows. First, social media is proven effective when content fulfills the characteristics consistent with Rogers' theory compatibility, simplicity, and observability. This is reflected in the

content analysis, which shows that da'wah videos using short storytelling formats achieve higher interaction rates than monotonous or lengthy presentations. Second, interactive da'wah models based on creative content can be developed by applying Thompson's principles of media interactivity. Content that provides responsive spaces, moderation-themed challenges, and digital Q&A forums strengthens audiences' emotional connection to da'wah messages. Third, the effectiveness of such content is further reinforced when digital preachers act as consistent role models of Islamic moderation, as explained by Bandura through the concept of observational learning.

The objective of this study is to identify the effectiveness of digital da'wah in strengthening Islamic moderation and to develop a social-media-based da'wah model relevant to Generation Z's characteristics (Anwar, 2023). The findings show that these objectives were achieved through an integrative analysis of survey results, content analysis, and informant interviews. From Rogers' perspective, the objective is achieved because creative and easy-to-understand da'wah content yields higher adoption rates. From Thompson's perspective, it is achieved because interactivity enhances the relationship between message and audience. From Bandura's perspective, it is achieved because imitation of moderate preacher behavior encourages the internalization of inclusive Islamic values.

Theoretical benefits of the study can be seen in its contribution to extending the application of the three theories in digital da'wah contexts. The study clarifies that Diffusion of Innovations applies not only to technology dissemination but also to the spread of religious messages. Media Interactivity Theory finds renewed relevance in explaining how Generation Z perceives digital da'wah as a dialogic process. Social Learning Theory offers a deeper understanding of how young audiences learn and imitate moderate behavior from digital preachers. Thus, theoretically, this study enriches the field of digital religious communication by providing empirical evidence on the internalization of religious values in social media environments.

The study's practical benefits are evident in its potential application for developing more effective digital da'wah models. Preachers, religious institutions, and content creators can use these findings as a foundation for designing da'wah strategies focused on visual creativity, simplicity of language, and dialogic message delivery. The use of short videos, infographics, and collaborative content can expand da'wah reach while strengthening the understanding of moderation values among young audiences. The research also recommends developing digital preacher training programs to help preachers serve as consistent role models who can build emotional connections with Generation Z audiences.

The study's academic contribution lies in enriching the literature on Islamic digital communication. It opens interdisciplinary discussions that combine communication theory, social psychology, and Islamic studies to develop da'wah models relevant in the digital era. This integrative approach also provides opportunities for future research to expand analysis to other social media platforms or to conduct experimental studies examining the long-term effects of creative content on the understanding of Islamic moderation.

Overall, the study's findings demonstrate that social-media-based da'wah models can be effective tools for strengthening Islamic moderation among Generation Z when content is designed according to the principles of innovation, interactivity, and social learning. The main research problem is addressed by showing that existing digital da'wah strategies have not fully utilized the creative and dialogic potential of social media. The research gap is bridged through the development of an interactive, creative-content-based da'wah model aligned with the characteristics of young digital users. Integrating the three theories allows this study to present new insights into the mechanisms of internalizing Islamic moderation values within digital environments.

This discussion comprehensively explains how social media based da'wah models play a strategic role in reinforcing Islamic moderation among Generation Z by connecting empirical findings, theoretical frameworks, and the social dynamics of the digital community. The discussion provides a holistic understanding of the interaction between religious messages delivered through digital platforms and the characteristics of young users living in a fast-paced, visual, and interactive communication ecosystem. By integrating modern communication concepts and digital behavior, this study provides a

nuanced picture of the factors that make digital da'wah effective in shaping Generation Z's religious perceptions and practices ('Aini & Zamroji, 2025). Moreover, the discussion situates the findings within prior scholarship, showing how this research expands, refines, and strengthens existing understandings.

The first aspect emphasized in the discussion is that the effectiveness of digital da'wah depends on aligning communication strategies with Generation Z's characteristics. This generation, raised in a highly connected digital environment, engages with religious messages through rapid, visual, and network-based information consumption (Soszynski, 2022). The findings indicate that Generation Z finds moderate da'wah content easier to understand when delivered through visually engaging forms, short narratives, and communicative language. This reinforces the notion that digital da'wah is not merely about transmitting religious material but about adapting formats and media to digital culture. Generation Z seeks not only religious information but also meaningful, relevant, and emotionally engaging communication experiences.

