

Rationality In Digital Da'Wah: Reconstructing Islamic Religious Education Through Social Media

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of digital technology has transformed social media into an influential platform for communication, knowledge dissemination, and religious learning. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (IRE), social media has increasingly functioned as an alternative learning resource that enables Islamic teachings to be delivered in more interactive, flexible, and accessible forms. This study aims to examine the role of social media as a learning resource for Islamic Religious Education, particularly in relation to educational innovation and value distortion within digital religious content. This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach using netnography and content analysis. The primary data source was the YouTube content Belajar Islam Pake Logika featuring Ustaz Felix Siau on Raymond Chin's channel, supported by audience comments, digital interactions, and relevant scholarly literature. The findings indicate that social media contributes significantly to the transformation of Islamic learning through rational communication, audiovisual interaction, and participatory learning environments that align with the characteristics of digital-native generations. Rational approaches in digital da'wah encourage critical thinking, accessibility, and contextual understanding of Islamic teachings. However, the study also reveals significant challenges, including misinformation, oversimplification of religious teachings, pseudo-religious authority, and the commodification of religion driven by algorithmic visibility and popularity. These conditions may contribute to value distortion and fragmented religious understanding among audiences. Therefore, strengthening digital religious literacy is essential to ensure critical and responsible engagement with online religious content. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on rational digital da'wah as both an innovative pedagogical strategy and a site of value contestation within social media environments.

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Introduction

The rapid expansion of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the landscape of education, communication, and religious engagement in contemporary society. Social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and WhatsApp are no longer limited to entertainment and interpersonal interaction; rather, they have evolved into influential

spaces for knowledge production, identity construction, and public discourse. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (IRE), social media has increasingly become an alternative learning environment through which Islamic teachings are disseminated in more accessible, flexible, and interactive forms (Ab Latif et al., 2025). This transformation reflects the emergence of digital religion, where religious understanding and practices are reconstructed through technological mediation and online communication (Adiyono et al., 2022). As digital-native generations spend a significant portion of their daily lives in online environments, social media now plays an important role in shaping religious perspectives, attitudes, and educational experiences.

The integration of social media into educational practices has generated substantial changes in learning patterns and pedagogical strategies. Conventional religious learning, which was traditionally centered on formal institutions such as schools, pesantren, mosques, and majelis taklim, is gradually shifting toward more decentralized and digitally mediated forms of knowledge transmission. Educational content related to Islamic teachings is now widely distributed through videos, podcasts, live streaming, reels, and short-form visual content that can be accessed anytime and anywhere. This condition demonstrates that digital technology has expanded the accessibility of Islamic education beyond geographical and institutional limitations (Baihaqi et al., 2025). In many cases, students and young Muslims prefer consuming religious explanations through social media because the content is perceived as more practical, contextual, and visually engaging compared to conventional learning materials.

Several previous studies have emphasized the positive impact of social media on learning activities. Digital platforms are considered capable of increasing students' motivation, engagement, and participation through multimedia-based learning experiences that integrate visual, textual, and auditory elements simultaneously (Faisol et al., 2024). In Islamic Religious Education, platforms such as YouTube and Instagram have become strategic media for delivering religious values in ways that are adaptable to the communication styles of contemporary youth. Video-based learning, for example, allows abstract theological concepts to be explained more concretely through visualization, storytelling, and contextual examples. Such approaches align with Dale's Cone of Experience theory, which suggests that audiovisual experiences can provide deeper understanding than purely verbal instruction (Agnes et al., 2022). Consequently, social media has emerged not only as a supplementary educational tool but also as a transformative medium capable of reconstructing learning culture within Islamic education.

Furthermore, the rise of digital da'wah has strengthened the role of social media in disseminating Islamic teachings. Digital preachers, Muslim influencers, and religious content creators actively utilize social media to communicate Islamic messages to broad audiences across social, cultural, and generational boundaries (Akour & Alenezi, 2022). Through consistent online interaction, these figures establish emotional closeness with audiences and shape religious perceptions in everyday life. This phenomenon indicates that religious authority in the digital era is increasingly influenced by visibility, popularity, and communication effectiveness rather than solely by formal religious credentials (Abusharif, 2020). In this context, social media has become a new public sphere where Islamic discourses are negotiated, contested, and reconstructed.

