



The Effectiveness of Instagram and TikTok as Islamic Da'wah Media: Their Influence on Audience Religiosity



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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji efektivitas Instagram dan TikTok sebagai media dakwah Islam serta mengevaluasi pengaruhnya terhadap religiusitas audiens. Penelitian ini menggunakan Teori Uses and Gratifications serta Teori Belajar Sosial Kognitif Albert Bandura. Metode yang digunakan adalah kuantitatif deskriptif dengan menyebarkan kuesioner kepada 70 responden, yang dilengkapi dengan data kualitatif dari wawancara bersama para dai digital. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dakwah digital sangat efektif dalam aspek aksesibilitas dan jangkauan dengan skor 81,4%, sedangkan kualitas konten, khususnya gaya penyampaian, memperoleh skor 78,6%. Dampak terkuat terlihat dalam mendorong sikap kritis sebesar 77,2% dan memotivasi transformasi keagamaan sebesar 75,7%, yang mencerminkan terpenuhinya gratifikasi kognitif dan afektif. Namun, ditemukan kesenjangan perilaku yang cukup signifikan karena praktik ibadah sunah hanya mencapai 48,6%. Kesenjangan ini menunjukkan tantangan dalam mengubah motivasi digital dan pembelajaran melalui pengamatan menjadi perilaku keagamaan yang konsisten. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguatan verifikasi konten, peningkatan gaya penyampaian yang persuasif, serta penerapan pendekatan manajemen kalbu untuk mendorong praktik keagamaan yang berkelanjutan dan keterlibatan audiens yang lebih bermakna di kedua platform, khususnya di kalangan pengguna media sosial Muslim yang beragam.

This study examines the effectiveness of Instagram and TikTok as media for Islamic preaching and evaluates their influence on audience religiosity. The research applies Uses and Gratifications Theory and Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory. A descriptive quantitative design was employed, with questionnaires distributed to 70 respondents and supplemented by qualitative data from interviews with digital preachers. The findings indicate that digital preaching is highly effective in terms of accessibility and reach, with a score of 81.4%, while content quality, particularly delivery style, scored 78.6%. Its strongest impacts were in encouraging critical attitudes (77.2%) and motivating religious transformation (75.7%), reflecting the fulfillment of cognitive and affective gratifications. However, a notable behavioral gap emerged, as the practice of voluntary worship reached only 48.6%. This gap highlights the challenge of converting digital motivation and observational learning into consistent religious behavior. The study recommends strengthening content verification, improving persuasive delivery, and applying a heart-management approach to encourage sustainable religious practices and more meaningful audience engagement across both platforms among diverse Muslim social media audiences.

INTRODUCTION

The widespread adoption of digital technology has fundamentally transformed how people engage with religious values. (Anggreani & Rafi, 2025). Before the advent of the digital age, da'wah activities were generally conducted through face-to-face meetings, such as religious study sessions, lectures, and social activities. This direct communication model has limitations in terms of accessibility and reach, so a da'i often had to travel long distances at great expense to spread the message of da'wah. The advent of digital technology has since enabled da'is to spread da'wah more widely without geographical constraints (Rafhael Lazuardy & Yusuf, 2025).

The process of religious mediatization demonstrates its persistence, as religious practices continue to adapt to the logic of digital media. Social media, particularly Instagram and TikTok, has become a new and dominant medium for the dissemination of Islamic messages, especially among Generation Z. This phenomenon indicates that the process of religious mediatization is irreversible, as religious practices continue to adapt to the logic of digital media, which consistently leverages the latest communication channels of its time (Bingaman, 2023). The digital era has accelerated this process, requiring da'is to master not only religious knowledge but also the art of digital communication and algorithmic mechanisms. This shift aligns with the findings of Kretzler et al. (2023), who state that internet use for religious activities has increased sharply and has an impact on the sociopsychological aspects of society. This is highly relevant to this study, as the high level of internet use for religious activities impacts the sociopsychological aspects of society. The digitization of da'wah has introduced new forms of religiosity that are more personal, individualistic, and based on online experiences (Saputra & Triantoro, 2021). Generation Z, as digital natives, exhibits unique media usage patterns. They tend to prefer concise (bite-sized) information, demand visual intensity, and value originality and interactivity.

