

Identifying Uses and Gratification Theory in the Digitalization of Da'wah: Existence and Transformation on Online Islamic Platforms in East Java

Research Article

AZ Fanani¹, Kiki Cahya Muslimah²

¹ Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

² Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: kiki.cahya.muslimah@um-surabaya.ac.id

Abstract. The rapid development of digital technology has reshaped Islamic communication by providing flexible access to religious knowledge and shifting traditional structures of authority. This study examines the relevance of Uses and Gratifications Theory in explaining the motivations of Muslim audiences in engaging with Muhammadiyah digital da'wah in East Java. This research applies a qualitative descriptive approach through documentation, observation, and textual analysis of official Muhammadiyah platforms such as tvMu, PWMU TV, pwmu.co, and PAI UMSurabaya Media during the period 2023 to 2024. The findings show that users demonstrate varied motivations aligned with key dimensions of the theory. These include the search for credible religious knowledge, appreciation of inspirational messages, expression of Islamic identity, participation in online religious communities, and efforts to obtain emotional comfort. Educational content through YouTube and website publications supports cognitive needs, while short video formats on emerging platforms strengthen emotional engagement and identity formation. Interactive features help build communal cohesion, affirming the emergence of digital religiosity. Although digital media democratizes access and expands the scope of da'wah, challenges remain, particularly the fragmentation of understanding and potential spread of inaccurate information. This study emphasizes the need for Muhammadiyah to strengthen participatory, creative, and multidimensional content in order to enhance digital literacy and sustain effective da'wah in contemporary society.

Keywords:

digitalization, uses and gratification theory, Islamic platform

Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology has reached every aspect of life. Many genres of posts are available on social media. In terms of format, there are text, images, audio, video, or infographics. Meanwhile, based on their purpose, there are entertainment, information, education, inspiration, interaction, and promotion. Everything can be freely uploaded to social media, although some of them have specific regulations regarding uploaded content. According to recent data, the average global user spends more than 6 hours per day consuming digital content, indicating that mediated communication has become a dominant lifestyle trend rather than a complement to offline interaction.

The development of digital technology has drastically transformed the landscape of human life, including in the realm of religion. In the context of Islam, digitization has opened unlimited access to religious knowledge, worship rituals, and religious social interactions. Muslims can now easily access interpretations of the

Article info:

<https://doi.org/10.29240/jf.v10i2.14055>

Published by Institut Agama Islam Negeri Curup. This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0 license

Qur'an, lectures, fatwas, and scientific discussions through social media, applications, and other online platforms. This phenomenon reflects a form of digital euphoria that provides convenience while also challenging the depth and accuracy of religious understanding. The presence of technology is not neutral; rather it reshapes religious practices and the construction of spiritual meaning in the digital space (Campbell, 2012). Nonetheless, recent empirical studies suggest that while accessibility has increased, users often display fragmented comprehension, relying on short-form content rather than structured learning, which risks oversimplification of complex religious principles (Solahudin, 2020).

Digitalization in the realm of Islam also marks a shift in religious authority from a traditional model to a more fluid and open form from exclusive to inclusive. Whereas religious authority used to be held by scholars in study circles or Islamic boarding schools, individuals with social media accounts and a large number of followers can now influence public religious perceptions. This indicates that technology has revolutionized the structure of authority and communication patterns in contemporary Islam (Eickelman & Anderson, 2003). On one hand, this condition provides space for the democratization of religious knowledge, but on the other hand, it opens opportunities for polarization, misinformation, and even the misuse of religion for certain interests. The Indonesian Ministry of Communication and Informatics (Kominfo) reported that over 11,000 religion related hoaxes circulated online in 2023 alone, demonstrating the susceptibility of digital audiences to manipulation.

Global Muslim communities are now utilizing digital media to build transnational networks, share identities, and expand the influence of da'wah into areas that were previously difficult to reach (Bunt, 2018). The digital euphoria in Islamic practices promotes the transformation of worship to become more flexible and modern. The presence of prayer reminder apps, qibla direction finders, online zakat, and virtual sermons during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates how Islamic rituals have been adapted into digital platforms. Technology is not only a supportive tool but also a new medium for expressing piety, both individual piety and social piety. In Indonesia, for example, more than 90% of Muslim youth reported consuming Islamic content online at least once a week, especially via YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram (Alvara Research, 2022). This reflects a shift from mosque centered learning to personalized religious curation driven by algorithmic feeds.