Despite these opportunities, the utilization of social media in Islamic education also presents serious challenges. The openness of digital platforms enables the unrestricted circulation of religious information, including content produced without adequate scholarly competence or theological responsibility. As a result, social media often becomes a space where misinformation, oversimplification of Islamic teachings, and ideological bias proliferate rapidly (A'la & Makhshun, 2022). Many religious messages circulating online prioritize sensationalism, emotional provocation, and algorithmic popularity rather than educational depth and scientific validity. Consequently, audiences may encounter fragmented interpretations of Islam that lack contextual understanding and methodological rigor.

This condition contributes to what many scholars describe as the crisis of religious

authority in the digital era. In traditional Islamic scholarship, religious authority is built upon sanad, intellectual lineage, and long-term scholarly training. However, social media tends to reward communicative attractiveness and audience engagement rather than epistemic credibility. Individuals with limited religious expertise may gain massive influence merely because their content aligns with digital trends and audience preferences. Berger and Golan (2021) explain that digital platforms have created new forms of epistemic authority in which audiences increasingly rely on online figures for religious guidance and self-socialization (Berger, 2021). Such transformations significantly affect Islamic Religious Education because learners may consume religious narratives without adequate verification or critical reflection.

Another important issue concerns the emergence of value distortion within digital religious content. Social media algorithms prioritize content that generates strong emotional responses, high engagement, and prolonged user interaction. Consequently, controversial, provocative, or simplified religious messages often receive greater visibility than moderate and academically grounded discussions. In some cases, Islamic teachings are reduced into short motivational slogans or binary moral judgments that ignore the complexity of religious scholarship. This phenomenon can potentially weaken critical thinking, encourage intolerance, and produce superficial understandings of Islam among digital audiences. Therefore, the role of digital literacy becomes increasingly essential in helping learners evaluate online religious content critically and responsibly.

Digital literacy in Islamic education should not merely focus on technical abilities to operate digital devices or platforms. More importantly, it must include critical competencies in analyzing information credibility, understanding media structures, identifying ideological narratives, and distinguishing authentic religious knowledge from misleading interpretations (Arraniri et al., 2021). Within this framework, educators and Islamic institutions are required to function not only as transmitters of religious knowledge but also as facilitators of critical digital awareness. Islamic Religious Education in the digital era must therefore integrate technological adaptation with ethical and epistemological considerations to ensure that online learning processes remain educational, reflective, and value-oriented.

One of the most interesting developments in contemporary digital da'wah is the increasing use of rational approaches in explaining Islamic teachings. Rationality-based religious discourse attempts to bridge Islamic values with the analytical mindset of modern digital audiences. This phenomenon can be observed in the YouTube content "Belajar Islam Pake Logika" featuring Ustaz Felix Siau on Raymond Chin's channel. The video attracted millions of viewers and generated extensive public discussion because it emphasized logic, critical reasoning, and intellectual reflection as important components in understanding Islam. Unlike conventional preaching methods that rely heavily on emotional persuasion, this content seeks to present Islam through rational arguments that resonate with educated and digitally literate audiences. The popularity of such content indicates shifting preferences in religious learning, particularly among younger generations who tend to value dialogical and logical communication styles.

Although numerous studies have examined the relationship between social media and Islamic education, most previous research primarily discusses the effectiveness of digital platforms as educational tools or communication media. Limited studies specifically explore how rational digital da'wah simultaneously functions as an innovative pedagogical strategy and as a potential site of value distortion within online religious spaces. In addition, existing literature rarely analyzes the implications of digital religious authority for Islamic Religious Education in contemporary Muslim societies. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this research gap by examining the role of social media as a source of Islamic Religious Education through a netnographic analysis of religious content on YouTube.

This research aims to analyze how rational approaches in digital da'wah contribute to the transformation of Islamic Religious Education while simultaneously identifying the risks of value distortion within social media environments. Using a qualitative netnographic approach

and content analysis, this study investigates the construction of religious narratives, audience responses, and educational implications of digital Islamic content. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on rationality-based digital da'wah as an emerging model of Islamic learning in social media spaces. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of adaptive, critical, and value-oriented Islamic education strategies in the digital era while strengthening discussions regarding digital literacy, religious authority, and contemporary Islamic pedagogy.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the role of social media as a source of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in the digital era, particularly in relation to educational innovation and value distortion within online religious content. Qualitative research was selected because the study aims to explore meanings, interpretations, and social phenomena that emerge within digital religious interactions rather than to measure variables statistically. According to Moleong (2017), qualitative research emphasizes understanding social realities holistically through interpretative analysis of human behavior, communication, and cultural contexts (Moleong, 2014). In the context of this study, qualitative inquiry enables an in-depth understanding of how Islamic teachings are communicated, interpreted, and contested through social media platforms.

