



Mediatized Da'wah: Muhammadiyah's Digital Transformation through YouTube @MChannel1912

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Abstract

The rapid growth of digital technology has reshaped Islamic preaching, requiring adaptation to new communication patterns. **This study aims to** analyze the strategies and challenges of Muhammadiyah North Sumatra in utilizing the @Mchannel1912 YouTube channel within the framework of mediatized da'wah. Using a descriptive qualitative **method**, data were collected through literature review, digital observation, and in-depth interviews with key figures from the Muhammadiyah Tabligh Assembly, and **analyzed** through reduction, classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. **Findings show** that @Mchannel1912 reflects Muhammadiyah's digital transformation through preacher training, contemporary content production, cross-platform promotion, and collaboration with young cadres and influencers. **The novelty lies** in its focus on the structured use of YouTube for regional digital da'wah, an area rarely explored in previous studies. **Despite challenges** such as low digital literacy, limited youth involvement, and weak interactivity, **the channel enhances** Muhammadiyah's digital presence and promotes a modern, moderate, and progressive Islamic discourse. **This study contributes** to the literature on digital Islamic communication and offers practical insights for optimizing religious preaching in a digital society.

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1. Introduction

The rapid development of information and communication technology in the digital era has brought significant changes to various aspects of life, including the religious sphere. Digital transformation has accelerated and expanded access to information, making it easily available to people from all walks of life (Isma Indriyani & Khadiq, 2023). One of its notable impacts is the emergence of new

spaces for disseminating Islamic da'wah through digital platforms, particularly social media and video-sharing sites such as YouTube. Mediatized da'wah, defined here as religious communication that is shaped and influenced by the logic, format, and dynamics of digital media, has become increasingly prominent. YouTube has emerged as a strategic medium for conveying religious messages due to its visual nature, flexibility, and capacity to reach users across age groups, geographical regions, and social backgrounds (Al-Qurtuby, 2020). Global statistics show that YouTube has more than 2 billion monthly active users, offering preachers and religious organizations a vast audience base. The platform enables da'wah to be presented in diverse formats such as sermons, vlogs, animated videos, podcasts, and Islamic drama series targeting younger generations.

This global trend is also observed in Indonesia, where scholars emphasize the necessity for preachers to adapt to social media in order to engage effectively with millennial audiences. Taufikurrahman et al. (2024) argue that digital da'wah is no longer a supplementary approach but a primary strategy capable of addressing both spiritual and social consciousness in contemporary society. Hanief et al. (2023) similarly note that digital media convergence has significantly advanced da'wah by enabling Islamic content to be disseminated rapidly, creatively, and in ways aligned with modern lifestyles. Within this context, various Islamic organizations in Indonesia, including Muhammadiyah, have adopted YouTube as a medium for religious propagation. As a progressive modernist Islamic organization, Muhammadiyah has encouraged innovation in its preaching methods, exemplified by the official YouTube channel @MChannel1912, managed by the Muhammadiyah branch in North Sumatra. This channel offers a variety of content, including Islamic lectures, Friday sermons, event documentation, and educational videos grounded in Muhammadiyah values. Previous studies confirm YouTube's strategic potential in virtual da'wah, particularly in societies with high digital engagement (Husin et al., 2021) and Romadlany & Effendi (2025).

Despite these advantages, Muhammadiyah North Sumatra's use of @MChannel1912 still faces notable challenges. Research by Safutri Br Sitorus & Tamrin Sikumbang (2025) and Nurcahya et al. (2025) shows that contemporary da'wah has moved beyond physical pulpits to digital spaces, but sustaining audience engagement remains a critical hurdle. For @MChannel1912, the main issues include inconsistent content production, limited channel promotion, and low audience interaction, particularly among young Muhammadiyah members. Furthermore, competition with other popular da'wah channels—such as NU Online, Felix Siauw's channel, and Pemuda Tersesat—intensifies the pressure to improve creativity and production quality. In the competitive environment of YouTube's commercial algorithm, channels with higher viewer retention and engagement are prioritized, which can sideline less-optimized religious content. These conditions highlight the urgency for strategic content planning and active audience-building efforts. Addressing these gaps is critical for strengthening the

channel's role in representing Muhammadiyah's modern and moderate Islamic narratives in the digital space.

While numerous studies have examined digital da'wah in Indonesia, most have focused on nationally prominent preachers or organizations, leaving regional Muhammadiyah channels understudied. There is limited scholarly work specifically investigating how Muhammadiyah North Sumatra utilizes YouTube through @MChannel1912, particularly in terms of its digital strategies, operational challenges, and effectiveness in shaping a progressive da'wah discourse. This research seeks to address this gap by analyzing the channel's strategies and challenges in engaging digital audiences. It also aims to explore how @MChannel1912 contributes to advancing Muhammadiyah's vision of Islam that is modernist, moderate, and socially engaged in an online setting. The study draws upon the mediatization of religion framework, contrasting media logic and institutional logic to understand how digital platforms influence religious communication. In doing so, it provides both theoretical contributions to mediatization studies and practical insights for enhancing regional da'wah efforts in the age of algorithmic media.