Therefore, Instagram and TikTok serve as *wasilah* (media) for a new generation of da'wah with specific characteristics (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020). Instagram excels at da'wah that leverages visual appeal, such as quotes and graphic designs, while TikTok utilizes fast-paced storytelling, trending audio, and a fully vertical video format (H et al., 2025). These differences in media further necessitate distinct strategies for delivering content (Maddah). Furthermore, the algorithmic nature of these platforms—which prioritize content based on engagement metrics—automatically shifts the focus of da'wah toward optimizing visibility rather than solely on the depth of substance. TikTok is considered an effective medium for da'wah, particularly for the younger demographic (ages 18–25), due to its concise and communicative video format (Konten et al., 2025). Literature reviews have examined the effectiveness of social media in the context of da'wah, generally confirming a positive influence on the audience's religious intentions and understanding. The Uses and Gratifications (UGT) theory offers a strong theoretical foundation for understanding this, explaining that audiences consciously choose media to fulfill their cognitive (seeking religious information),

affective (seeking peace of mind or motivation), and social (connecting with a community or da'i) needs (Karunia H et al., 2021). From a UGT perspective, the effectiveness of digital da'wah is measured by the audience's gratification or satisfaction. For example, a study by Putri and Astutik (2021) found that TikTok is effectively used as a lighthearted and appropriate medium for religious learning. These findings consistently indicate that the ease of access and suitability offered by this platform meet the audience's need for instant spiritual guidance (Siregar & Surya, 2022). However, the UGT framework also highlights a potential issue: passive media consumption, in which watching content can replace actual religious practice, leading to mere information absorption rather than tangible behavioral change. This theoretical framework is crucial for designing measurement tools to identify the satisfaction respondents seek and actually obtain (Putri & Astutik, 2021). Furthermore, according to Bhatiasavi (2024) the Uses and Gratifications theory explains that social media users actively seek content that fulfills their cognitive, affective, and social needs.

Thus, the effectiveness of digital da'wah can be gauged by the extent to which such content fulfills the audience's informational and emotional needs. When religious messages are presented engagingly through short videos and compelling visuals, users tend to feel connected and spiritually motivated. Furthermore, Myller & Friemel (Myller & Friemel, 2024) argue that religious communities in the digital space are evolving and serve as new spaces for learning and social connection. The positive impacts of digital da'wah are often accompanied by serious challenges inherent in the open digital environment. Dakwah via social media faces critical issues, including message distortion, low content credibility, and the spread of religious misinformation and hoaxes (Nusaibah, 2023). Content duration limitations on Instagram and TikTok often result in the loss of important context, leading to overly simplistic interpretations of complex fiqh issues. Furthermore, the absence of centralized oversight allows for the emergence of various new religious figures, who effectively challenge the teachings of conventional religious institutions (Nasution, 2024). Respondents themselves expressed concerns about unproductive debates in comment sections and the risk of misunderstandings arising from the loss of contextual material due to short durations (Bahrudin & Waehama, 2024). This reality demands that preachers master not only the subject matter (*maddah*) but also visual appeal, storytelling, and effective interaction strategies, alongside a sincere adherence to scholarly sanad to mitigate these risks (Jalaluddin et al., 2024).

Although positive effects have been widely confirmed, a significant research gap remains, particularly regarding the transition from digital motivation to real-world religious behavior (Suriati, 2021). Most previous studies have focused on content analysis or have limited their scope to cognitive and affective effects. This study aims to fill this gap by using primary data (surveys) that simultaneously compare the effectiveness of both platforms and measure their influence and impact on dimensions of religiosity (*atsar*) (Pratiwi & Zulputri, 2025). In response to this phenomenon, several previous studies have examined the effectiveness of

social media in the context of da'wah. For example, research on digital da'wah strategies and content analysis on specific platforms has been conducted (Hakim et al., 2021). Some studies have focused specifically on da'wah strategies or analyzed content on a single platform, such as Instagram. For example, a quantitative study showed that intensive use of Instagram significantly influences changes in the religious and social behavior of Generation Z (Ar'robby et al., 2025). The novelty of this study is enhanced by the use of a mixed – methods approach with a Sequential Explanatory design, which integrates survey data from N=70 respondents with qualitative data from respondents and in – depth interviews with Digital Da'is. This integration aims to bridge the gap between high religious motivation (affective dimension) and a weak drive to change behavior in practice (behavioral dimension). The primary objective of this study is to analyze the effectiveness of Instagram and TikTok as platforms for Islamic da'wah and to evaluate their influence on society. Specifically, this study seeks to identify factors that influence the effectiveness of da'wah, analyze the impact of content on religious understanding, attitudes, and behavior, and outline the challenges, risks, and required optimization strategies. This study is crucial for understanding how digital dynamics influence religiosity and religious authority in society, and for providing practical recommendations to develop more effective and ethical da'wah content.