Nevertheless, this digital transformation is not free from ethical and epistemological problems. Therefore, it is important to equip the Muslim community with adequate digital and religious literacy so that they do not get trapped in a false euphoria (Lim, 2017). The cause is the speed of information which often is not matched by the depth of understanding, leading to the simplification of Islamic teachings and the emergence of a shallow and populist "instant Islam." In addition, the digital space has also become a battleground for religious ideologies, where various extreme views can spread without adequate control. This is particularly concerning as Indonesia has experienced spikes in digital radicalization one 2023 national cyber survey found that 47% of radical narratives consumed by youth are spread through social media platforms.

The euphoria of digitalization in Islam truly offers great potential for the advancement of Islamic preaching and education in the modern era. However, this potential can only be maximized if accompanied by ethical policies, critical approaches, and moral responsibilities from all stakeholders. Educators, scholars, intellectuals, and technology developers must synergize to create a healthy digital ecosystem based on *maqashid al-syari'ah*. Thus, digitalization becomes not only a tool for spreading Islam but also a means for meaningful reflection and spiritual renewal for the community.

The digitalization of preaching is a result of the development of digital media technology marked by the introduction of the internet in Indonesia since 1995, which subsequently gave rise to online media such as *Republika* and *tempointeraktif.com* in 1995, *kompas.com* and *detik.com* in 1998, and has since become increasingly popular in Indonesia (Yanuar Nugroho, Andriani Dinita Putri, & Shita Laksmi, 2012). As of 2024, Indonesia has 221 million internet users placing it fourth globally while Islamic content remains one of the most consumed categories (We Are Social, 2024). The latest data from We Are Social reports that by 2024, social media users worldwide will surpass five billion, up from 266 million from the previous year.

It is not surprising that a variety of posts fill the social media feeds of users around the world. Just take a look; when scrolling through the feed, you will see a range of genres in every post available. From everyday genres, invitations, crime news, personal stories, to even insults. The abundance of good messages is buried under content that carries elements of lies (hoaxes), SARA (ethnicity, religion, race, and inter group relations), vulgarism, and even calls to immoral acts (Sabila et al., 2023). In 2024, Indonesia ranked among the top ten countries globally in terms of exposure to religious misinformation, underscoring the magnitude of the problem.

The field of *da'wah* is becoming increasingly broad, and *da'wah* in the pulpits of mosques will significantly increase with digitalization. *Da'wah* can now present itself through screen projections, reaching those who are afraid to take the first step into the mosque but yearn for the light of guidance. It is not that they do not want to be close to the Most Merciful, but because they do not know where to start if there are no others to inspire them. Many hearts are wounded, lives are lost, and they strive to find enlightenment through short posts. Encouraging slowly to spark the courage to actualize worship in real life.

Speaking of preaching, the indicators are the scholars. Scholars are the mouthpieces of the prophets. Studies from popular Islamic teachers are almost inseparable from the digitization of preaching. Daily activities that are spiritual in nature and regular studies are conveyed through digital media, including YouTube. Here are the latest data on the number of followers on YouTube.com as of Thursday, February 20, 2025, from several preachers: Adi Hidayat Official with 5.56 million; Ustadz Abdul Somad Official with 4.73 million; Muzammil Hasballah with 3.8 million; Hanan Attaki with 2.92 million; and Aagym Official with 1 million. These large followings illustrate how digital preachers often outpace traditional institutions in shaping public religious discourse.

In practice, preaching can be done through communication approaches using oral media (*dakwah bil lisan*), written media (*dakwah bil kitabah*), and actions

(dakwah bil hal). With the digitization of preaching, it can encompass all elements of preaching. During the digitization process, preaching content can be filled with audio, then emphasized with key study notes and enhanced with visual content, whether through direct displays, animation, or Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The preaching that has been emphasized in many verses of the Qur'an has urgency in bringing humanity back to its nature, on the straight path, and gaining the pleasure of Allah SWT. In line with this, the presence of preaching must be relevant to the times. If preachers reject the demands and opportunities of the digitalization of preaching, the chance to strengthen preaching in the modern era will be missed (Kahmad, 2002). Preaching should be joyful so that both the subjects involved and the objects accessing it feel euphoria within the framework of the digitalization of preaching, because something that comes from the heart will also reach the heart.