The second aspect highlights the importance of content creativity in strengthening Islamic moderation. The study shows that creative content reduces psychological distance between preachers and young audiences, making moderation messages more relatable (Akmaliah, 2025). Creativity extends beyond visual aesthetics to narrative framing, contextual examples, and symbols familiar to Generation Z's life experiences (Gubernatis, 2024). Thus, creativity becomes an epistemic dimension of digital da'wah as an engaging message facilitates deeper understanding of moderation, tolerance, and inclusivity.

The third aspect focuses on interactivity as a determining factor of digital da'wah success. Social media provides dialogic spaces that allow audiences to participate, ask questions, give feedback, and engage in healthy discussions on religious issues (Middleton & Wilson-Barnao, 2025). The study finds that Generation Z responds positively to da'wah content that opens avenues for active involvement. Interactivity fosters egalitarian communication, where users feel that preachers not only preach but also listen and empathize (Hidayat & Nuri, 2024). It also serves a pedagogical function, transforming one-way preaching into inclusive, shared learning.

Another key theme concerns the role of digital preachers in shaping moderate religious understanding. Generation Z tends to follow figures who are not only theologically competent but also empathetic, relatable, and communicative (Ilham et al., 2025). The findings show that a preacher's communication style, behavioral consistency, and personal credibility are crucial determinants of audience acceptance. Digital preachers thus become behavioral models, influencing not only content but also online culture through interaction, self-presentation, and ethical communication (Sprenger, 2025).

The discussion further highlights that social media has created a new da'wah landscape emphasizing flexibility, accessibility, and speed. Generation Z is exposed daily to vast religious content, requiring them to filter information quickly. Preachers must therefore not only capture attention but also convey messages that are trustworthy and ethically validated through behavior. Social media is not merely a preaching medium but a contested space of religious discourse where moderate narratives must strategically compete with radical content.

The discussion also notes that Islamic moderation often perceived as abstract by young audiences in traditional sermons can become more concrete, personal, and contextual through digital media. When moderation is framed through relatable life stories, everyday situations, or inspirational narratives, it becomes easier for Generation Z to internalize its values (Russo et al., 2025).

Moreover, the study reveals Generation Z's psychological preference for authenticity in communication. Overly formal or didactic da'wah tends to be ignored, whereas honest, humble, and down to earth content receives stronger appreciation. This aligns with the egalitarian and participatory ethos of social media.

From a sociocultural perspective, the study shows that social media enables the formation of digital religious communities that influence how Generation Z understands faith values. These communities, often led by emotionally relatable digital figures rather than traditional clerics, promote inclusive and reflective discussions. Hence, community-based digital da'wah has great potential for

strengthening moderation through collective learning spaces that are socially adaptive and less hierarchical.

Through this comprehensive discussion, it becomes clear that social media based da'wah is not merely an alternative to traditional preaching but a new paradigm that positions young users as active subjects in internalizing religious values. Social media transforms the preacher–audience relationship into a collaborative one, where religious messages are not simply transmitted but negotiated through shared digital experiences. Consequently, this study enriches the digital da'wah literature by demonstrating how social media can serve as a strategic instrument to strengthen Islamic moderation among Generation Z through creative, dialogic, and socially relevant approaches.

Table 2 Comparison of Previous Studies and This Study Findings

Aspect	Findings of Previous Studies	Findings of This Study
Content format	Short content is more effective in attracting young audiences	Narrative visual content enhances understanding and acceptance of Islamic moderation values
Interactivity	Many digital da'wah activities are one-directional	Users respond better to content that provides space for dialogue
Influence of figures	Influencers shape religious behavior	Preachers with communicative styles enhance the internalization of Islamic moderation
Message relevance	Da'wah should adapt to social issues	Islamic moderation is viewed as relevant when presented in a contextual manner

From the table above, it can be seen that this study's findings both confirm several results from previous research and offer new insights. In general, earlier studies highlighted the importance of communication formats and strategies suited to the characteristics of young audiences, but few focused on how Islamic moderation da'wah is packaged in creative content forms. This is where the contribution of the present study lies enriching the existing body of literature.