METHOD

This study employed a mixed – methods approach using a sequential explanatory design, in which quantitative data collection and analysis were conducted first, followed by qualitative inquiry. This design was selected to identify general patterns in respondents' perceptions of digital da'wah content and subsequently explain the meanings underlying those patterns. The quantitative phase examined the relationship between exposure to digital da'wah, religious motivation, knowledge, and behavioral change. In contrast, the qualitative phase clarified findings that could not be fully explained through numerical data. The quantitative data were obtained from 70 respondents selected through purposive sampling. This technique was used because the study required participants who had experience accessing digital da'wah content and were relevant to the research objectives. Eligibility criteria were included in the introductory section of the online questionnaire. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed that their responses would be used solely for academic purposes.

The research instrument was an online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms and shared via social media platforms. It consisted of three sections: respondent eligibility and general characteristics, Likert – scale items measuring the reach, relevance, motivational influence, cognitive impact, and behavioral influence of digital da'wah content, and open – ended questions exploring respondents' experiences and interpretations. Before distribution, the questionnaire was reviewed to ensure clarity and consistency with the research objectives. The online format was chosen because it enabled efficient access to respondents who actively used social media and were familiar with digital religious

content. Qualitative data were subsequently collected through in–depth interviews with digital preachers. The interview guide was developed after reviewing the initial survey findings, particularly the gap between increased religious motivation and changes in practical religious behavior. The interviews explored how digital preachers designed their messages, understood audience engagement, encouraged behavioral change, and addressed the limitations of online da'wah.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, especially frequencies and percentages. Microsoft Excel was used to organize and calculate the data, while Origin supported data visualization. Qualitative data from interviews and open–ended responses were analyzed using thematic analysis, including data familiarization, coding, theme development, theme review, and interpretation. Finally, both data sets were integrated during the interpretation stage. The qualitative findings were used to explain and contextualize the statistical patterns, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how digital da'wah influences religious motivation, knowledge, and behavioral change.

RESULT

Respondent and Informant Profiles

The results and discussion section begins by presenting the characteristics of the 70 respondents ($N = 70$) who participated in the survey. Identifying these characteristics is important to ensure that the sample under study represents a relevant population, namely, active Instagram and TikTok users exposed to religious content in accordance with the established purposive sampling criteria. The respondent profile is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Profile($N = 70$)

Variable Category	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Usia	Age 18 – 25 (Gen Z)	44	62.9%
	26 – 35 (Early Millennials)	9	12.9%
	36 – 45 (Late Gen X)	7	10.0%
	< 18	6	8.6%
	> 45	4	5.7%
Gender	Female	41	58.65
	Male	29	41.4%
Highest Level of Education	Diploma/Bachelor's Degree	35	44.3%
	High School/Vocational High School/Equivalent	31	2.9%
	Master's/Doctorate	2	2.9%
	Elementary School/Junior High School/Equivalent	2	35.7%
Social Media Usage Intensity (Instagram & TikTok)	4 – 6 Hours	25	35.7%
	1 – 3 Hours	22	31.4%
	> 6 Hours (Heavy Users)	16	22.9%
	< 1 Hour	7	10.0%

Source: Results of the Analysis of Research Survey Data, 2026

Table 1 draws on an analysis of respondent profiles and shows that the study sample was dominated by the 18 – to 25 – year – old age group (Generation Z), accounting for 62.9% of all respondents. Demographically, women made up most respondents at 58.6%, consistent with global trends, in which women tend to be more active in consuming content related to spirituality and self – development on social media. Most respondents had a higher education background, with 50.0% holding a diploma or bachelor's degree. Meanwhile, the Social Media Usage Intensity variable (which specifically measures daily usage duration on Instagram and TikTok) indicates that most respondents are heavy users. A total of 58.6% of respondents spent 4 hours or more per day (35.7% in the 4 – 6 – hour category and 22.9% in the >6 – hour category) on both platforms. These characteristics reinforce the relevance of the study's findings, as the sample consists predominantly of Generation Z and active social media users. The qualitative component involved a digital preacher with the initials DF. The interviewee's profile is summarized in Table 2

Table 2. Profile of the Interviewee

Parameter	Description
Educational Background	Cohort of the Sundanese Language Education program at UPI
Primary Media for Da'wah	Instagram and TikTok
Duration of Digital Da'wah	Since high school, specifically in 2023 (2 years)
Main Content Focus	Motivation, heart management (self – reflection), and daily advice
Rationale for Content Focus	Realized this approach because he does not yet consider himself an expert in specific religious fields (non – fiqh) and aims to provide peace of mind

