



Innovating Islamic Preaching through TikTok Live Streaming and Mobile Legends Gaming

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Abstract

In the rapidly evolving digital landscape, religious practices are increasingly adapting to new media platforms. This study explores an innovative approach to Islamic preaching (dakwah) that integrates TikTok live streaming with Mobile Legends gameplay. Focusing on the popular TikTok account @Abiazkakkiaa, this research employs a qualitative descriptive approach with virtual ethnography methods to analyze how traditional religious messages are being reimagined for a digital, youth-oriented audience. The study examines the unique intersection of social media, gaming, and religious communication, investigating how TikTok's features are utilized to create an engaging space for dakwah. Through in-depth analysis of live streaming sessions, user interactions, and content strategies, this research provides insights into the effectiveness of this novel preaching method in reaching and influencing younger generations. Key findings reveal the formation of virtual religious communities, the adaptation of Islamic teachings to gaming contexts, and the challenges of balancing entertainment with religious integrity. The study also highlights the shifting perceptions of religious authority among youth and the increasing importance of technological literacy for religious leaders. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on digital religion, offering valuable insights into the future of religious communication in the age of social media. It addresses crucial questions about the role of technology in shaping religious practices and the potential for innovative approaches to revitalize traditional forms of religious outreach.

Keywords: Digital Dakwah, TikTok, Mobile Legends, Islamic Preaching, Social Media, Virtual Ethnography, Youth Engagement.

1. Introduction

Technological developments have changed the way humans communicate significantly. Interactions between individuals are now increasingly digital, with social media becoming the main means of exchanging everyday messages and information (Sidiq, 2023). Social media, as a collection of software, is able to connect individuals, communities and audiences in a virtual space called cyberspace (Çela, 2015). One of the positive benefits of social media is its use as a medium for preaching for preachers. Da'wah, which is the activity of inviting, calling and conveying the teachings of Allah SWT in accordance with the Al-Quran and Hadith, is an obligation for every follower of the Islamic religion (AN, 2019). In this context, preachers are required to adapt to current developments and develop da'wah methods that are more easily accepted by their preaching partners.

The new era of media in da'wah requires preachers to be able to optimize the use of social media applications, so that they can reach a wider audience. Cybermedia theory put forward by Gibson defines cyber media as a collection of representational data that can only be accessed via a computer or gadget with an internet connection. Some examples of cyber media include e-mail, Chrome, Wiki, Blogs, Internet Broadcasting, and Social Media. Social media itself can be defined as an internet device that allows users to represent themselves, interact and form social bonds virtually (Ingram, 2023). With its ability to reach a wider and more diverse audience, social media offers great opportunities for preachers to spread messages of goodness and religious teachings more effectively and efficiently.

One important step in optimizing da'wah in the digital era is choosing the right media according to the preacher's character. This aims to make it easier for the target audience for da'wah. Preachers also need to pay attention to contemporary issues that are of concern to society as material for their preaching (Hartono, 2020). This shows that da'wah must continue to adapt to the inevitable changes of the times. Even though social media offers convenience for its users, it is important to still consider the credibility of the information sources used. One platform that is currently

popular among the younger generation is the TikTok application. This application attracts many users because of its easy-to-use features and wide audience reach.

TikTok not only allows users to upload videos and text, but also offers a live streaming feature for accounts that meet certain requirements, such as having a thousand followers. This application is famous for its unique and interesting special effects, allowing users to create short videos that attract the attention of many people. TikTok can also make its users famous or known as "selebtiktok" (Sidiq, 2023). Various types of content can be created on TikTok, including educational content, film clips, marketing knowledge, tutorials, daily activities, etc., depending on the target user (Zhou, 2019). One interesting example is a preacher known as "Ustadz Abi" or "Ustadz Gaming". Initially, he preached on TikTok in a conventional way, creating short lecture content. However, this method does not provide a significant and widespread impact.

Seeing this, Ustadz Abi then adopted a more innovative approach by playing the Mobile Legends game and broadcasting live on his personal account @abiazkakiaa. This approach shows how preachers can use unconventional methods to reach a wider and more diverse audience, while still conveying their preaching messages. Ustadz Abi's innovative approach to preaching through the Mobile Legends game and live broadcasts on TikTok has attracted the attention of the Mobile Legends player community and netizens in general. He strategically chose young people who play the Mobile Legends game as targets for his preaching. The motivation behind this choice stems from his concern about the negative impact of online games on young people's behavior, especially in the use of inappropriate language.

