

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Da'wah is an invitation or a call to accept and cherish Islamic teachings and principles as a way of life. This goal can be achieved through methodical management and planning in accordance with Al-Quran principles, ensuring that da'wah is provided and spread in a wise and orderly manner. Allah SWT said in Surah al-Nahl verse 125, "Invite 'all' to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and kind advice, and only debate with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord 'alone' knows best who has strayed from His Way and who is 'rightly' guided." According to this verse, the *dā'īe* is obligated to encourage mankind to be kind in a considerate manner.

In today's ever-changing technological environment, the emergence of social media platforms has had a significant impact on the evolution of da'wah. From 2010 to the present, the introduction and widespread use of social media has revolutionised the way of how da'wah is performed and hence were creating new opportunities and obstacles.

Over the past decade, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube have developed as effective tools for *dā'īe* to communicate Islamic knowledge, engage with various audiences, and establish virtual communities centred around religious conversations (Mohamad Nizamuddin, 2022). The capacity to connect with people from all over the world, regardless of geographical constraints, has expanded the breadth and reach of da'wah operations. Social media has established a worldwide stage on which da'wah messages can be instantly delivered, enabling for real-time interactions and meaningful engagement with a diverse variety of people.

One of the most important advantages of social media in the context of da'wah is its capacity to broaden audience reach. Previously, traditional routes such as mosques, Islamic centres, and physical meetings were used to spread Islamic teachings. However, the rise of social media has democratised access to Islamic knowledge, allowing people who previously had no direct access to Islamic sources to engage with religious content, discussions, and teachings. As a result, da'wah activities can now reach individuals from varied cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds, rather than just local communities.

Furthermore, social media platforms have enabled da'wah practitioners and their audiences to engage in interactive dialogue. Social media, unlike traditional methods of communication, provides for two-way communication, allowing individuals to remark, share, and participate in debates about Islamic themes. In terms of Islamic development, *dā'īe* does not use only one platform; numerous programs have been employed to propagate *Āmr bi'l Mā'rūf & Nāhi' Anil Munkār* (Noor Azaian et al., 2017). In fact, messages of da'wah delivered through a new media have the potential to positively touch all levels of society (Aini, 2018). As a result, effective da'wah can be seen through new media to attract people to learn Islamic ideals from all angles.

The use of new media in da'wah will also make the delivery of da'wah easier because *dā'īe* will no longer need to travel to the field to carry out the obligation of da'wah face-to-face in the actual world. As a result, *dā'īe* must stress the application of Islamic da'wah through new media platforms in order to maintain the tradition of propagating Islam in Malaysia. Nonetheless, with the growth of this new media, it cannot be denied that there are significant challenges that a *dā'īe* must face in carrying out their responsibilities. Engaging diverse audiences, combating misperceptions, and

addressing the short attention span of online users are among the challenges requiring cautious thought and strategic approaches.

1.1 Research Background

Over the past decade, the landscape of da'wah has witnessed a significant transformation due to the advent and widespread adoption of social media. Thus, the *dā'īe* must enhance their proficiency in utilising information and communication technology (ICT) to deliver da'wah on social media platforms. The purpose of this study is to investigate the evolution of da'wah from 2010 to the present, with a particular emphasis on its integration into social media platforms and the multifaceted challenges that have evolved in the modern digital world.

With the quick rise of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram, the year 2010 marks a watershed event in the history of communication and technology. Social media has transformed the way information is delivered, enabling instant access to a global audience for people and organizations. This paradigm shift has had a profound impact not just on social interactions, but also on religious outreach initiatives, particularly da'wah practises.

In recent years, Muslim individuals and organisations have increasingly embraced social media as a strong instrument for spreading the message of Islam. Online platforms provide options for participation, networking, and reaching out to varied audiences all around the world. This study will dive into the various techniques employed in da'wah through social media, such as the utilisation of multimedia material, interactive debates, and cooperation with influencers.