The following discussion explains how research gaps can be identified by comparing earlier findings with those of this study. Many previous studies have focused mainly on the effectiveness of social media as a general platform for da'wah, without examining in detail the characteristics of da'wah content specifically aimed at strengthening Islamic moderation among Generation Z (Zainal & Sidik, 2024). Most earlier studies evaluated the effectiveness of social media through quantitative indicators such as viewer numbers, interaction rates, or content dissemination patterns, without exploring how content elements influence the internalization of moderate religious values. This study fills that gap through an analytical approach that positions narrative structure, visual style, and interactivity level as key components determining the success of digital da'wah in shaping Generation Z's religious perceptions and attitudes. Thus, the research gap is identified in the limited focus on the internal aspects of da'wah content particularly those contributing conceptually and practically to strengthening Islamic moderation values.

While previous studies tended to view social media merely as a message distribution channel, this study advances the understanding that the success of digital da'wah largely depends on the quality of the content produced. Visual style plays a significant role because Generation Z has grown up in a digital ecosystem dominated by visual representation (Dewantoro et al., 2025). They have strong preferences for aesthetic, concise, and easily digestible presentations. Appealing visuals, soft color

schemes, relevant illustrations, and simple animations greatly affect audience attention and message retention. In the context of Islamic moderation, visuals depicting social harmony, inclusivity, and balance help Generation Z transform abstract concepts into more concrete understanding (Yuliawati & Asri, 2024). These findings reinforce the idea that visual style is not merely an aesthetic element but an integral part of how Generation Z absorbs and interprets religious messages.

In addition to visual style, narrative structure also emerges as an important component in addressing previous research gaps. The narrative structures used in traditional da'wah content are often linear, lengthy, and dominated by conceptual explanations, which do not align with Generation Z's information consumption patterns that are fast, concise, and experience-based (Azam, 2023). This study reveals that narratives presented through short stories, real-life examples, or everyday situations are more effective in conveying the values of Islamic moderation. Storytelling-based narratives allow Generation Z to feel connected and engaged with the message, thereby facilitating the internalization of moderate values. Thus, this study clarifies that narrative structure plays a crucial role in building the relevance of the message to young people's lived realities.

Audience engagement is another aspect that has received limited attention in prior research. Earlier studies often discussed social media interactivity in general communication contexts but rarely linked it directly to the internalization of moderation values. This study finds that Generation Z responds more positively to da'wah content that enables active interaction, such as Q&A sessions, open comment sections, online surveys, or live-streaming features. Through such interactions, Generation Z becomes not merely passive recipients but active participants in a dialogical religious conversation. Active engagement fosters deeper learning because audiences can confirm their understanding, ask questions, or share personal experiences related to moderation values. Therefore, interactivity is not just a technical feature of social media but a pedagogical mechanism that effectively strengthens the understanding of moderate religious principles.

Beyond these three aspects, another significant research gap lies in the limited attention to digital preachers as behavioral models. Earlier studies focused more on content as the primary object of analysis, whereas this study shows that preacher figures play a crucial role in shaping how Generation Z understands and emulates moderation values. This aligns with Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes that individuals learn through observing behavioral models. In the context of social media, preachers who display inclusive attitudes, friendly language, and non-judgmental communication styles are more easily accepted by young audiences (Baedowi et al., 2025). This study reveals that Generation Z does not only focus on the message itself but actively evaluates the preacher's character, personality, and credibility. This finding indicates that preachers are an integral part of the message itself and inseparable from the process of internalizing moderation values.

The credibility of digital preachers is proven to be one of the most influential factors affecting the acceptance of moderate messages (Nuriana & Salwa, 2024). Unlike earlier studies that viewed preachers as neutral message conveyors, this research finds that communicative traits such as the ability to address sensitive issues wisely, responsiveness to audience questions, and consistency in demonstrating moderate behavior serve as key indicators for Generation Z in assessing a preacher's reliability. These findings strengthen the understanding that digital preachers are not merely message deliverers but also moral exemplars shaping audience perceptions and behavior. Thus, this study fills a theoretical gap that previous research has not adequately addressed.

In addition to credibility, the communicative style of digital preachers also influences the internalization level of Islamic moderation messages. Preachers who convey messages in a relaxed, simple, and humanistic manner tend to be more favored by Generation Z (Faizah et al., 2024). The study finds that such an approach makes the moderation message feel closer and more relevant to everyday life contrasting with the formal and normative tone of traditional preaching. Therefore, this research expands the understanding of the paradigm shift in da'wah within the digital era, where message effectiveness depends largely on how well the communication style matches audience preferences.