Source: Interview Analysis Results, 2026

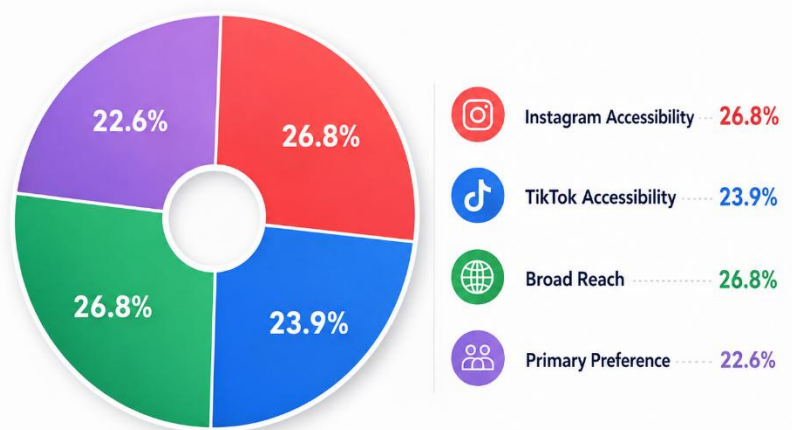
Table 2 outlines the profile of a qualitative informant identified by the initials DF, a male student in the Sundanese Language Education program at UPI, class of 2024. He has been actively spreading Islamic teachings through Instagram and TikTok since 2023. His content focuses on motivation, spiritual guidance, and daily advice. He chose this focus because he has not yet delved deeply into the field of fiqh and wishes to bring a sense of peace to his audience.

Factors Shaping the Effectiveness of Instagram and TikTok as Da'wah Media

Instagram and TikTok serve as *wasilah* (media) for da'wah among a new generation, characterized specifically as short – form video platforms (Muna Farah Azzahra et al., 2025). The key characteristics of these two platforms—an emphasis on visuals, speed, short duration, and high interactivity—fundamentally distinguish them from conventional da'wah media such as television or books (Yuliasih, 2022). The primary objective of this study is to identify the factors that make da'wah on Instagram and TikTok considered effective, using the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) framework. This study limits its focus to two key

elements. The first element is *wasilah*, namely the media used, which in this case are Instagram and TikTok. The second element is *atsar*, namely the influence and impact that the media has on the audience (*mad'u*) (Pratiwi & Zulputri, 2025). The shift from conventional media to digital media has significantly altered how these five elements interact (Faridah & Melati Amir, 2025). Effectiveness is measured through three main dimensions: Accessibility and Reach, Content Quality and Appeal, and Interaction and Feedback. The Accessibility and Reach dimension of social media is illustrated in Figure 1

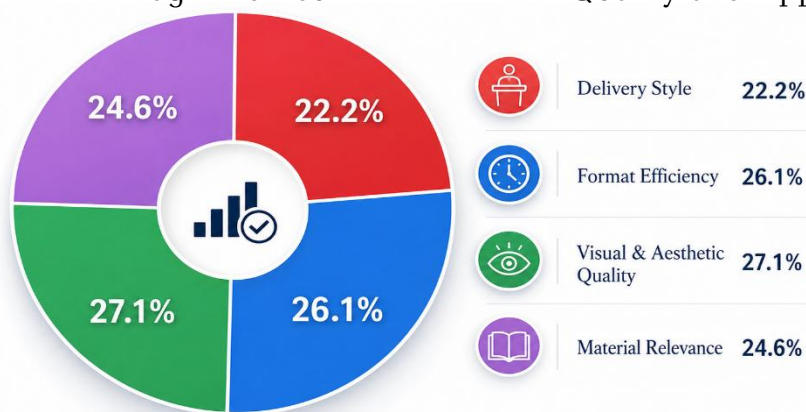
Figure 1. Percentage Distribution of Accessibility and Reach Elements



Source: Results of the Analysis of Research Survey Data, 2026

Figure 1 illustrates that accessibility and reach are the strongest dimensions of a platform's effectiveness. A total of 81.4% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Instagram and TikTok provide a wide reach for Islamic outreach. The same level of agreement 81.4% was also recorded regarding the ease of finding Islamic outreach content on Instagram. TikTok's accessibility was endorsed by 72.8% of respondents, while 68.6% cited both platforms as their primary source of exposure to Islamic da'wah. These findings indicate that digital platforms effectively meet the audience's cognitive need for religious information that is easily accessible and readily available. Within the UGT framework, the audience is positioned as active users who consciously choose the media best able to meet their information needs (Meiling Luo, 2020). In addition to accessibility and reach, the quality and appeal of content are also highly influential factors in the digital realm. The measurement results can be seen in Figure 2