The research specifically adopted a netnographic approach combined with content analysis. Netnography is a qualitative research method adapted from ethnography that focuses on online communities, digital interactions, and internet-mediated cultural phenomena (Fikri et al., 2025). This method is considered appropriate because contemporary religious discourse increasingly occurs within digital environments such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and other social networking platforms. Through netnography, researchers are able to observe patterns of communication, audience engagement, and the construction of religious narratives in virtual spaces without directly intervening in online interactions. In addition, content analysis was utilized to identify key themes, educational messages, ideological tendencies, and representations of Islamic values embedded within digital religious content.

The primary data source of this study consisted of religious content uploaded on YouTube, particularly the video entitled *Belajar Islam Pake Logika* featuring Ustaz Felix Siau on Raymond Chin's YouTube channel. The video was selected purposively because it gained significant public attention, generated millions of views, and sparked extensive discussions regarding rational approaches to Islamic teachings. Furthermore, the content reflects the broader phenomenon of digital da'wah that integrates logic, visual communication, and contemporary language styles to engage younger audiences. In addition to the video itself, audience comments, viewer interactions, likes, and discussion threads were also analyzed to understand public responses toward the content and its educational implications.

Secondary data were obtained from academic books, scientific journals, research reports, and relevant scholarly publications discussing digital religion, Islamic Religious Education, social media learning, digital literacy, and religious authority in online spaces. The use of secondary sources was intended to strengthen the theoretical framework and contextualize the findings within broader academic discussions. Most references used in this study were derived from recent publications indexed in national and international academic databases to ensure the credibility and relevance of the literature.

Data collection was conducted through digital observation and documentation techniques. Digital observation involved systematically observing the selected YouTube content, audience engagement patterns, and online discussions related to the topic. The researchers repeatedly watched the video to identify important narratives, visual strategies, religious arguments, and communicative approaches employed by the speaker. Simultaneously, documentation techniques were applied by collecting screenshots, comment samples, viewer statistics, and other relevant digital materials that supported the analysis process. These procedures enabled the researchers to capture both textual and contextual dimensions of online religious communication.

The data analysis process followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three interconnected stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the first stage, data reduction was conducted by selecting, categorizing, and simplifying relevant information obtained from observations, comments, and literature sources. Irrelevant or repetitive data were excluded to maintain analytical focus. The second stage involved organizing and presenting the data systematically in the form of thematic categories, narrative descriptions, and interpretative explanations (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This stage facilitated the identification of recurring patterns related to rationality, religious literacy, educational innovation, and value distortion within digital da'wah content. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting the relationships among themes and connecting empirical findings with existing theoretical perspectives.

To ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from YouTube content, audience comments, and academic literature. In addition, theoretical triangulation was applied by utilizing multiple theoretical perspectives related to digital literacy, digital religion, and Islamic pedagogy in interpreting the findings. These strategies were intended to enhance the credibility and analytical rigor of the research.

Ethical considerations were also taken into account throughout the research process. Since the study analyzed publicly accessible digital content, no direct intervention or interaction with participants was conducted. Nevertheless, the researchers maintained ethical responsibility by avoiding the disclosure of sensitive personal information contained within audience comments and online discussions. The study focused primarily on understanding broader communication patterns and educational implications rather than evaluating individual users personally.

Overall, the combination of qualitative netnography and content analysis provides a comprehensive methodological framework for examining the transformation of Islamic Religious Education within digital environments. This approach allows the study to capture the complexity of online religious communication, the dynamics of digital authority, and the dual role of social media as both an innovative educational medium and a potential source of value distortion in contemporary Muslim society.