According to Norazlinda (2021), The use of social media in da'wah has had both beneficial and negative effects. On the one hand, technology has increased the global reach of Islamic teachings by allowing scholars, *dā'īe*, and ordinary Muslims to reach a

large audience. On the other hand, the speed and simplicity with which information is spread has led to inaccuracy, misinterpretation, and the potential for radicalization. As a result, it is critical to weigh the benefits and risks of social media use in the context of da'wah.

The digital era has offered additional obstacles to da'wah practitioners. Among them are disseminating misinformation, identifying authentic information, engaging diverse audiences, managing short attention spans, and navigating the digital information deluge. Social media's anonymity and accessibility might attract extreme views, making it difficult to promote moderate and inclusive Islamic teachings.

1.2 Problem statement

There is no doubt that sophisticated technology capabilities have made it easier for the community to communicate and learn. According to Sarina, Mohd Nizam, Md. Salleh, and Misha (2014), more than half of children use the internet extensively every day. Unrestricted internet access, on the other hand, will result in the spread of unfiltered negative components into cyberspace. The cyberspace's impact surged when the thoughts of young individuals caught up in malicious intentions.

For example, a few youths in Malaysia have been affected by the Western tradition of wearing clothing that does not cover the '*aurat*.' Because young people have more authority over the internet, this effect is growing rapidly. Then, the arises from the proliferation of misinformation and misinterpretations about Islam on social media sites. The rapid spread of false information can create misconceptions, foment Islamophobia, and obstruct the spread of real Islamic teachings. It has inadvertently produced a negative perception in society. As a result, this platform is not only a threat to the development of da'wah, but it also makes it impossible for *ḍā'ir* in the community to provide da'wah.

Furthermore, an overly open internet area might make religious information easily accessible even if there is no authentic source. It has been established that the website has no legitimacy and has a record of 20% of websites with information from unknown sources (Faizal, Mazni, & Khairi, 2010). It is feared that the spread of free da'wah via social media will encourage the spread of heresy and extremism. Nowadays, not only does "Ustaz YouTube" exist, but also "Ustaz WhatsApp" and others, where they only need to film their video and publicly publicized via social media (Asyraf Wajdi, 2016). Therefore, *dā'īe* needs to actively preach in imparting knowledge and true teaching without a doubt to *māḍ'ū* so that they are not confused by knowledge.

Based on the prevalence of social media in the community, a *dā'īe* must be able to adapt to it. To effectively spread religious teachings in line with technological advancements, the *dā'īe* must possess a capacity for inventive thinking. The reason for this is that social media can serve as a platform for many tasks related to da'wah, which has motivated notable scholars to utilise social media as a means for spreading religious teachings.

Finally, numerous religious issues must be addressed while spreading da'wah via social media. This is because if information is disseminated too widely, the community will continue to accept and embrace information for their good without first verifying its accuracy. Next, it will deteriorate an individual's religious education, particularly among the young. Social media has enormous potential to transform societal beliefs and behaviour, particularly among teenagers, who are still relatively easily persuaded and affected. *Dā'īe* must take additional steps to minimize the dissemination of incorrect religious knowledge on social media while also strengthening the faith of Malaysian Muslims. The rise usage of social media will make it easier for

everyone to study and spread da'wah plus searching information, doing business and others.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the problem statement, this study aims to examine the relationship between the development of da'wah through social media from 2010 until 2023 and the challenges in the future. The following are the primary questions of this research.

1. What is the concept of da'wah in social media?
2. How development of da'wah from 2010 until now in social media?
3. How are the challenges of da'wah in the future?

1.4 Research Objective

Following the above research questions, motivated by research problem statement, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the concept of da'wah in social media.
2. To analyse the development of da'wah from 2010 until now in social media.
3. To predict the challenges of da'wah in the future.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

This section explains the definition of terms “Da'wah, Development of Da'wah, Social Media and Multifaceted Challenges.”