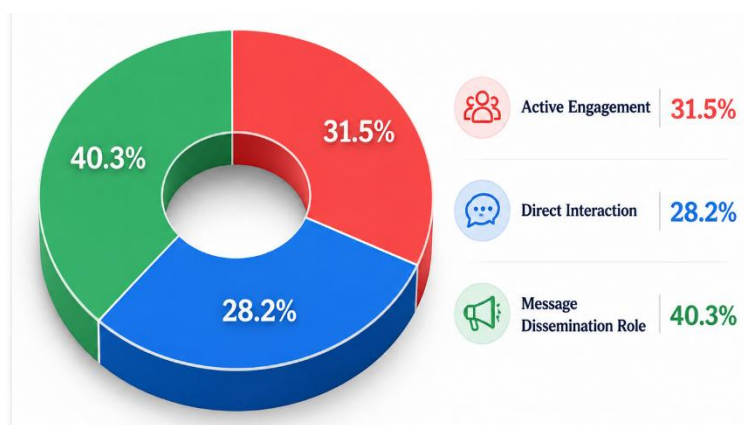
Figure 2. Percentage Distribution of Content Quality and Appeal Factors



Source: Results of the Analysis of Research Survey Data, 2026

Figure 2 shows that delivery style received the highest approval rating on this dimension, with 78.6% of respondents stating that this element supports the effectiveness of digital da'wah. Format efficiency—particularly short duration—received an approval rating of 72.8%. Visual quality and aesthetics were endorsed by 71.4% of respondents, while the relevance of the material was also endorsed by 71.4%. These results indicate that concise, visual, and audience – tailored content is better able to sustain users' attention. These findings align with Generation Z's communication preferences, as they tend to be more responsive to visual storytelling than to long monologues (Dharojah et al., 2025). Furthermore, the Interaction and Feedback dimensions were analyzed by the author in this study, as shown in Figure 3

Figure 3. Percentage Distribution of Interaction and Feedback Elements



Source: Results of the Analysis of Research Survey Data, 2026

Figure 3 shows that the lowest overall percentage was found in "Live Discussions with Speakers," at only 37.1%, and it contributed 28.2% to the total "Interaction" dimension. This low figure limits the fulfillment of Social – Integrative Gratification (UGT), where the audience seeks social connections or more in – depth discussions. Nevertheless, the "Role of the Message Disseminator" item ranked highest in this dimension, with 52.9% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they actively share content, thereby making the largest contribution—40.3%—

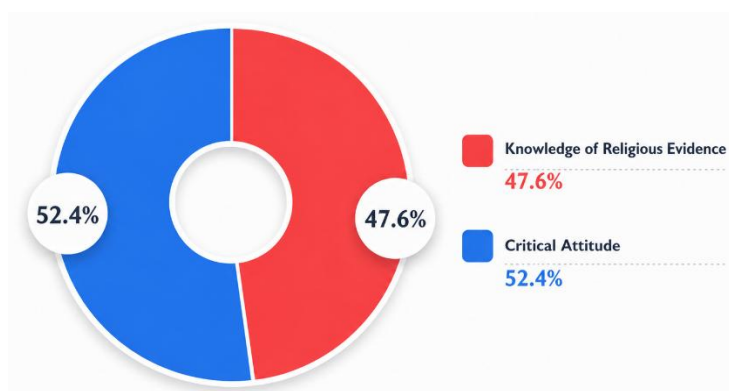
to the Interaction dimension. The level of Active Engagement (likes, comments) was endorsed by 41.4% of respondents, contributing 31.5% to the Interaction dimension. The discrepancy between the audience's prominent role as content sharers and the low level of dialogue suggests that, although the platforms facilitate comments, the large number of Da'i viewers makes in – depth two – way communication difficult.

Interview results with Digital da'i (DF) reinforce the survey's findings that the effectiveness of Instagram and TikTok as da'wah media is determined by their alignment with Generation Z's media consumption patterns, which are increasingly shifting from physical gatherings to digital spaces. DF emphasized that most young people already use Instagram, making it a relevant channel for reaching a young audience. To adapt da'wah messages to the nature of social media and the audience's limited attention span, DF employs a "short, concise, and visual" strategy by outlining key points, using illustrations, and presenting engaging content. According to him, the shorter the video duration, the greater the chance that the content will capture attention and reach a wider audience. Thus, the effectiveness of da'wah on Instagram and TikTok depends not only on the existence of the platforms but also on the da'i's ability to adapt the format, duration, and visual presentation of the message to the habits of the digital audience.