Result and Discussion

1. Social Media as an Innovative Learning Resource in Islamic Religious Education

The development of digital technology has significantly transformed the paradigm of education in contemporary society, including within the field of Islamic Religious Education (IRE). Social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and WhatsApp are no longer viewed merely as communication and entertainment tools, but have evolved into influential educational spaces that shape knowledge production, social interaction, and religious understanding (Manik et al., 2024). In the digital era, learners increasingly rely on online platforms to obtain educational information because digital media offers accessibility, flexibility, and interactivity that are often absent in conventional classroom-based learning. Within the context of Islamic education, social media has become a strategic medium for disseminating religious teachings to broader audiences across generational, geographical, and social boundaries (Dianita et al., 2023).

The findings of this study indicate that YouTube, in particular, functions as a highly influential platform for Islamic learning due to its audiovisual characteristics and interactive communication features. Through visual explanation, narration, animation, and public discussion spaces, YouTube enables Islamic teachings to be delivered in more contextual and engaging ways. The analyzed content, *Belajar Islam Pake Logika* featuring Ustaz Felix Siau on Raymond Chin's YouTube channel, demonstrates how digital da'wah can operate as an innovative pedagogical approach that adapts Islamic teachings to the communication culture

of contemporary digital society. The video attracted millions of viewers and generated extensive public interaction, illustrating the significant role of social media in shaping religious discourse among younger generations (Delialioğlu, 2012).

One of the most prominent innovations identified in this study is the use of rational communication within digital Islamic education. Unlike conventional preaching models that primarily emphasize doctrinal instruction and emotional persuasion, the analyzed content adopts a logical and dialogical approach in explaining Islamic teachings. The speaker consistently emphasizes the importance of critical thinking, reasoning, and intellectual reflection in understanding religion. Such an approach aligns with the characteristics of digital-native generations who tend to prefer analytical and conversational learning styles rather than purely authoritative forms of communication (Amri et al., 2017). In educational theory, this approach reflects constructivist learning principles in which learners actively construct understanding through interaction, reflection, and contextual interpretation rather than passively receiving information.

The integration of rationality into digital da'wah also demonstrates the adaptive nature of Islamic education in responding to societal transformation. Historically, Islamic intellectual traditions have strongly emphasized the role of reason in religious understanding, particularly within disciplines such as kalam dan philosophy. Therefore, the rational approach employed in digital religious content does not necessarily contradict Islamic teachings, but rather revitalizes the intellectual dimensions of Islamic scholarship within contemporary communication environments (Siregar, 2021). Through simple language, practical examples, and logical explanations, digital da'wah can bridge the gap between classical Islamic values and the realities of modern digital culture.

Another important finding concerns the accessibility provided by social media in supporting Islamic learning. Traditional religious education is often limited by institutional structures, classroom schedules, and geographical constraints. In contrast, digital platforms allow audiences to access religious materials anytime and anywhere according to their individual learning needs. Students can repeatedly watch educational videos, participate in online discussions, and independently explore religious topics through digital resources. This flexibility significantly contributes to the democratization of Islamic learning because educational access is no longer restricted to formal institutions or specific social groups. Baihaqi (2025) explain that social media has expanded educational accessibility by enabling learners to engage with Islamic teachings beyond the boundaries of conventional classrooms (Baihaqi et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the findings reveal that social media enhances student engagement and participation in religious learning processes. Interactive features such as comments, likes, sharing functions, and live discussions create opportunities for audiences to respond actively to religious content. In the analyzed YouTube content, viewers not only consumed information passively but also participated in discussions regarding logic, faith, religious tolerance, and critical thinking. Such participatory communication reflects the emergence of networked learning environments where educational processes occur collaboratively through digital interaction. Campbell (2012) argues that digital religion transforms religious practices into participatory and communicative experiences shaped by online social networks (Campbell, 2012). Consequently, social media does not merely function as a medium of information delivery but also as a dynamic environment where religious knowledge is collectively negotiated and reconstructed.

The effectiveness of social media in Islamic education is also closely related to its multimedia capabilities. Video-based learning combines visual, auditory, and textual elements simultaneously, making abstract religious concepts easier to understand and more relatable to audiences. According to Dale's Cone of Experience theory, audiovisual learning experiences tend to produce deeper understanding compared to purely verbal instruction because they engage multiple sensory dimensions simultaneously (Aderibigbe et al., 2023). In the context of

Islamic Religious Education, visual communication allows complex theological concepts, moral teachings, and social values to be explained through storytelling, animation, examples, and practical illustrations. This multimedia approach is particularly effective for younger audiences who are highly accustomed to visual culture and digital communication.