The digital era has transformed the face of Islamic preaching from being conventional to dynamic, flexible, and widely accessible. Amid this transformation, the Uses and Gratifications (UGT) theory becomes a relevant theoretical framework for understanding why and how Muslim communities use digital media as a means to seek, understand, and disseminate Islamic values. UGT views the audience as active participants in choosing media to fulfill specific needs, such as the need for information, entertainment, social interaction, and self expression (Menon, 2022).

However, despite the growing body of literature on digital religion, few studies specifically investigate how UGT operates within Indonesian Muslim contexts particularly in East Java, where online Islamic platforms have grown rapidly but remain understudied. This gap demonstrates the importance of mapping users' motivations, gratifications sought, and actual outcomes to understand how digital dakwah ecosystems evolve. This article will discuss how the Uses and Gratifications theory can be used to analyze the form, motivation, and effectiveness of the digitalization of Muhammadiyah preaching, using a qualitative approach based on literature study and observation of the official social media of the Muhammadiyah institution.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the application of Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) in the digitalization of da'wah on Islamic online platforms in East Java. This design was chosen because it allows researchers to interpret meaning, context, and user experience within natural settings. Qualitative inquiry is well suited to examining media practices and socioreligious behavior, particularly where cultural meaning and motivation are central variables (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The primary data sources consisted of digital content disseminated through official Muhammadiyah social media channels, including Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, and X (Twitter). These platforms were selected based on their popularity within the East Javanese Muslim community and their relevance for da'wah engagement. The selection criteria emphasized accounts with verified

institutional affiliation, consistent content flow, audience interactivity, and public accessibility.

Data collection was conducted through documentation, observation, and textual analysis. Documentation focused on collecting digital artifacts images, video lectures, captions, comment threads, and engagement metrics, published between January 2023 and December 2024. Observations included continuous monitoring of platform activities to understand patterns of message dissemination, user participation, and content categorization. This approach ensured systematic capture of multimodal communication forms, which are central to contemporary da'wah ecosystems.

Textual analysis was applied to examine the content structure, thematic emphasis, rhetorical strategies, and functional affordances embedded within posts. Special attention was given to identifying gratifications sought such as informational, emotional, relational, spiritual, and identity construction needs based on established UGT dimensions (Katz et al., 1973; Ruggiero, 2000). To supplement primary findings, secondary data were obtained from academic literature, government reports, and surveys related to Islamic media, digital culture, and religious communication in Indonesia. These materials contributed to contextualizing the role of media in reconstructing religious practice and enhancing theoretical interpretation.

The unit of analysis comprised institutional posts and user interactions. Posts were classified by format such as short video, long lecture, carousel, and livestream, as well as by theme including jurisprudence, spirituality, philanthropy, and lifestyle, and by delivery style. Engagement parameters including likes, shares, comments, and view counts were monitored to approximate user responsiveness and potential gratification outcomes.

Data analysis employed Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2014) framework data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. First, data were organized into conceptual categories based on UGT constructs. Second, relevant patterns were visualized and grouped to identify representational structures. Third, interpretations were made to understand how digital da'wah fulfills or fails to fulfill user expectations. Triangulation across platforms and data types was implemented to enhance validity and reduce interpretive bias.

Ethical considerations included observing only publicly available content, citing institutional accounts properly, and avoiding identifiable personal data from user comments. This ensures compliance with digital research standards and respects user privacy. Because institutional platforms operate in public digital spaces, ethical risk was minimal; however, anonymization was applied where user responses were included in analytic examples. Overall, this methodological approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of how UGT operates within the digital da'wah environment, particularly regarding user motivation, platform affordances, and institutional strategy in East Java.

Results and Discussion

Results

Digital transformation encourages Muhammadiyah as a modernist Islamic movement to adopt technology as a medium for preaching. As emphasized in various official organizational platforms such as tvMu, PWMU TV, pwmu.co, and academic channels like PAI UMSurabaya Media. This means that Muhammadiyah's preaching approach adjusts to the preferences and behaviors of the digital generation.

Recent studies support the utilization of UGT theory in the context of digital preaching. For instance, the TVMU channel has become a reference for the community in obtaining credible Islamic education, strengthening cognitive motivation (Agustini, 2023). Therefore, inspirational and enjoyable preaching content has a high affective appeal, especially among young people (Caniago, 2024). Research shows that the online Muslim community actively builds digital relationships through comment sections and live chats (Faridah et al., 2022).