The Impact of Digital Da'wah on the Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral

This article analyzes the impact of consuming da'wah content on the dimensions of the audience's religiosity (atsar). As a communication process, da'wah comprises five interrelated core elements: the Da'i (communicator), Mad'u (audience), Maddah (message content), Wasilah (media/channel), and Atsar (effect or impact). These impacts are measured through three main aspects aligned with the taxonomy of religiosity: Cognitive Impact (Knowledge), Affective Impact (Motivation/Attitude), and Behavioral Impact (Practice). The Cognitive Impact (Knowledge) is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Percentage Distribution of Cognitive Influence Factors

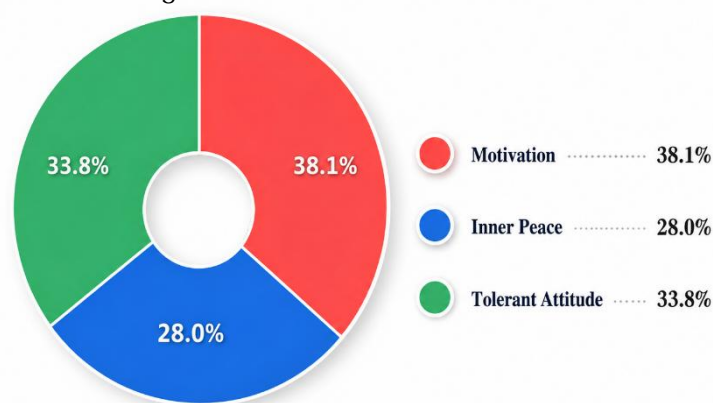


Source: Results of the Analysis of Research Survey Data, 2026

Figure 4 shows that the impact on Critical Thinking has a greater contribution—52.4% of the total Cognitive Dimension—with the "Agree/Strongly Agree"

(A+SA) response rate reaching 77.2% of respondents. This figure is higher than the impact on the acquisition of new religious principles. The "Knowledge of Religious Principles" item ("I learned about Islamic law or new religious principles after watching da'wah content") was agreed upon by 70.0% of respondents, contributing 47.6% to that dimension. The dominance of the "Critical Attitude" dimension demonstrates that exposure to information on social media not only increases knowledge but also substantially encourages personal gatekeeping functions, leading the audience to process and verify religious information actively. As for the affective influence dimension, see Figure 5.

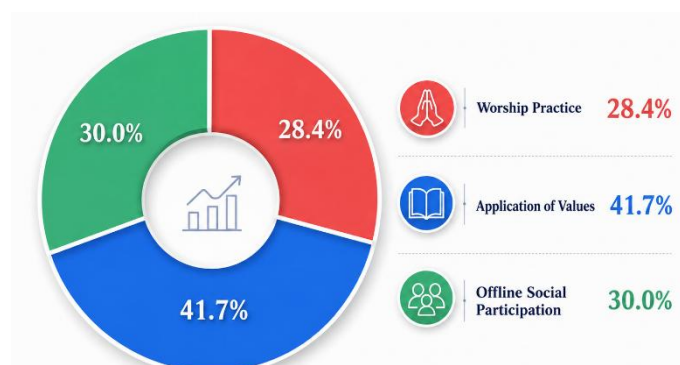
Figure 5. Percentage Distribution of Affective Influence Factors



Source: Results of the Analysis of Research Survey Data, 2026

Figure 5 shows that da'wah content is highly effective in fostering motivation, with motivation items such as the motivation to become a better person or to embrace Islam agreed upon by 75.7% of respondents and contributing the most significantly, accounting for 38.1% of the total Affective dimension. The level of agreement regarding the development of tolerant and moderate attitudes was also high, reaching 67.2%, with a contribution of 33.8% to that dimension. However, there was a significant decline in items related to inner peace, such as feeling calmer, more optimistic, and more religious, which were agreed upon by only 55.7% of respondents and accounted for 28.0% of that dimension. This discrepancy between high motivation and lower inner peace indicates that social media is more successful at inspiring the intention for external change than at providing deep and sustainable spiritual peace. Furthermore, the dimension of impact on religious practice can be seen in Figure 6

Figure 6. Dimensions of Behavioral Impact (Practices)



