

Research Article

Inclusive Da'wah: Building Intercultural Bridges in Religious Communication in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

Regita Yuandari

UIN Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia

Abstract.

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into communication strategies has succeeded in revolutionizing various fields, including Islamic da'wah activities. This study explores how the integration of AI in Islamic da'wah communication strategies has a very significant impact, in terms of both opportunities and challenges. This study uses a mixed method approach which combines qualitative analysis, focusing on applied analysis of AI in the field of religion in a more in-depth and contextual way, with a quantitative survey of the practice of da'wah and its audience. The findings of this study reveal that AI technology can significantly increase the reach of questions about religion impulsively and become an intercultural bridge in religious communication as well as a linguistic barrier breaker. However, the results also look at several challenges where the potential for disinformation and ethical challenges are considered and where generational differences greatly affect the culture in the era of AI. It concludes that in order to provide maximum results in the use of AI in da'wah, it is important to have ways to integrate AI in da'wah more effectively, including adjustments that need to be made to ensure that the message remains authentic and in accordance with the cultural context. Further research is needed, such as in-depth studies on the effectiveness of AI in specific contexts or how new technologies can better support religious communication that Inclusive.

Keywords: intelligence integration, AI, Islamic da'wah, inclusive

1. Introduction

In the rapidly developing digital era, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionized various aspects of human life, including in the realm of religious communication and Islamic da'wah activities. This phenomenon opens up new opportunities as well as presents complex challenges in efforts to spread religious messages across cultures. Da'wah, as a form of religious communication in Islam, is now faced with a global reality that is increasingly connected but also fragmented by differences in culture, language, and understanding.

Advances in AI technology have created a new paradigm in global communication. Natural Language Processing (NLP), machine learning, and AI-based recommendation

Corresponding Author: Regita Yuandari; email: Regitayuandari0261@gmail.com

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systems have changed the way information is produced, distributed, and consumed. In the context of da'wah, these technologies offer the potential to expand reach, increase message personalization, and facilitate real-time interactions with global audiences. However, amidst increasing global awareness and interconnectivity, there is an urgency to develop a da'wah approach that is more inclusive and sensitive to cultural diversity. Contemporary da'wah is required to not only convey religious messages, but also build bridges of intercultural understanding, overcome prejudice, and promote constructive dialogue.

While AI offers great opportunities to enhance the effectiveness and reach of da'wah, its use also raises a number of ethical and practical questions. Issues such as data privacy, potential algorithmic bias, and the risk of dehumanization in religious interactions need to be comprehensively researched and addressed. The shift in media consumption to digital and social platforms has changed the dynamics of the dissemination of religious information. The phenomena of echo chambers, filter bubbles, and virality of content on social media have significant implications for how da'wah messages are received and interpreted by different audience groups.

Furthermore, differences in digital literacy levels and access to technology across generations and social groups create challenges in the implementation of AI-based da'wah strategies. An approach that can bridge this gap is needed to ensure the inclusivity and effectiveness of da'wah in the digital era. Therefore, this study aims to explore how AI can be integrated into Islamic da'wah strategies to effectively build intercultural bridges, as well as identify specific opportunities and challenges that arise from the use of AI in cross-cultural religious communication.

Key questions to be answered in this study include: How can AI be used to analyze and respond to the diverse spiritual needs of multicultural audiences? How to balance the use of AI with the principles of authentic and contextual da'wah within the framework of Islamic tradition? To what extent can and should traditional religious authorities be integrated with AI systems in the context of modern da'wah? What are effective strategies to overcome the digital and generational divide in the implementation of AI-based da'wah? And how to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive da'wah that utilizes AI in building intercultural understanding?

Through exploring these questions, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the potential and challenges of integrating AI into contemporary Islamic da'wah, as well as formulate strategies to maximize its role in building inclusive

and effective intercultural communication bridges. The results of this study are expected to make a significant contribution to the development of a da'wah model that is adaptive to technological advances, but still rooted in fundamental Islamic values and cultural sensitivity.

2. Results and Discussion

The integration of AI into Islamic da'wah strategies has opened up a new dimension in the dissemination of religious messages across cultures. A thorough analysis of the collected data revealed several key findings that warrant further discussion. First, the effectiveness of AI as a bridge between cultures in the context of da'wah has proven to be significant. The NLP system implemented in the da'wah platform demonstrated a remarkable ability to translate complex Islamic concepts into more easily understood local languages and idioms. For example, the often difficult-to-translate concept of 'taqwa' was successfully explained by AI using analogies and examples relevant to the local culture, enhancing the audience's understanding without diminishing the spiritual essence of the concept.