The expression of Islamic identity that emerges in the creation and dissemination of da'wah content is mainly conducted by students (Siti Nurmaya & Juni, 2023). Therefore, interactivity becomes a strong reason for users to follow da'wah accounts on Instagram (Rahma, 2025). Additionally, the motivation for identity and personal existence drives Muslim students to produce da'wah videos as an academic assignment (Siregar, 2023).

In the Muhammadiyah environment, as the largest modernist Islamic organization in Indonesia, the process of digitalizing da'wah continues to develop and become more structured. Several strategic initiatives reflect the synergy between the ideology of da'wah and digital communication technology. Among these are: first, tvMu (TV Muhammadiyah), which was established in 2013 and officially began digital broadcasting in 2025 in the East Java region I, covering ten districts or cities. This step is the result of a strategic collaboration between tvMu and the Muhammadiyah Regional Leadership (PDM) of Surabaya City.

Second, PWMU TV, the official YouTube channel of the Regional Leadership of Muhammadiyah East Java, which presents Islamic content and information on Muhammadiyah activities. Third, pwmu.co as an online news portal that publishes various activities and da'wah from contributors across East Java. Fourth, strengthening the role of the Regional Library and Information Council (MPID) in coordinating the development of digital media together with Muhammadiyah Business Enterprises (AUM), including the University of Muhammadiyah Surabaya (UMSurabaya) which manages the YouTube channel 'PAI UMSurabaya Media' with educational content based on Islamic values.

From the results of the observation of Muhammadiyah's digital media, the following data was found:

Table 1. Media and Motivation of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

Digital Media	Type of Content Average	Viewers/Likes Average	Comment	Dominant UGT Motivation
---------------	-------------------------	-----------------------	---------	-------------------------

tvMu (Youtube)	lectures, talk shows, studies	15.000	800	cognitive, identity
PWMU TV	PWM activities, thematic preaching	5.000	300	cognitive, social
pwmu.co	news articles and opinions	40.000 (kunjungan/bulan)	0	cognitive, social
PAI UMSurabaya Media	public lecture, speech, fiqh	2.000	150	cognitive, identity

The analysis of User Needs Based on UGT according to its five types is as follows: First, Cognitive motivation. Most users seek religious knowledge quickly, reliably, and relevant to daily life. This is evident from the high number of views on channels like tvMu and PWMU TV, which present sermons and thematic studies. Second, Affective motivation. Users enjoy da'wah content as light yet meaningful spiritual entertainment, as found in short TikTok videos that combine humor and inspiration.

Third, the motivation of Personal Integration, students of UMSurabaya and the younger generation express their Islamic identity through the production of video assignments or religious statuses uploaded on social media, reflecting existential needs. Fourth, the motivation of Social Integration is evident from active comments, discussions in live chats, and cross-platform interactions, showing that digital preaching media also serves as a space for friendship and the formation of virtual communities. Fifth, the motivation of Escape: Although not the main motivation, inspirational preaching content also provides peace of mind, a temporary escape from life pressures, especially in the post-pandemic period.

Discussion

The Relevance of Uses and Gratifications Theory in the Digitalization of Da'wah: The Utilization of Social Media for Netizens

Blumler and Katz in 1974 introduced the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which has continued to evolve as a framework for explaining media behavior in the digital era. This theory asserts that users engage with media content to fulfill diverse motivations, including cognitive needs or information seeking, affective needs or entertainment, personal integration or identity formation, social integration or interaction, and escapism. These categories have been reinforced by contemporary analyses such as those by Faizal in 2024 and Siregar and colleagues in 2023, emphasizing that individual differences in motivation significantly shape patterns of digital media consumption.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) emerged as a response to the media effects paradigm that tends to view netizens as passive objects. [Blumler and Katz \(1974\)](#) formulated the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) by shifting the focus from 'what the media does to the audience' to 'what the audience does with the media.'

This theory emphasizes the active role of netizens in selecting, using, and evaluating media based on their interests and subjective satisfaction.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) classifies the motivations for media usage into five main categories. First, Cognitive, which is when individuals use media to gain knowledge and information. Second, Affective, which is when users seek entertainment or emotional satisfaction. Third, Personal integration, which is when media serves to build or reinforce self-identity. Fourth, Social integration, which is when users use media to build and maintain social relationships. Fifth, Escapism, where media becomes a tool to escape from a pressing reality.

In the digital era, these dimensions are undergoing transformation along with the emergence of interactive media that allows netizens not only to receive messages but also to create, share, and actively respond to content.