Source: Results of the Analysis of Research Survey Data, 2026

Figure 6 shows a gap between intention (affective) and action (behavior). The highest impact in this dimension is seen in the "Daily Application of Values," where 71.4% of respondents Agreed/Strongly Agreed, contributing a significant share of 41.7% to the total behavioral dimension. This figure indicates that the application of social values (ethics) is easier to emulate and practice. Meanwhile, Offline Social Engagement (motivation to attend in – person study sessions) was endorsed by 51.4% of respondents, accounting for 30.0% of that dimension. On the other hand, the lowest impact was found in the practice of Sunnah worship, which was endorsed by only 48.6% of respondents and contributed 28.4% to that dimension. The sharp contrast between Affective Motivation (75.7%) and Worship Practices (48.6%) indicates that while digital da'wah is effective in the observation and motivation stages, the process of imitating routine behaviors (such as Sunnah worship) fails due to a lack of reinforcement and structured social environment elements that social media cannot optimally provide.

Credibility, Ethics, and Risk Management in Digital Da'wah

This section analyzes the challenges and risks of digital da'wah from the audience's perspective and outlines optimization strategies based on respondents' suggestions and the practices of Digital Da'i (DF). Based on respondents' open – ended answers and interview results, the main challenges of da'wah via Instagram and TikTok relate to message distortion, contextual misunderstandings, and content duration limitations. Da'wah material presented in short videos risks being cut off, preventing the audience from fully grasping the context. This situation can lead to misinterpretation or even misuse of the message's content. DF acknowledges that the short duration poses a unique challenge in preserving the integrity of the meaning. To address this, he structures his messages in a specific, step – by – step, and targeted manner to ensure the content does not lose its context when packaged in short – form video formats. Another challenge relates to the credibility of sources and the risk of spreading misinformation. Some respondents highlighted religious content that does not align with religious principles, is inaccurate, or is based solely on the content creator's personal perceptions. Aware of his own academic limitations, DF chooses not to delve

deeply into issues of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and instead focuses his content on motivation and heart management, drawing from the teachings of his mentor.

Social risks also arise through debates in the comment sections, which often escalate into mutual blame. In addressing this situation, DF strives to accept criticism as a form of concern, investigate its validity, and use it as material for self-evaluation. He also places greater value on criticism conveyed via private messages, as this is considered more ethical and reduces the potential for open conflict. Given these challenges, strategies for optimizing digital da'wah should focus on improving content quality, verifying sources, adjusting formats, and strengthening media ethics. The audience suggested that content creators include supporting evidence, sources for verses and hadiths, and clear explanations in every piece of da'wah material. DF implemented this strategy by including relevant references, especially when discussing more in-depth topics, and recommended that every piece of content be verified by an ustaz or someone with religious expertise. In terms of presentation, content should be delivered in language that is easily understood by the younger generation, presented concisely, engagingly, and in a style suited to social media without sacrificing substance. DF structures its content around key points, uses visual illustrations, and provides initial motivation to help the audience view worship as something easy to practice.

Additionally, he emphasizes the importance of purifying one's intentions, not making popularity or the number of followers the primary goal, remaining open to criticism, and encouraging the audience to be more discerning and not easily provoked when using social media. Credibility and ethics in digital da'wah are essential competencies for a da'i in his da'wah activities. In the interview, DF acknowledged that the greatest challenge in digital da'wah is maintaining the validity of content amid personal limitations in scholarly knowledge and the risk of spreading misinformation. To maintain credibility, he limits his discussions to topics of motivation and spiritual management and avoids in-depth fiqh issues as they fall outside his area of expertise. DF stated, "I don't consider myself an expert—I'm not yet an expert on more specific religious matters." Although he focuses on motivational content, he still emphasizes the importance of validating sources by citing verses from the Qur'an and hadiths along with their meanings or translations. According to him, "We must include clear references for what we convey," so that public trust is maintained and the audience receives a religiously sound foundation. In the face of algorithmic demands and concerns that digital media only pursues viewership numbers, DF prioritizes sincerity of intention as the guiding principle. Algorithms, popularity, and monetization are viewed merely as supplementary means that must not overshadow the purpose of da'wah as a path to spreading goodness. He emphasizes that the videos produced are intended to serve as a path to guidance for others, not merely a means to garner praise. When managing conflicts, DF values criticism conveyed privately via direct messages, as this is considered more respectful.