In addition, social media contributes to the transformation of pedagogical authority within Islamic education. Traditionally, religious instruction was dominated by teachers, clerics, and formal educational institutions that controlled the production and dissemination of knowledge. However, digital platforms have decentralized educational authority by allowing broader participation from various actors, including independent preachers, influencers, and content creators. This transformation has enabled the emergence of more diverse forms of Islamic discourse that reflect contemporary social realities and communication styles. Although this condition creates challenges related to religious authority, it also encourages educational innovation by making Islamic teachings more adaptive and relevant to changing societal contexts (Dausat & Rosid, 2025).

The findings further demonstrate that digital Islamic learning can strengthen religious moderation and intellectual openness when accompanied by critical literacy. The analyzed content consistently encourages audiences to think rationally, avoid blind fanaticism, and understand religious differences through logical reflection. Such narratives are highly relevant in multicultural societies where intolerance, misinformation, and ideological polarization increasingly spread through digital media. Rational digital da'wah therefore possesses the potential to cultivate moderate Islamic perspectives by encouraging dialogue, critical thinking, and contextual understanding rather than rigid literalism.

However, the effectiveness of social media as a learning resource ultimately depends on the digital literacy competencies of both educators and audiences. Digital literacy is not limited to technical abilities in operating media platforms but also includes critical skills in evaluating information credibility, understanding ideological narratives, and identifying misinformation. Setyaningsih et al. emphasize that digital literacy plays a crucial role in helping individuals participate critically and responsibly within digital society. In Islamic education, digital literacy enables learners to distinguish authentic religious teachings from misleading or manipulative content (Yulianti et al., 2025). Consequently, Islamic educational institutions must integrate digital literacy education into their pedagogical frameworks to ensure that students can navigate online religious environments critically and ethically.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that social media has become an innovative and transformative learning resource within Islamic Religious Education. Through rational communication, multimedia interaction, participatory learning, and broad accessibility, digital platforms create new opportunities for developing adaptive and contextual Islamic pedagogy in the digital era. At the same time, the integration of critical digital literacy remains essential to ensure that social media functions not merely as a technological tool, but as an educational environment capable of fostering intellectual depth, religious moderation, and ethical awareness among contemporary Muslim learners.

2. Value Distortion and the Crisis of Religious Authority in Digital Spaces

The rapid growth of social media as a medium for Islamic Religious Education (IRE) has not only created opportunities for educational innovation but has also generated significant challenges related to value distortion and the transformation of religious authority. The openness and accessibility of digital platforms enable anyone to produce, distribute, and interpret religious content regardless of their educational background or scholarly competence. Consequently, social media has become a highly contested religious space where various interpretations of Islam compete for legitimacy and public attention. This condition has fundamentally altered the traditional structure of religious learning and authority within Muslim societies (Amirudin et al., 2025).

The findings of this study reveal that digital religious content often prioritizes visibility,

emotional appeal, and audience engagement over theological depth and scientific credibility. Social media algorithms are designed to maximize interaction by promoting content that generates strong emotional responses, controversy, and high engagement rates. As a result, religious narratives that are provocative, sensational, or simplified tend to gain greater popularity than nuanced and academically grounded discussions. This phenomenon contributes to what scholars describe as the commodification of religion, where religious teachings are transformed into consumable digital products shaped by market-oriented communication strategies rather than educational objectives (Anisa et al., 2024).

Within this context, Islamic teachings are frequently reduced into short motivational statements, binary moral judgments, or emotionally charged narratives that ignore the complexity of religious scholarship. The analyzed YouTube content demonstrates that although rational approaches can encourage critical thinking, public discussions surrounding religious issues on social media often become polarized and oversimplified. Comment sections reveal that many audiences interpret religious messages based on personal emotions, ideological preferences, or group identities rather than through comprehensive theological understanding. Such conditions indicate that social media can potentially create fragmented religious understanding among audiences, especially among younger users with limited religious literacy (Konukoğlu et al., 2024).

Another important finding concerns the emergence of pseudo-religious authority in digital spaces. Traditionally, religious authority within Islam was established through sanad (scholarly lineage), formal religious education, mastery of Islamic sciences, and long-term intellectual training. Religious knowledge was transmitted systematically through educational institutions such as pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic universities. However, the rise of digital media has significantly shifted the basis of religious legitimacy (Dhofier, 1982). In contemporary online environments, authority is increasingly determined by popularity, communication skills, visual presentation, and follower engagement rather than scholarly expertise.