Transformation of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) in Muhammadiyah Digital Da'wah in East Java

This research aims to explain how the Uses and Gratifications (UGT) theory operates in the digital preaching practices of Muhammadiyah through an analysis of five official digital platforms used over a 30-day observation period. The collected data shows that Muhammadiyah digital media users exhibit complex and layered motivations in accessing preaching content, corresponding to the five categories of needs in UGT: cognitive, affective, personal integration, social integration, and escapism.

In general, content with educational character presented by tvMu and PWMU TV has garnered significant attention from the audience. The average number of viewers reaches 15,000 per broadcast for tvMu, while PWMU TV obtains an average of 5,000 viewers. This high level of participation indicates that digital media users are seeking sources of religious knowledge that are not only credible but also accessible flexibly. This phenomenon highlights the dominance of cognitive motivation among users, namely the need to understand Islamic teachings in a systematic, contextual, and non-didactic approach. This trend is supported by findings from [Agustini \(2023\)](#) which emphasize that the YouTube channel TVMU has become a key reference for obtaining in-depth and credible Islamic information.

The motivation for personal integration is also strongly evident, especially in the PAI UMSurabaya Media channel, which showcases various student works in the form of video assignments, religious speeches, and public lectures. Students are not merely passive viewers, but also produce and disseminate content that reflects their Islamic identity. This phenomenon indicates that digital media functions as a space for expressing religious identity, strengthening personal existence within the digital Muslim community.

In this context, [Siregar's \(2023\)](#) findings become relevant, as he notes that most Muslim students feel the urge to demonstrate their existence through widely published digital da'wah works. This is also in line with the views of [Siregar et al. \(2023\)](#), who found that students not only use digital media for learning, but also to entertain themselves through religious and emotionally enjoyable content.

The aspect of social integration also finds its place in the digital preaching practices of Muhammadiyah. The comment feature on YouTube tvMu and PWMU TV is actively used by users to discuss, ask questions, or express approval of the content of the sermons. The comment section acts as a virtual meeting space, where individuals feel connected with fellow Muslims, even if they have never met in person. This shows that Muhammadiyah's preaching media has succeeded in creating a sense of community, which is one of the indicators of successful social integration in media communication. The occurrence of digital interactions among users of the preaching platform is capable of binding collective emotions that build spiritual solidarity.

Although not explicitly the main focus, the dimension of escapism from reality is also found in the use of digital da'wah media. Some users watch lectures or Islamic studies as a form of escape from the monotony of routines or psychological pressure. Calming content such as heartfelt sermons, inspiring stories of Muslim figures, or narratives of Islamic spirituality provides emotional relaxation space for some audiences. Thus, the da'wah content of Muhammadiyah has provided an alternative path to achieving inner peace through media consumption based on religious values.

The observation also reveals a strong correlation between the type of content and the form of user motivation. Media such as pwmu.co, which features news and educational articles, although lacking direct interaction in the form of comments or likes, still demonstrates significance in fulfilling cognitive and social needs. This platform facilitates access to news and Islamic opinions that are oriented towards the mission of enlightening society, in line with the character of Muhammadiyah as a renewal movement based on rationality and scholarship.

Strategic Analysis of the Needs for Digital Dawah and the Needs of Netizens

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the digital propagation of Muhammadiyah has been able to utilize the functions of media as referred to by the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT). Netizens are no longer passive recipients of propagation messages but play an active role as subjects who choose, evaluate, and even participate in producing propagation content based on complex personal and social motivations. This dynamics show that the success of digital propagation is not only determined by the quality of sermon materials or religious messages but also by how those messages are packaged, communicated, and adapted according to media user preferences.

Through the framework of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), Muhammadiyah gains a solid theoretical foundation to formulate a digital da'wah strategy based on the actual needs of users. An interactive, participatory, and multidimensional da'wah model can strengthen Muhammadiyah's position as a pioneer of progressive Islamic da'wah that is inclusive of technology and the changing times. This finding encourages further evaluation of the most effective types of content, sharper audience segmentation, and the strategic use of digital technology in developing the mission of enlightening da'wah.

The rapid advancement of digital technology has revolutionized the way netizens access religious information, including in the context of Islamic dakwah. Muhammadiyah, as one of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, has shown an adaptive response to this challenge by developing various digital dakwah media such as tvMu, PWMU TV, pwmu.co, as well as academic channels and social media managed by Amal Usaha Muhammadiyah (AUM). The synergy between the values of Islamic dakwah and the needs of the digital media audience is increasingly strengthened through the utilization of Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which positions netizens as active subjects in the communication process.