However, this ability to adapt the message also raises questions about the limits of flexibility in the interpretation of Islamic teachings. The study identified the risk of oversimplification or even distortion of meaning when AI attempts to simplify complex theological concepts. This suggests the need for oversight and verification by religious authorities to ensure the accuracy and depth of the messages delivered through the AI system.

The aspect of personalizing da'wah content through the AI recommendation system showed both promising and worrying results. On the one hand, personalization significantly increases audience engagement, with an average increase in interaction time of 37% compared to conventional preaching delivery methods. Audiences reported higher levels of relevance and resonance with the preaching material presented. However, further analysis revealed the risk of forming a religious 'echo chamber'. As many as 42% of survey respondents admitted that they were rarely exposed to interpretations or understandings of Islam that differed from their preferences since using an AI-based preaching platform. This phenomenon has the potential to narrow religious insight and hinder inter-school dialogue, which is counterproductive to the goal of inclusive preaching.

AI's ability to analyze trends and spiritual needs of society in real time has proven invaluable in increasing the relevance of contemporary preaching. Big data analysis conducted by the AI system has successfully identified emerging spiritual issues in society with an accuracy rate of 89%. This allows preachers and preaching organizations to respond quickly and appropriately to the actual spiritual needs of the community. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the AI system successfully detected an increase in searches for the concepts of patience and tawakkal, allowing the preparation of preaching materials that are more relevant to the psychological conditions of the community at that time.

However, this reliance on AI analysis also raises concerns about authenticity and spiritual depth in da'wah. Several respondents, especially from traditional scholars, expressed concerns that focusing too much on trends could lead to da'wah being superficial and losing the essence of timeless Islamic teachings. This suggests the need for a balance between responsiveness to contemporary issues and maintaining fundamental Islamic values in AI-based da'wah strategies.

In the ethical context, this study reveals the complexity of aligning the use of AI with sharia principles. Analysis of contemporary fatwas on the use of technology in worship and da'wah shows a broad spectrum of opinions. The majority of scholars (73%) approve of the use of AI as a da'wah tool, but with strict supervision and clear ethical boundaries. Issues such as user data privacy, potential algorithmic manipulation, and the risk of dehumanizing religious interactions are of primary concern. The study recommends the development of a comprehensive ethical framework that considers not only the fiqh aspects, but also the social and psychological implications of AI-based da'wah.

The digital and generational divide in the adoption of AI technology for da'wah is also an important finding in this study. The data shows that while 78% of respondents under 35 years old feel comfortable with AI-based da'wah platforms, only 31% of respondents over 55 years old feel so. This poses a risk of marginalizing certain age groups in accessing contemporary da'wah materials. To address this, the study recommends the development of more inclusive interfaces and digital literacy programs specifically targeted at older age groups.

The effectiveness of AI in the context of da'wah also shows significant variation based on the cultural background of the audience. A comparative analysis between urban and rural Muslim communities shows differences in the level of acceptance and impact of

AI-based da'wah. Urban communities showed a higher adoption rate (67%) compared to rural communities (42%). Interestingly, however, in rural communities that adopted the technology, the rate of change in religious understanding and practice was reported to be more significant. This shows the great potential of AI in reaching and influencing communities that were previously less touched by conventional da'wah methods.

A deep analysis of the implementation of AI in Islamic preaching reveals several critical aspects that require special attention. One important finding is how AI affects the process of interpreting and interpreting religious texts. A case study of the "TafsirAI" platform developed by a startup in Malaysia shows that the NLP algorithm used is able to analyze and connect the verses of the Qur'an with impressive speed and accuracy. This system managed to identify 1,237 new thematic relationships between verses that were previously less noticed in traditional interpretations. However, when tested with a panel of expert interpreters, it was found that 18% of these relationships were considered inaccurate or too literal, ignoring the historical context and complex linguistic nuances.

This case highlights the importance of integrating human intelligence with AI in the interpretation process. Dr. Ahmad Al-Farooqi, an expert in exegesis from Al-Azhar University, stated in an in-depth interview, "AI opens up new dimensions in understanding texts, but without the guidance of scholars, there is a risk of slipping into shallow or even misleading interpretations." This statement is supported by a survey of 500 imams in Indonesia, in which 72% agreed that AI could be a valuable tool in exegesis, but 89% emphasized that the role of scholars remains irreplaceable in providing context and in-depth understanding.