This transformation creates serious implications for Islamic Religious Education because audiences may perceive digital popularity as equivalent to religious credibility. Influencers and content creators with limited theological competence can easily gain massive influence if their communication style resonates with audience preferences and platform algorithms. Berger and Golan (2024) explain that online religious learning environments have generated new forms of epistemic authority in which digital figures shape religious understanding and self-socialization processes among audiences (Berger, 2021). Consequently, learners may become more dependent on viral content and online personalities than on established religious scholarship.

The findings also demonstrate that social media contributes to the weakening of traditional educational mediation in religious learning. In conventional Islamic education, students typically learn under the supervision of teachers who provide contextual explanations, clarification, and methodological guidance. In contrast, digital learning environments often encourage individualized and fragmented consumption of religious information without structured educational frameworks (Syafruddin et al., 2025). Audiences consume religious content independently according to algorithmic recommendations and personal interests, which may limit exposure to diverse perspectives and critical dialogue. This condition is reinforced by the phenomenon of filter bubbles, where algorithms continuously expose users to similar viewpoints and ideological preferences. As a result, social media may strengthen intellectual isolation and reduce openness toward alternative interpretations of Islam.

Another major concern identified in this study is the spread of misinformation and unverified religious narratives within digital spaces. The speed of information circulation on social media often exceeds users' ability to verify content accuracy. Religious messages containing provocative claims, conspiracy theories, or controversial interpretations can spread rapidly through sharing mechanisms and algorithmic amplification. In many cases, audiences accept and disseminate religious information without examining its sources, context, or

scholarly validity (Amir et al., 2022). This situation becomes particularly dangerous in multicultural societies because misinformation may contribute to intolerance, sectarian conflict, and ideological radicalization.

The analyzed content also illustrates the tension between rationality and emotional religiosity within contemporary digital Islamic discourse. While many viewers appreciated the use of logic and critical reasoning in explaining Islamic teachings, others perceived such approaches as reducing the spiritual and transcendental dimensions of religion. These contrasting reactions demonstrate that social media has become a contested arena where different models of religiosity compete for legitimacy. Rational discourse, emotional preaching, literal interpretation, and ideological narratives coexist and interact within the same digital environment. Consequently, Islamic Religious Education in the digital era must navigate increasingly complex forms of religious communication and identity formation.

Moreover, the findings suggest that social media culture encourages the simplification of complex religious debates into short, easily consumable formats. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts prioritize brief and visually attractive content due to audience attention patterns and algorithmic structures. While these formats improve accessibility and engagement, they also risk reducing Islamic teachings into fragmented information detached from broader theological and historical contexts. Important discussions regarding jurisprudence, ethics, spirituality, and Islamic philosophy may become oversimplified in order to fit digital communication trends. Such simplification can weaken critical understanding and encourage superficial religiosity among audiences.

The issue of commercialization further complicates the relationship between social media and Islamic education. Many digital religious creators rely on monetization systems based on views, advertisements, sponsorships, and audience engagement. Consequently, there is a tendency for some content creators to prioritize viral appeal over educational quality. Emotional controversy, sensational narratives, and provocative statements often generate greater engagement and financial benefits compared to moderate and academically rigorous discussions. Hakim and Dahri (2020) argue that the commodification of religion within social media has transformed Islamic discourse into part of digital consumer culture. In this environment, religious messages risk becoming entertainment-oriented products rather than instruments for intellectual and spiritual development (Hakim et al., 2020).

Despite these challenges, the findings also indicate that social media possesses the potential to strengthen religious moderation and critical awareness when utilized responsibly. Rational and dialogical approaches in digital da'wah can encourage audiences to reflect critically on religious issues, avoid blind fanaticism, and appreciate diversity within Islamic thought. The analyzed YouTube content consistently emphasized the importance of logic, tolerance, and intellectual openness in understanding religion. Such approaches are highly relevant in addressing the rise of extremism, misinformation, and ideological polarization within digital society (Reddy et al., 2020).