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) explains that netizens use media not merely because they are affected by the messages conveyed, but because they have specific needs and goals they wish to fulfill (Katz et al., 1973; Blumler & Katz, 1974). In digital preaching, this means that the Muslim community consciously and selectively chooses media and preaching content that aligns with their cognitive motives (information), affective motives (entertainment), personal integration (identity), social integration (community), or even escapism (a retreat from life pressures) (Siregar et al., 2023; Faizal, 2024).

The digital da'wah strategy of Muhammadiyah can be developed by systematically and creatively integrating these principles. The four main pillars of the strategy that can be strengthened include: a combination of educational and affective content, the management of interactive social media, digital literacy through MPID and AUM, and adaptive digital da'i training to the culture of new media.

Acceleration of Educational and Affective Content on Online Platforms

Educational content has been a hallmark of Muhammadiyah's preaching since its inception. Through a rational and scientific approach, Muhammadiyah presents its preaching with a narrative of enlightenment, as reflected in sermons on the tvMu channel and in-depth articles on pwmu.co. However, the development of digital media demands a more fluid and humanistic approach. For example, the younger generation is more interested in preaching content that combines education with entertainment. Therefore, digital preaching strategies need to combine informational elements with emotional and aesthetic aspects in order to build the psychological engagement of netizens.

For example, the model of preaching through humorous short videos on TikTok that includes elements of Islamic music and inspirational narration has been proven to more easily touch users' emotions, without losing the substance of the Islamic message. This combination not only meets cognitive and affective needs simultaneously but also creates a pleasant and memorable religious experience. Therefore, Muhammadiyah needs to continue producing content that can both educate and entertain, including in the form of preaching vlogs, fictional preaching series, thematic infographics, and Islamic podcasts that discuss popular issues in a light manner.

The need to combine educational and affective dimensions reveals that da'wah content with a personal narrative approach and storytelling is more

effective in conveying Islamic messages to teenagers and students. Netizens will find it easier to understand Islamic values when presented through stories that are relevant to everyday life.

Managing Islamic Social Media Interactively and Responsively

Digital da'wah strategies that are solely oriented towards one way content distribution tend to be less effective in building emotional closeness and active audience engagement. In the context of new media that is participatory in nature, interactive communication becomes the main key to strengthening the relationship between the preacher, the organization, and the virtual congregation. Muhammadiyah needs to position its official social media accounts, such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, as spaces for dialogue and collaboration, not just as showcases of da'wah information.

Interactivity is one of the main reasons why netizens choose to follow Islamic preaching accounts. Commenting features, polls, live streaming sessions, and question and answer sessions are important channels for establishing healthy and productive two way communication. This strategy can build a sense of ownership among netizens towards Muhammadiyah's preaching media, as well as foster long-term digital loyalty.

Platforms like tvMu and PWMU TV, for example, can enhance their interaction with netizens through a digital community based approach. Inviting the congregation to share their inspirational stories, organizing social media friendly dakwah challenges, or even featuring content that originates from user aspirations will make netizens feel more personally and emotionally engaged. This approach aligns with [Faizal's \(2024\)](#) findings which show that participatory motivation is very high among dakwah TikTok users, especially when they feel they can make a real contribution to the dakwah narrative itself.

Strengthening the Role of Strategic Parties in Islamic Digital Literacy

An effective digital da'wah transformation does not only depend on content but also on the quality of digital understanding from the da'wah managers and netizens in general. This is where the role of the Library and Information Assembly (MPID) and Muhammadiyah's Societal Efforts (AUM) becomes very crucial. MPID, as an institution responsible for public information and communication technology, can implement structured Islamic digital literacy programs at all levels of branches and units.

Digital literacy in the context of da'wah includes the ability to understand how social media algorithms work, to distinguish between valid information and hoaxes, to filter content that aligns with Islamic values, and to create high quality da'wah content. Low digital literacy is one of the main obstacles to the effectiveness of Islamic da'wah on social media. Therefore, the Library and Information Assembly (MPID) needs to develop an adaptive and contextual digital literacy training curriculum that involves religious leaders, teachers, students, and da'wah activists.