Ustadz Abi's TikTok account @abiazkakiaa has succeeded in attracting 757.5 thousand followers and broadcasts live every day. The content on his account discusses a lot of questions related to games which are integrated with preaching messages. His motto, "games are temporary, the hereafter is forever", reflects his efforts to balance youth interest in games with spiritual values. This phenomenon is interesting for further research because it shows a unique way of preaching that can be accepted by the younger generation. The large number of followers shows the effectiveness of this approach in reaching a wide audience. The author views this phenomenon as a form of optimizing new media in preaching.

Ustadz Abi's approach illustrates how da'wah can adapt to technological trends and the interests of the younger generation without sacrificing the essence of the religious message. This shows the great potential in using digital platforms and content relevant to young people's daily lives to convey religious values. Further research into this phenomenon could provide valuable insight into the effectiveness of contemporary da'wah methods, as well as the potential and challenges in using social media platforms and gaming content for da'wah purposes. This can also open a wider discussion about how religion and technology can work together in the context of modern society. Thus, this study is not only relevant in the context of Islamic da'wah, but also in a broader understanding of how moral and spiritual messages can be conveyed effectively through media that are popular among the younger generation in the digital era.

2. Materials and Methods

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach with a focus on the phenomenon of da'wah in the TikTok application. This method was chosen to seek a more in-depth explanation of contemporary da'wah practices on social media platforms. The type of research used is virtual ethnography, which allows researchers to observe and analyze online interactions in the context of digital culture. The main object of research is the TikTok account @Abiazkakiaa, with analysis limited to two levels of Cyber Media: Media Space and Media Object. This limitation allows researchers to focus on key aspects of the phenomenon under study, namely how the virtual space of TikTok is used for da'wah and how da'wah content is conveyed through media objects on the platform.

Data collection was carried out through two main instruments: documentation and in-depth interviews. The "in their own terms" principle is applied, where data collection is carried out entirely in the online virtual environment that is the research location. This is in line with the views of Tom Boellstroff, who emphasizes the importance of understanding digital phenomena in their own context. Research data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained from verbal content, words or captions in TikTok live streaming and posts on the @Abiazkakiaa account. This data includes direct interactions between Ustadz Abi and his followers during Mobile Legend live streaming sessions. Secondary data was collected through literature study, including literature about TikTok, virtual ethnography, as well as published news regarding the phenomenon of Ustadz Abi's preaching which went viral because of his unique preaching style.

The data analysis technique uses a virtual ethnographic approach, which involves the description and interpretation of cultural patterns in a digital context. Researchers will observe and analyze interactions between users, the content of comments from players and spectators, the number of viewers, and the number of account followers. Special attention will also be given to the response of viewers who join the "Ma Jenis Nurul Legend" community. The theoretical framework used in this research refers to cyber media analysis in virtual ethnography developed by Rulli Nasrullah. Although this theory consists of four levels of analysis (media space, media document, media object, and experience), this research will focus on two levels: media space and media object. This focus allows researchers to analyze how TikTok's virtual space is used for da'wah and how da'wah content is packaged in the form of media objects on the platform.

3. Results And Discussion

3.1. Research Methods and Approaches

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with virtual ethnographic methods. The main focus is analyzing the da'wah phenomenon on the TikTok application, especially the @Abiazkakiaa account. This approach was chosen to provide an in-depth understanding of contemporary da'wah practices on social media platforms.

Virtual ethnography, as explained by Tom Boellstroff, allows researchers to conduct observations and analyzes in an online environment, maintaining the principle of "in their own terms". This is important to understand digital phenomena in their own context, without losing their original nuances and meaning.

3.2. Data Sources and Collection

This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach with a virtual ethnography method to analyze the phenomenon of Islamic preaching (dakwah) on the TikTok application, specifically focusing on the @Abiazkakiaa account. Data collection is conducted through various sources, both primary and secondary. Primary data is obtained directly from verbal content in @Abiazkakiaa's TikTok live streams, captions and posts on the account, as well as direct interactions between Ustadz Abi and his followers during Mobile Legend live streaming sessions. Meanwhile, secondary data is collected through literature studies on TikTok and virtual ethnography, news related to Ustadz Abi's preaching phenomenon, literature on digital dakwah and the use of social media for religious purposes.