However, achieving these positive outcomes requires strong digital literacy competencies among both educators and audiences. Digital literacy in Islamic education should include not only technical skills but also critical awareness regarding media structures, ideological narratives, and information verification processes. Setyaningsih et al. (2021) emphasize that digital literacy enables individuals to participate critically, ethically, and responsibly within digital environments. In the context of Islamic learning, digital literacy helps students distinguish authentic religious teachings from misleading or manipulative narratives circulating online (Yulianti et al., 2025).

Therefore, Islamic educational institutions must actively integrate digital literacy education into their pedagogical frameworks. Teachers and religious educators should guide students in evaluating information credibility, understanding algorithmic influences, and engaging constructively within digital public spaces. At the same time, scholars and Islamic institutions need to increase their presence within digital environments by producing credible,

contextual, and academically grounded religious content capable of competing with misleading narratives. Without active participation from authoritative educational institutions, digital religious spaces may continue to be dominated by sensationalism, ideological polarization, and pseudo-religious authority.

Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate that social media possesses a dual and paradoxical role within Islamic Religious Education. On one hand, digital platforms create innovative opportunities for expanding educational access, encouraging participatory learning, and developing rational approaches to Islamic teachings. On the other hand, social media also generates significant risks related to value distortion, misinformation, commodification of religion, and the crisis of religious authority. Consequently, the future of Islamic education in the digital era depends not only on technological adaptation but also on the ability of educators, institutions, and society to cultivate critical digital literacy, intellectual responsibility, and ethical awareness within online religious environments.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that social media has become an influential and transformative learning resource within Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in the digital era. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and other digital media provide broader opportunities for disseminating Islamic teachings through interactive, flexible, and accessible communication models. The analyzed content, Belajar Islam Pake Logika featuring Ustaz Felix Siau on Raymond Chin's YouTube channel, illustrates how rational approaches in digital da'wah can function as innovative pedagogical strategies that align with the characteristics of contemporary digital audiences. By emphasizing logic, critical thinking, and contextual explanation, digital religious content can contribute to the development of more adaptive, reflective, and engaging Islamic learning processes.

The findings further reveal that social media significantly expands educational accessibility by allowing audiences to access Islamic learning materials beyond spatial and institutional limitations. Through audiovisual communication and participatory interaction, digital platforms encourage independent learning, increase audience engagement, and facilitate the reconstruction of religious discourse in contemporary society. Rational and dialogical communication approaches also possess the potential to strengthen religious moderation and intellectual openness among younger generations who are increasingly influenced by digital culture.

However, this study also confirms that the integration of social media into Islamic education presents serious challenges related to value distortion, misinformation, and the crisis of religious authority. The openness of digital platforms enables the circulation of religious narratives that are often oversimplified, emotionally driven, and detached from scholarly rigor. In many cases, popularity and algorithmic visibility become more influential than theological competence in shaping public religious understanding. Consequently, social media may contribute to the emergence of pseudo-religious authority, fragmented religious interpretation, and ideological polarization within digital society.

The study therefore emphasizes the urgent importance of strengthening digital religious literacy within Islamic education. Digital literacy should not only focus on technical abilities but also include critical competencies in evaluating information credibility, understanding ideological narratives, and engaging ethically within online environments. Islamic educational institutions, scholars, and educators must actively guide learners in navigating digital religious spaces critically and responsibly while simultaneously producing credible and academically grounded Islamic content capable of counterbalancing misinformation and sensationalism.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on rational digital da'wah as both an innovative learning strategy and a potential site of value contestation within social media environments. This study contributes to broader discussions regarding digital religion, Islamic pedagogy, and the transformation of religious authority in contemporary Muslim society. Nevertheless, this research remains limited because it primarily focuses on a single YouTube content and does

not involve direct audience interviews or quantitative measurement of educational impact. Future studies are therefore recommended to explore multiple social media platforms, comparative digital religious narratives, and audience reception patterns to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of Islamic learning in digital environments.

Overall, this study concludes that social media possesses a dual role in Islamic Religious Education. On one hand, it offers innovative opportunities for expanding educational access, encouraging participatory learning, and promoting rational religious understanding. On the other hand, it also creates significant risks related to value distortion, commercialization of religion, and weakened religious authority. Therefore, the future development of Islamic education in the digital era depends not only on technological adaptation but also on the ability of educators, institutions, and society to cultivate critical digital literacy, ethical awareness, and moderate religious understanding within increasingly complex online environments.

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