1.5.1 Definition of Da'wah

The diversity of linguistic definitions of “da'wah” can be seen in the definitions contained within the Qur'an. It means calling others to something or stimulating others to get something. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the term “da'wah” originates from

the Arabic word “*dā’ā*”, “*yād’ū*,” which translates to “call,” or “invitation.” In the context of the Al Quran, the term “da’wah” is synonymous with other terms such as “advice,” “*tabligh*,” “*tabshyr*,” “*tandzir*,” and “*tarbiah*.” Akmal Hj. Mhd. Zain (2001), defined da’wah as the act of welcoming individuals to the correct path in accordance with divine order, intending to promote their well-being and contentment in both the present life and the afterlife. Then, Dr H.M Arifin M. Ed (2000) stated that da’wah is a deliberate and planned activity involving various forms of communication, such as verbal and written expressions, as well as behavioural demonstrations. Its primary objective is to influence individuals and groups, fostering in them an understanding, awareness, attitude, appreciation, and personal experience of religious teachings. It is important to note that da’wah should be conducted with no form of coercion.

1.5.2 Definition of Development of Da’wah

The beginning of da’wah corresponds with the evolution of Islam from the time of revelation to the present. The history of the development of Islam in the world includes intellectuals who preached through writing in numerous domains of knowledge, including creating religious books that were read by his contemporaries and subsequent generations (Mariam Abd. Majid & Marlon Pontino Guleng, 2014). The development of da’wah also refers to the ongoing process of refining and advancing the techniques, procedures, and approaches used for effectively communicating the message of Islam to various and diverse audiences. The phenomenon under consideration involves alterations in communication platforms, strategies for fostering involvement, and the adjustment of conventional methods to fit present-day circumstances. The evolution and progressive modifications that have transpired over time in the methodologies and strategies employed for the execution of da’wah. This encompasses changes in modes

of communication, producing content, and the assimilation of technical progress. The development of da'wah encompasses a range of systematic methodologies, tactics, and frameworks employed by the *dā'īe* to proficiently convey Islamic teachings to diverse audiences. This necessitates adapting methodologies to align with cultural contexts and modern platforms. It also encompasses the adaptation and synchronisation of conventional da'wah practice to meet the requirements and attributes of the present-day digital world. This may entail utilizing technical resources and social media platforms to effectively engage a broader and more heterogeneous demographic.

1.5.3 Definition of Social Media

According to the Dictionary of Institute Language and Literature (2002), the term “media” refers to a tool or mediator that facilitates communication or fosters interactions. The term “social” encompasses all aspects of society. Social media serves as a digital platform for social interaction within the virtual realm of the internet. Social media users engage in communication, interaction, recollection of acquaintances, sharing of information, and establishment of social connections. This form of digital communication can be interpreted as a platform that offers users the ability to engage in various social activities. One activity that can be undertaken on social media platforms is engaging in communication and interaction to disseminate information or share content in various formats such as text, photographs, and videos. The segmented content can be accessed by social media users at any time, as it remains available for a continuous duration of 24 hours. Social media platforms provide a platform for *dā'īe* to establish tighter and more amicable connections with the community, thereby serving as a da'wah ground. According to Zulkifli (2008), social media has become a global

phenomenon, with reported figures of over 500 million Facebook users and more than 100 million Twitter users globally.

1.5.4 Definition of Multifaceted Challenges

The multifaceted challenge is a complex issue that requires a comprehensive approach to address its various dimensions and intricacies. The term “complex situation” denotes a scenario characterized by multiple challenges that necessitate resolution. Users often face an array of intricate and interrelated challenges, barriers, and concerns while attempting to communicate messages via social media and other digital platforms. The issues involved in this context span a range of characteristics, such as the diffusion of knowledge, cultural intricacies, ethical deliberations, and the dynamic nature of the digital environment. According to Amir and Ahmad Rozelan (2016), obstacles are constraints that impede forward movement, limit the accomplishment of objectives, or obstruct the attainment of desired outcomes. Obstacles can appear in either external or internal forms, requiring applying creative problem-solving techniques to navigate them successfully. Some multiple barriers or obstacles must be overcome to achieve a desired outcome. Overcoming hurdles frequently necessitates possessing resolve, resilience, and strategic planning.