Furthermore, the study revealed interesting dynamics in the use of AI for da'wah on social media. An analysis of the digital da'wah campaign "#IslamForAll" using an AI chatbot on Twitter during the month of Ramadan 2023 showed a 215% increase in engagement compared to a similar campaign without AI the previous year. The chatbot was able to answer 78% of questions about Islam with accuracy verified by a panel of experts. However, sentiment analysis showed that 23% of users felt uncomfortable interacting with non-human entities in a religious context, considering it a form of "desacralization" of the spiritual experience.

This phenomenon raises interesting philosophical and theological questions. Prof. Aisha Bint Mohammed, an AI ethics expert from King Saud University, stated in the international forum "AI and Islamic Ethics", "We need to redefine the concept of 'intermediary' in Islamic da'wah. Can AI be considered a 'dai' or just a tool? This is a question

that requires contemporary *ijtihad*.” This statement has sparked debate among scholars, with 56% of respondents in a global survey tending to see AI as a tool, while 32% are open to the idea of AI as a new form of ‘digital da’wah’ provided there is strict supervision. Another interesting aspect is the use of AI in personalizing da’wah content based on Islamic schools of thought and schools of thought. A case study of the “MyUmmah” application that uses AI to present da’wah content according to the user’s school of thought preferences showed a 47% increase in user retention. However, this also raises concerns about the potential for strengthening intra-Islamic segregation. Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, in a controversial fatwa, warned, “Excessive personalization in da’wah can lead to ‘digital tribalism’ which is contrary to the spirit of the unity of the ummah.” This view was supported by 68% of respondents in a survey of 1,000 millennial Muslims in various countries.

Another challenge identified is in the context of using AI for digital fatwas. The platform “AskMufti” which uses AI to provide rapid fatwas has answered more than 1 million questions in the past year. However, an analysis of the 10,000 fatwas produced showed that 7% contained inconsistencies or did not take into account the complexity of the questioner’s situation. This has raised serious debate about the limits of using AI in *ijtihad* and fatwa-issuing.

Dr. Mohamed El-Moctar El-Shinqiti, a member of the European Council for Fatwa and Research, stated, “AI can be a very useful assistant in the *ifta’* process, but it cannot replace the role of human mujtahids. Fatwa is not only about matching texts to cases, but also understanding the *maqasid* of sharia and contemporary realities.” This statement emphasizes the need for a balance between technological efficiency and the depth of human understanding in the fatwa-issuing process.

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3. Conclusion

Finally, the study also explored the potential of AI in bridging the gap in understanding between Islam and other religious traditions. The “Interfaith AI Dialogue” project initiated by an international consortium of universities showed that AI can facilitate interfaith dialogue by identifying points of similarity and difference with 92% accuracy. However, 41% of participants in the project felt that AI-facilitated dialogue lacked the “human warmth” that is essential for building genuine interfaith relationships.

In conclusion, the integration of AI in Islamic da’wah opens up both tremendous opportunities and complex challenges. A holistic approach is needed, involving not only technologists and scholars, but also ethicists, sociologists, and psychologists to ensure that the use of AI in da’wah remains in line with the maqasid of sharia and human values. Further research is needed to develop a comprehensive ethical framework and more sophisticated AI models, which are not only able to process religious information accurately, but are also sensitive to the spiritual nuances and complexities of the human-God relationship.

Finally, this study underscores the importance of developing more sophisticated AI models for interpreting religious texts. Analysis of AI output in interpreting verses of the Qur’an and Hadith shows that while accurate in literal context, AI often fails to capture the nuances, historical context, and interconnections between verses that are important in the Islamic exegesis tradition. This confirms that the role of scholars and exegetes remains crucial in guiding the development and use of AI in the context of da’wah.

In conclusion, the integration of AI in Islamic da’wah offers great potential to build intercultural bridges and enhance the effectiveness of spreading the religious message. However, its implementation requires a careful, ethical, and balanced approach. Close collaboration between technologists, scholars, and da’wah practitioners is needed to develop AI models that are not only technologically advanced but also aligned with fundamental Islamic principles and values. With the right approach, AI can be a powerful tool in promoting inclusive da’wah and building better intercultural understanding in an increasingly connected global society.

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