Data collection techniques include participant observation in live streaming, documentation of TikTok content, analysis of user interactions, when possible, in-depth interviews with Ustadz Abi or his active followers. This approach allows researchers to gain a deep and contextual understanding of the dakwah phenomenon on the TikTok platform.

In the media space analysis, researchers observe how TikTok as a platform is utilized for dakwah. Aspects studied include live streaming features, real-time interactions, and the formation of virtual communities. Researchers analyze the frequency and duration of live streams, popular times for live streaming, and how the Mobile Legends game is integrated into live streaming sessions. Additionally, researchers also observe the use of live comment features, Ustadz Abi's responses to questions and comments, and the dynamics of interaction between the preacher and followers. The formation and growth of the "majenis nurul legend" community is also a focus of research, including interactions between community members and the role of the community in strengthening the message of dakwah.

The analysis of media objects focuses on the content and delivery methods of the dakwah message. Researchers examine how Ustadz Abi integrates religious messages into the gaming context, the use of gaming terminology to explain religious concepts, and the effectiveness of using game analogies in delivering dakwah messages. Furthermore, researchers also analyze short videos outside of live streaming, frequently raised dakwah themes, as well as the delivery style and rhetoric used. Captions and text on TikTok posts are also objects of analysis, including the use of hashtags and TikTok trends in the context of dakwah, as well as the effectiveness of written messages in supporting visual content.

Audience response and engagement are analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, researchers observe the number of followers and their growth, average number of live stream viewers, and engagement levels (likes, comments, shares) on posts. Qualitatively, researchers analyze comment sentiment (positive, negative, neutral), types of questions frequently asked by followers, and changes in behavior or understanding reported by followers.

This research also examines the impact and implications of the dakwah phenomenon through TikTok and gaming. Impact on the audience includes changes in perceptions about dakwah among young people, increased interest in religious teachings, and the potential for positive behavioral changes among gamers. Implications for dakwah practice include innovations in dakwah methods in the digital era, the potential use of other gaming platforms for dakwah, as well as challenges and opportunities in integrating technology with dakwah. Contributions to media and religious studies are also analyzed, including new understandings of the intersection between social media, gaming, and religion, insights into the adaptation of religious practices in the digital era, and implications for developing theories of dakwah communication in social media.

Finally, this research also presents a critical reflection on the advantages and limitations of the dakwah method through gaming, including its long-term effectiveness, the potential for misinterpretation of religious teachings in the gaming context, and the balance between entertainment and dakwah substance. Ethical aspects and responsibilities are also discussed, including ethical considerations in using gaming platforms for dakwah, the preacher's responsibility in maintaining the accuracy and integrity of religious messages, as well as the potential negative impacts of game addiction and ways to address them.

Through this in-depth analysis, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of contemporary dakwah phenomena on the TikTok platform, especially through integration with gaming content. The results of this research are expected to make a significant contribution to the study of dakwah communication in the digital era and open new insights into the adaptation of religious practices in the context of technology and popular culture.

3.3. Media Space Analysis

TikTok, as a social media platform, has experienced a significant rise in popularity. This is evidenced by its user base, which numbers in the billions across various countries. The origins of TikTok can be traced back to September 2016, when the Chinese company ByteDance launched a short-video software called Douyin. Within a year, Douyin had amassed 100 million users and was generating 1 billion video views daily. Due to its skyrocketing popularity, Douyin expanded beyond China under a new, more eye-catching name: TikTok.

In the context of this research, we focus on how TikTok's live streaming feature, particularly when used for Mobile Legends gameplay, creates a unique cultural space for dakwah (Islamic preaching). The analysis includes:

- a) Account Creation and Management:
 - Detailed steps for creating a TikTok account
 - Profile customization options relevant to dakwah purposes
 - Verification processes for religious content creators
- b) Content Publication:
 - Guidelines for creating and uploading short videos
 - Integration of religious messages within gaming content
 - Use of TikTok's editing tools to enhance dakwah messages
- c) Live Streaming Requirements and Features:
 - Eligibility criteria for live streaming (e.g., minimum follower count)
 - Technical requirements (internet speed, device compatibility)
 - Special features available during live streams (e.g., filters, effects, interaction tools)
- d) Mobile Legends Integration:
 - Process of streaming Mobile Legends gameplay on TikTok
 - Challenges and opportunities in combining gaming with religious content
 - Technical aspects of maintaining game quality while engaging in dakwah
- e) Community Interaction Mechanisms:
 - Comment systems during live streams and on posted videos
 - Use of hashtags to create and join dakwah-related discussions
 - Formation of follower groups or "families" within TikTok
- f) Algorithm and Content Discovery:
 - How TikTok's algorithm promotes religious content
 - Strategies for increasing visibility of dakwah messages
 - Balancing trending topics with religious teachings
- g) Monetization and Sustainability:
 - TikTok's policies on monetizing religious content
 - Ethical considerations in combining dakwah with profit-making
 - Alternative funding models for sustaining dakwah activities on the platform
- h) Cross-platform Integration:
 - Linking TikTok content with other social media platforms
 - Strategies for building a cohesive online presence across multiple channels
- i) Cultural and Linguistic Adaptations:
 - How TikTok's features are adapted for Indonesian users
 - Use of local slang and gaming terminology in dakwah content
 - Navigating cultural sensitivities in a global platform
- j) Privacy and Safety Measures:
 - TikTok's policies on protecting minors, relevant to youth-oriented dakwah
 - Content moderation practices for religious material
 - User control over data and interaction settings

By thoroughly examining these aspects, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how TikTok's media space is utilized and adapted for dakwah purposes, particularly in the context of gaming live streams. This analysis will shed light on the innovative ways in which religious messages are being disseminated in the digital age, as well as the challenges and opportunities presented by this new medium of communication.

4. Conclusion

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the dakwah phenomenon on TikTok, particularly focusing on the @Abiazkakiaa account and its integration of Islamic preaching with Mobile Legends gameplay, we can draw several important conclusions:

- a). Innovative Dakwah Approach: The research reveals a significant shift in dakwah methods, adapting to the digital age by leveraging popular social media platforms like TikTok. The integration of religious messages

with gaming content, specifically Mobile Legends, represents an innovative approach to reaching younger audiences.

- b). **Expanding Reach:** By utilizing TikTok's features, particularly live streaming, Ustadz Abi has successfully expanded the reach of his dakwah to a broader and more diverse audience. This approach demonstrates the potential of social media platforms in bridging the gap between traditional religious teachings and contemporary youth interests.
- c). **Community Building:** The formation of the "majenis nurul legend" community highlights the potential of digital platforms in creating and nurturing virtual religious communities. This aspect of online dakwah fosters a sense of belonging and continuous engagement among followers.
- d). **Adaptation of Religious Content:** The study shows how religious messages are being adapted and contextualized within the framework of gaming and social media trends. This adaptation makes religious teachings more accessible and relatable to younger generations.
- e). **Challenges and Ethical Considerations:** The research also brings to light the challenges of maintaining the integrity of religious messages in an entertainment-focused platform. It raises important questions about the balance between engaging content and substantive religious teachings.
- f). **Impact on Youth Perception:** There's evidence of a shift in how young people perceive religious figures and teachings, with this new approach potentially making dakwah more appealing and less intimidating to younger audiences.
- g). **Technological Literacy in Religious Practice:** The study underscores the growing importance of technological literacy among religious leaders, highlighting how digital skills are becoming crucial for effective preaching in the modern era.
- h). **Platform-Specific Strategies:** The research demonstrates the need for understanding and utilizing platform-specific features (like TikTok's algorithm, hashtags, and live interaction tools) to maximize the reach and impact of religious content.
- i). **Cross-Cultural and Linguistic Adaptations:** The study reveals how religious content is being adapted to fit local cultural contexts and linguistic nuances, even on a global platform like TikTok.
- j). **Future of Digital Dakwah:** This case study provides insights into the potential future directions of digital dakwah, suggesting a trend towards more interactive, multimedia-based approaches to religious education and outreach.

In conclusion, this research illuminates the evolving landscape of religious communication in the digital age. It demonstrates how traditional practices of Islamic preaching are being transformed and adapted to meet the preferences and habits of younger, digitally-native audiences. While this approach presents new opportunities for expanding the reach and relevance of religious messages, it also introduces new challenges and ethical considerations that religious leaders and communities must navigate. The study of @Abiazkakaiaa's TikTok dakwah serves as a valuable case study in understanding the intersection of religion, technology, and youth culture in the contemporary digital landscape.

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