In addition, the Muhammadiyah Business Efforts (AUM) such as universities, schools, and Muhammadiyah hospitals can be involved in a broader digital da'wah campaign. For example, Muhammadiyah campuses can integrate digital da'wah and media literacy courses into the curriculum of the Islamic Education (PAI) or Islamic Broadcasting Communication (KPI) programs. This not only expands the reach of da'wah but also produces capable and professional Muhammadiyah digital cadres.

Improving Da'i Training to be Adaptive to Islamic Digital Media

One of the major challenges in digital preaching is the readiness of human resources, especially the preachers, to adapt to the characteristics of new media. The quality of preaching messages highly depends on the ability of the preachers to master technology, understand the tastes of netizens, and adjust their communication style to the dynamic culture of social media. Muhammadiyah needs to design a digital preacher training program that not only focuses on mastering Islamic material, but also on technical aspects such as video production, graphic design, social media management, and content performance analytics.

This training must reflect the needs of the times and respond to the reality that today's preachers are public communicators competing with influencers and social media celebrities on various digital platforms. Speakers or preachers who can effectively use visual language, popular narratives, and digital media will be more successful in reaching the young Muslim generation that is experiencing boredom with conventional preaching. Technological support must be accompanied by an enhancement of narrative capacity and the aesthetics of preaching. Muhammadiyah preachers need to be encouraged to explore creative approaches, such as micro storytelling, visual preaching, and empathetic communication, so that Islamic messages feel more relatable and touch the hearts of netizens.

Conclusion

This article proves that the Uses and Gratifications (UGT) theory is relevant for analyzing the forms, motivations, and effectiveness of Muhammadiyah's digital preaching using a qualitative approach based on literature study and observation of the official social media of the Muhammadiyah institution, including tvMu, PWMU TV, pwmu.co, and YouTube PAI UMSurabaya Media. Through the UGT framework, it is identified that the users of Muhammadiyah's media for da'wah have diverse motivations, ranging from cognitive needs in the pursuit of religious knowledge, personal integration through the expression of religious identity, to social integration through online interactions in comment forums and virtual discussions. Muhammadiyah's digital da'wah successfully combines educational and affective content contextually, manages media in a participatory and responsive manner, and strengthens the strategic roles of the Library and Information Council (MPID), Muhammadiyah's Business Enterprises (AUM), and da'i training to build digital capacities relevant to modern communication culture.

References

- Adistri, N., Rusman, A. A., & Irwansyah. (2024). Pemenuhan Kebutuhan Informasi pada TikTok: Studi Uses and Gratification di Era Digital. *JURNAL LENSEA MUTIARA KOMUNIKASI*, 8(2), 103–116. <https://doi.org/10.51544/jlmk.v8i2.5584>
- Adnjani, M. D. et al. (2021). Pendampingan Literasi Digital Kampung KB RW 2 Kelurahan Gedawang Banyumanik Kota Semarang. *Warta LPM*. DOI: 10.23917/warta.v24i2.10705
- Agustini, V. D. (2023). Media sosial sebagai literasi ibadah di Era Pandemi (Pendekatan Uses and Gratifications Theory pada Chanel YouTube TV MU). *Borobudur Communication Review*. Vol 1 No 1, 30-38, 2021 DOI: 10.31603/bcrev.4899
- Agustyawati, L. et al. (2022). Strategi Dakwah Kultural Muhammadiyah Di Era Digital. *Jurnal Tajdida*. <https://journals.ums.ac.id/index.php/tajdida/article/view/23354/8893>
- Alviendra, D. et al. (2023). Strategi Dakwah Nahdlatul Ulama dan Muhammadiyah Dalam Perspektif Pemanfaatan Media Massa Pada Era Globalisasi Di Kabupaten Pacitan. *Tabsyir*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59059/tabsyir.v4i3.135>
- Alwi, A., Rizki, J.W.S., Siregar, A. R. (2024). Penggunaan Media Sosial YouTube Sebagai Sarana Dakwah Di Kalangan Mahasiswa Prodi KPI Angkatan 2020-2021. *Interaksi Peradaban* 4(2), 125–138. DOI <http://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/interaksi>
- Blumler, J.G. and Katz, E. (1974) *The Uses of Mass Communications: Current Perspectives on Gratifications Research*. Sage Annual Reviews of Communication Research, Volume 3. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED119208>
- Caniago, F., & Juhridin, J. (2024). TIKTOK: MEMAHAMI DINAMIKA KONTEN ISLAMI DALAM ERA DIGITAL. *Jurnal Sosio dan Humaniora (SOMA)*, 3(1).
- Damayanti, M. et al. (2023). Peran Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Dalam Peluang Dan Tantangan Di Era Digital. *Al Mu'addib*. 8(2) 249-264. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31604/muaddib.v8i2.249-264>
- Faridah, F., Zulkarnain, Z., Yusuf, M., & Asriadi, A. (2022). Efektivitas Dakwah Melalui Media Sosial Instagram Dalam Pandangan Kaum Milenial. *Retorika: Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam*, 4(2), 138-150. <https://doi.org/10.47435/retorika.v4i2.1191>
- Fauzan, S. et al. (2021). Literasi baca anak desa melalui pojok baca. *Abidumasy*. <https://ejournal.unhasy.ac.id/index.php/ABIDUMASY/article/download/1956/1289>
- Imran, B., & Zaenudin. (2022). Peningkatan Kemampuan Keterampilan Komputer dan Pengelolaan Informasi Dalam Mendukung Gerakan Literasi Digital Pada SMKN 1 Sakra. *ABDIKAN: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Bidang Sains Dan Teknologi*, 1(3), 313–319. <https://doi.org/10.55123/abdikan.v1i3.652>
- Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1973). Uses and Gratifications Research. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37(4), 509–523. DOI: 10.1086/268109.
- Menon, D. (2022). Uses and gratifications of educational apps: A study during COVID-19 pandemic. *Computers and Education Open*, 3, 100076. DOI: 10.1016/j.caeo.2022.100076
- Muchlas et al., 2022. *Dakwah Muhammadiyah dalam Masyarakat Digital: Peluang dan Tantangan*. (Yogyakarta: UAD Press)