This study also shows that the gap in earlier research is not only methodological but also conceptual. Many prior studies used quantitative analyses focusing on the reach or engagement metrics

of da'wah content, which were insufficient to capture how young audiences interpret and internalize religious messages. This study adopts a more exploratory approach, examining how content elements interact with Generation Z's psychological and social characteristics in shaping their understanding of Islamic moderation. In doing so, it provides an important conceptual contribution to the development of digital da'wah literature.

Furthermore, this study's findings demonstrate that the gap in earlier research can be narrowed through the integration of creative approaches in producing digital da'wah content. Creative elements such as a combination of engaging visuals, concise narrative structures, and accessible interactivity have proven to enhance the effectiveness of conveying Islamic moderation values. This creative approach not only captures audience attention but also creates a more meaningful learning experience. Since earlier studies rarely emphasized the creative dimension in digital da'wah, this research makes a significant contribution by proposing a new framework for modern da'wah practices.

Another research gap is found in the relevance of da'wah messages to Generation Z's social context. Earlier research highlighted the need to align da'wah messages with contemporary social issues but did not elaborate on how this alignment can be implemented in digital content. This study clarifies that Islamic moderation is better understood when presented contextually linked to issues such as social tolerance, differences of opinion, or campus life dynamics. This approach helps Generation Z recognize Islamic moderation not as a theoretical discourse but as a set of values with direct application in daily life.

Ultimately, this study demonstrates that addressing previous research gaps requires a multidimensional approach that integrates content analysis, audience behavior, and preacher characteristics. This holistic approach provides a more comprehensive picture of how Generation Z absorbs Islamic moderation messages, filling a significant gap in the literature by offering a deeper understanding of effective digital da'wah strategies.

The research questions how effective digital da'wah models are in instilling Islamic moderation among Generation Z and how interactive creative content strategies can be developed are answered through these findings. The results show that digital da'wah models are indeed effective when content captures attention, facilitates easy comprehension, and allows direct interaction. This aligns with previous findings asserting that two-way communication strengthens audience attachment to religious messages (Shofiyuddin et al., 2024). However, this study extends that understanding by incorporating visual creativity and contextual storytelling as essential elements in delivering moderation values.

The research objective of developing a da'wah model relevant to Generation Z's characteristics was achieved through data analysis. The findings show that effective da'wah content for Generation Z must combine aesthetic elements, clear narratives, and simple language. Previous studies indicate that Generation Z prefers honest, direct, and relatable communication, whereas overly technical or formal preaching often fails to engage them. This study reinforces those conclusions by demonstrating that communicative language and modern visuals significantly influence the acceptance of moderation values.

The theoretical significance of this research lies in its contribution to expanding understanding of the integration between digital communication and religious moderation. Previous studies generally focused on isolated aspects such as social media effectiveness or digital interaction patterns but rarely combined all these dimensions within a unified da'wah model. This study introduces the concept of interactive creative da'wah, applicable in digital contexts.

From a practical perspective, the study provides empirically grounded recommendations for improving digital da'wah strategies such as using short videos, storytelling, live-streaming features, and infographics. Previous studies often provided only general statements on the importance of creativity, without specifying which elements most influence Generation Z's understanding. This research presents those elements systematically, making them more applicable for practitioners.

From an academic standpoint, this study enriches interdisciplinary discourse connecting digital communication, social psychology, and Islamic studies. While prior research acknowledged the value

of interdisciplinary approaches in understanding Generation Z's behavior, none had directly linked them to Islamic moderation da'wah. This study makes a significant contribution by demonstrating that combining surveys, interviews, and content analysis can provide a comprehensive understanding of how Generation Z receives, interprets, and emulates religious behavior they observe on social media. The findings also open pathways for future research to conduct experiments or longitudinal studies to evaluate the sustainability of digital da'wah's impact on Generation Z's religious character formation.

One key point emerging from the discussion is the relationship between the study's findings and the strengthening of Islamic moderation. Previous studies noted that moderation is often perceived as abstract and less appealing to younger audiences. This research shows that presenting Islamic moderation in creative formats and linking it to current issues makes the values more comprehensible and applicable for Generation Z. This supports earlier scholars' arguments that internalizing moderate values requires approaches that are not only informative but also inspirational and dialogic.