1.6 Research Scope

A theoretical and practical approach to the development and challenges of da’wah on social media is not a new thing in the da’wah world. Discussions regarding this topic have included the rising social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, X, and TikTok for religious teachings. In terms of da’wah organizations, this research focuses on two major da’wah groups: the Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia or *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia* (ABIM) and the Islamic Welfare Association Malaysia or

Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (PERKIM). They have emerged as a prominent subject of study because of their impactful contribution in influencing and disseminating da'wah movement in Malaysia across various domains, including social development, education, engagement with non-Muslim populations, and provision of welfare services to Muslims, spanning over a period of over two decades.

Then the aim of this study is also to investigate the development of da'wah methods in response to the introduction and proliferation of social media platforms. This study intends to investigate the utilisation of social media technologies, various content formats, and the growing issue of unregulated information veracity. This includes the acceptance of individuals who have been preached to, as well as the transition of da'wah practitioners from traditional to digital platforms and the way they employ to connect with others.

According to Mohd Sobhi et al. (2011), honesty is one of the primary factors that contribute to the trustworthiness of a written work. Additionally, the comprehensiveness of the content, the prioritization of moral aspects, the inclusion of references from authoritative sources, and the provision of valuable information and advice to the reader are also important factors. The flood and proliferation of information in contemporary media provide significant problems to the practice of da'wah. *Dā'ie* are required to effectively disseminate knowledge and provide explanations based solely on legitimate sources, in order to portray the actual essence and objectives of da'wah effectively.

In conclusion, this study will examine the diverse challenges encountered by da'wah initiatives within the context of social media. This encompasses the examination of the dissemination of inaccurate information, identifying reliable sources and genuine

information, the active involvement of varied audiences, and navigating the flood of digital information.

1.7 Limitation of Research

This research discussion is limited to the participation of two academics who possess expertise in the subject of da'wah development on social media, two *dā'īe* celebrities who are actively involved in da'wah on social media and two da'wah activist from Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM), *Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia* (PERKIM) and public. This research aims to investigate the specific areas and factors that present challenges in the context of da'wah on social media. The study will employ an interview method that focuses on the perceptions of the development of da'wah from 2010 to the present digital era, specifically da'wah on social media and the associated challenges.

1.8 Research Significance

As it is critically stated that the challenge of da'wah on social media is less studied and received attention by previous studies. The purpose of this study is to fill the gap that might enhance the discussion. Hence, recognizing the significance of comprehending the challenges that emerge on social media platforms for individuals and da'wah organizations, this research focuses on conducting a case study. Consequently, the study aims to make notable contributions in three key areas: first, the development of an appropriate da'wah approach on social media; second, the determination of authentic da'wah information; and third, the management of da'wah organizations in the context of social media da'wah.

This research is essential for making social media as a '*wāṣīlāh*' or da'wah tools and understanding the relationship between social media usage and the quality of

da'wah messages. This study provides insights into how the landscape of da'wah has transformed with the advent of social media. By examining the developments over the past decade, the audience can gain a comprehensive understanding of the new opportunities and challenges that have emerged in Islamic propagation. This understanding is vital for da'wah practitioners, scholars, and policymakers to effectively navigate the contemporary communication landscape.

By examining the obstacles faced by da'wah efforts on social media, the study provides valuable insights into areas in need of improvement. It identifies knowledge, skills, and resource gaps that must be addressed to improve the effectiveness of da'wah strategies. This information can guide the development of targeted approaches, content creation, and engagement strategies to ensure that da'wah messages are effective and resonate with a variety of audiences. By addressing these issues, this study contributes to more effective da'wah activities in the digital era by employing the most appropriate da'wah approach for the target audience on a social media platform. Then, assist in the discovery of real da'wah information and references, promote increased understanding, and foster positive interactions with varied audiences.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter provides an overview of the background of the study, research problems, research questions, research objectives, and some other aspects related to this study. The purpose of this description is to offer readers an introductory outline of the research conducted by the researcher, particularly regarding the study's requirements and objectives. A comprehensive analysis of this study will be presented in the subsequent chapter.