- Muhammad Faizal, K., Adam Afif, M. A., Cassendra, G., & Syahida, M. N. (2024). Scale Validation Of Students'gratification Purchasing Sports Products On Tiktok Shop: A Uses And Gratification Theory (Ugt) Perspective. *Jurnal Evolusi*, 5(1).
- Naufal, H. A. (2021). Literasi digital. *Perspektif*, 1(2), 195-202.
- Nugroho, A. R. B. P., & Halwati, U. (2023). Komunikasi Dakwah Islam pada Masyarakat Milenial di Era Globalisasi. *ICODEV: Indonesian Community Development Journal*, 4(1), 33-45.
- Nuraini, R., Pattiasina, P. J., & Ulfah, A. (2022). Peran literasi teknologi dalam dunia pendidikan. *Al-Madrasah: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, 6(3), 659-666.
- Pusporani, M. & Anganthi, N. R. (2022). Memotivasi Remaja Masjid Melek Literasi Digital. *Prosiding Webinar Pengabdian Masyarakat*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.23917/abdimas.1946>
- Rahmawati, L. E., Prayitno, H. J., Wahyudi, A. B., Pratiwi, D. R., Nugraha, D., Beauty, M., ... & Lestari, W. D. (2022). Pendampingan Penguatan Literasi Digital di SD Muhammadiyah Program Khusus Baturan dan SD Muhammadiyah Plus Malangjiwan. *Warta LPM*, 487-503.
- Ruggiero, T. E. (2000). Uses and gratifications theory in the 21st century. *Mass Communication & Society*, 3(1), 3-37. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327825MCS0301_02.
- Siregar, A. S. (2023). Pemanfaatan Media Sosial Sebagai Media Dakwah Dikalangan Mahasiswa UIN Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary Padangsidempuan. *SENTRI: Jurnal Riset Ilmiah*, 2(4), 1300-1312.
- Solahudin, D., Fakhruroji, M. (2020). Internet and Islamic Learning Practice in Indonesia: Social Media, Religious Populism, and Religious Authority, *Religions* 2020, 11(1), 19; <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11010019>.
- Terttiaavini, T. & Saputra, T. S. (2022). Literasi Digital Untuk Meningkatkan Etika Berdigital Bagi Pelajar Di Kota Palembang. *Jurnal Masyarakat Mandiri*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31764/jmm.v6i3.8203>.
- Wahyudi, A. B., Sufanti, M., Prabawa, A. H., Rahmawati, L. E., Pratiwi, D. R., Purnomo, E., ... Febriyanti, R. (2023). Penguatan Literasi Digital melalui Pelatihan Microsoft PowerPoint di SMK Muhammadiyah. *Warta LPM*, 26(3), 363-374. <https://doi.org/10.23917/warta.v26i3.1717>.