The discussion also emphasizes that a successful digital da'wah model must combine communicative innovation with sensitivity to young audiences' needs. Previous studies highlighted the importance of relevance and contextualization, but this study clarifies that such relevance can be achieved through diction choices, real-life examples, and visual styles consistent with Generation Z's popular culture. Therefore, this study contributes practically by identifying the specific elements that make moderation messages more acceptable.

Overall, this discussion shows that the study successfully addresses its main research problem, questions, objectives, and identified gaps by presenting a comprehensive view of how digital da'wah can be designed to strengthen Islamic moderation. The integration of this study's findings with prior research provides a strong academic foundation to conclude that social-media-based da'wah represents a relevant and promising approach to shaping the religious character of Generation Z.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that social-media-based da'wah holds highly significant potential in strengthening Islamic moderation values among Generation Z especially when religious messages are presented through creative, interactive, and easily comprehensible approaches. The integration of the research findings and discussion indicates that Generation Z, as the largest group of social media users, requires da'wah patterns that align with their digital preferences. This includes the use of engaging visuals, concise and relevant storytelling narratives, and interactive spaces that enable two-way communication between preachers and audiences. The delivery of messages that meet these characteristics is proven to be more effective in helping Generation Z understand and internalize the values of Islamic moderation than conventional da'wah models.

The findings reveal that the success of digital da'wah is determined not only by content quality but also by how the message is presented. Survey analysis shows that visual appeal is the dominant factor influencing Generation Z's attention, while thematic relevance and language simplicity enhance comprehension of Islamic moderation's core values. Meanwhile, the discussion emphasizes that Generation Z responds positively to da'wah content that fosters emotional connection through digital interactivity. This reinforces the argument that social media functions not merely as a message distribution channel but as a dialogic space where religious meaning is constructed collaboratively. Accordingly, the results support the conclusion that an ideal da'wah model for Generation Z should reflect creativity, interactivity, and inclusivity within digital communication.

The study also demonstrates that the role of preachers is crucial in the process of internalizing Islamic moderation values. Generation Z tends to emulate public figures who are perceived as credible, communicative, and relevant to their life context. Through the discussion, it becomes clear that Social Learning Theory plays an important role in shaping Generation Z's religious behavior through observation of digital preachers. Preachers who embody moderate, tolerant, and inclusive attitudes can serve as behavioral models that are respected and emulated by young audiences. This conclusion affirms that strengthening Islamic moderation through social media requires not only appropriate content but also credible messengers whose integrity and communication style align with Generation Z's digital culture.

Furthermore, the study concludes that the existing gap in digital da'wah strategies lies in the lack of attention to interactivity and content creativity. The discussion shows that most previous digital da'wah efforts remained one-directional and informative, failing to meet the participatory communication preferences of Generation Z. The findings of this study address that gap by proposing an interactive, creative-content-based da'wah model designed specifically to enhance the understanding of Islamic moderation. This model effectively bridges the gap between traditional message delivery methods and the digital communication preferences of young audiences.

The research objectives to identify the effectiveness of digital da'wah and to develop a creative, social-media-based da'wah model were achieved empirically. The results indicate that social media can serve as an effective da'wah medium when utilized optimally in accordance with youth characteristics. The discussion supports this conclusion by emphasizing that modern visual approaches, short narratives, and interactive features such as comment sections and live streaming can significantly increase Generation Z's engagement in understanding Islamic moderation messages. This conclusion provides theoretical, practical, and academic contributions by reaffirming that digital communication can be a strategic medium for strengthening moderate Islamic values among younger audiences.

Overall, this study concludes that social-media-based da'wah has great potential as a means of nurturing moderate religiosity among Generation Z. The strengthening of Islamic moderation can be achieved through the integration of creative content, appealing visuals, interactivity, and exemplary preacher figures. The findings and discussion demonstrate that digital da'wah is not merely a technical issue of message delivery but a comprehensive communication strategy that requires deep understanding of audience behavior and digital platform dynamics. Therefore, this research provides a scientific foundation for developing da'wah strategies that are more adaptive, inspirational, and relevant to the needs of Generation Z in the digital era.

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