However, he remains open to public correction and views criticism as a means to evaluate himself. For him, well-delivered reprimands can serve as

reminders to improve both the content and the delivery of his da'wah. Da'wah activities on social media do not always receive positive responses. Some public figures even exploit the dynamics of public debates in Indonesia as an opportunity to project an image of religious conversion (Hudaa et al., 2023). In response to the negative stigma surrounding entertainment platforms like TikTok, the Ushul Fiqh approach views social media as a means (wasilah) whose legal status depends on the reason for its use (illat). Randani et al. (2021) emphasize that if a platform is used for good, its value becomes positive; however, if the opposite is true, its value becomes haram. Therefore, the strategy of millennial da'is must focus on "claiming the space" through positive content to displace the dominance of less beneficial content. Munir (2024) also highlights the importance of self-monitoring mechanisms by the public to assess the accuracy of information and its alignment with religious teachings to minimize the impact of misleading content.

DISCUSSION

The study's findings indicate that the effectiveness of religious outreach via Instagram and TikTok is closely linked to the fulfillment of the audience's psychological and informational needs, as described by UGT. Accessibility and reach received the highest approval ratings—81.4%—indicating that both platforms can meet the need for quick, easily accessible religious information. Acceptance of the delivery style was also high, at 78.6%, reinforcing the importance of concise, visual, and relevant content for young users. The "short, concise, and visual" strategy implemented by DF demonstrates that, within the digital ecosystem, the medium is not merely a channel but also helps shape the structure and presentation of messages to align with user preferences and algorithmic logic. At the same time, this study reveals a paradox of interaction. Direct dialogic engagement with the dai is relatively low, at 37.1%, while message-sharing activity reaches 52.9%. From a Uses and Gratifications perspective, this pattern suggests that the audience may derive greater gratification from sharing content and displaying religious affiliation than from engaging in in-depth theological discussions. This situation creates parasocial communication: the audience feels close to the religious preacher, but this relationship is not always accompanied by substantive two-way interaction. This limitation is significant because spiritual guidance generally requires more sustained dialogue, clarification, and mentoring than short video content can provide.

The most significant finding is the gap between affective motivation and routine religious practice. Critical attitudes and motivation for religious transformation reached 77.2% and 75.7%, respectively, while the practice of voluntary acts of worship reached only 48.6%. Social Cognitive Learning Theory helps explain these differences. Digital da'wah is effective at the attention and retention stages because the audience can observe religious messages and role models. However, behavioral replication requires practical skills, routine, and social reinforcement. Without a supportive environment, supervision, or ongoing

feedback, the motivation generated by social media may remain merely an intention and not turn into a habit. Qualitative findings provide important insights into this gap. DF's emphasis on heart management and the perception that worship is easy to perform are efforts to reduce psychological barriers before encouraging more technical religious practices. This strategy acknowledges that behavioral change cannot be forced instantly through digital media.

Furthermore, the self-imposed restriction against discussing fiqh beyond one's area of expertise and the emphasis on verifying Quranic verses and hadiths highlight the importance of source credibility. In an open information environment, audience trust is determined not only by the appeal of the presentation but also by the competence, transparency, and ethical responsibility of the religious preacher. The research findings also underscore the ambivalent nature of the mediatization of religion. On the one hand, Instagram and TikTok democratize access to religious knowledge, enabling young audiences to discover da'wah in familiar formats, and stimulating cognitive and affective engagement. On the other hand, both platforms can foster fragmented religiosity, one-way communication, and expressions of piety that stop at the consumption or symbolic sharing of content. Therefore, digital religious outreach should not be positioned as a complete replacement for conventional religious study sessions. Digital media is better understood as a complementary tool that sparks interest and motivation. At the same time, the development of sustainable religious practices still requires learning, community, and social reinforcement outside of these platforms.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the effectiveness of Instagram and TikTok as Islamic da'wah media and their influence on audience religiosity. The findings show that both platforms are highly effective in accessibility and reach (81.4%) and in supporting engaging delivery styles (78.6%). Digital da'wah also encourages critical attitudes (77.2%) and religious motivation (75.7%). However, the lower level of voluntary worship practice (48.6%) demonstrates that cognitive and affective engagement does not automatically translate into consistent behavioral change. The platforms are therefore strongest as channels for exposure, learning, and motivation, but weaker as environments for sustained religious practice and direct spiritual guidance. The principal challenges include loss of context, misinformation, limited dialogical interaction, and uncertainty regarding religious authority. Optimization requires clear source verification, persuasive and platform-sensitive delivery, ethical media practices, and strategies that connect motivation with practical religious routines. Because the study used a purposive sample of 70 respondents and one digital preacher, the findings should be interpreted as contextual rather than nationally representative. Future research should involve larger and more diverse samples, multiple digital preachers, and longitudinal observation to examine whether repeated exposure to digital da'wah produces durable changes in religious behavior.

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