While prior studies on digital da'wah in Indonesia have predominantly examined nationally recognized figures or organizations, few have systematically analyzed how regional Islamic institutions operationalize mediatization in a sustained and structured manner. Most existing works focus on content typology, audience reception, or platform affordances, yet they rarely address the *negotiation process between media logic and institutional logic* within the operational routines of a religious organization. This absence is particularly evident in the Southeast Asian context, where institutional da'wah efforts must balance doctrinal integrity with the competitive dynamics of algorithm-driven platforms. Consequently, there is limited theoretical understanding of how regional religious organizations, such as Muhammadiyah North Sumatra, adapt mediatized da'wah not only as a technological shift but as an institutional transformation. This study addresses this gap by investigating the strategic, operational, and interactional dimensions of Muhammadiyah's YouTube channel @MChannel1912, thereby extending mediatization theory to encompass the micro-processes of adaptation in regional Islamic contexts.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Mediatized Da'wah

Mediatized da'wah adalah adaptasi dakwah Islam ke dalam ekosistem media yang membentuk format, gaya, dan interaksi audiens. Media sosial seperti YouTube, Instagram, dan TikTok menggeser komunikasi dari tatap muka ke format visual interaktif dengan jangkauan luas (Firdaus et al., 2025; Mastanah et al., 2023). Perspektif ini memandang media sebagai agen yang mempengaruhi substansi dan otoritas dakwah melalui *media logic* seperti kecepatan, interaktivitas, dan daya tarik visual. Kajian sebelumnya membahas produksi konten, branding pendakwah, komodifikasi pesan, dan representasi gender (Hidayat & Nuri, 2024; Sule & Sulaiman, 2021), namun umumnya berfokus pada figur nasional dan

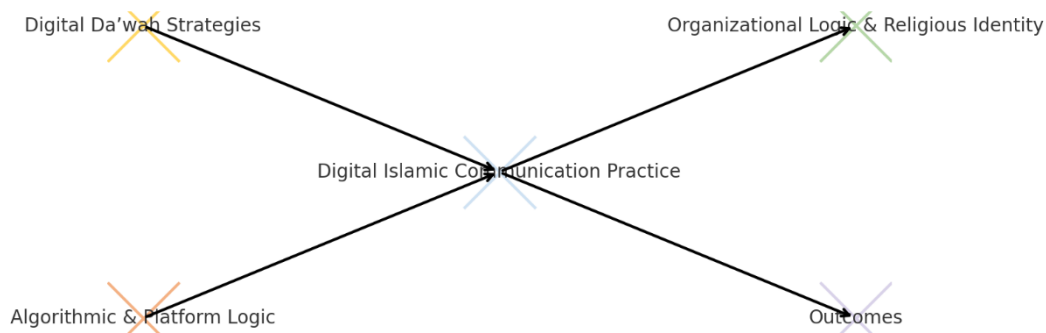
mengabaikan kanal institusional daerah. Studi ini mengisi celah itu dengan menganalisis bagaimana Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara menegosiasikan *media logic* dan *institutional logic* dalam dakwah digitalnya.

2.2 Mediatization of Religion

Mediatization of religion adalah proses ketika praktik dan makna agama dibentuk oleh logika media, bukan semata logika institusi (Hjarvard, 2008; Couldry, 2012). *Media logic* mengutamakan optimasi algoritma dan daya tarik emosional, sementara *institutional logic* menekankan integritas doktrin. Perbedaan ini menciptakan peluang sekaligus ketegangan, sebagaimana terlihat pada adaptasi organisasi Islam di Turki dan India (Eisenlohr, 2016; Martino, 2020). Penelitian terdahulu mengidentifikasi pola adaptasi institusional dan sirkulasi budaya, tetapi kajian Asia Tenggara—terutama tingkat daerah—masih minim, dan jarang menghubungkan *platform metrics* dengan keputusan organisasi. Studi ini menggunakan kerangka Hjarvard (2020) untuk memetakan mekanisme mikro seperti alur editorial dan strategi metadata yang memediasi interaksi logika media–institusi di Muhammadiyah.

2.3 Digital Religious Communication

Digital religious communication meliputi pemanfaatan teknologi digital untuk penyebaran ajaran, ritual, dan komunitas (Campbell & Tsuria, 2021). Pandemi COVID-19 mempercepat normalisasi ibadah daring dan konten religius di berbagai platform (Kasir & Awali, 2024). YouTube memfasilitasi ceramah panjang, Instagram mengedepankan visual edukatif, sedangkan TikTok mendorong pesan singkat yang viral. Kajian sebelumnya menekankan peran kualitas produksi, narasi, dan interaktivitas (Hoover & Echchaibi, 2023), tetapi dominan pada konteks Barat atau figur publik besar. Penelitian ini mengatasi celah tersebut dengan menganalisis @MChannel1912 melalui *netnography*, analisis konten, wawancara, dan metrik platform untuk memetakan strategi dakwah institusional di tingkat regional.



Conceptual Model

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Intercultural Communication Practice and Religious Moderation in the Muslim Minority Community of Sorong

3. Methods

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze how Muhammadiyah North Sumatra utilizes the YouTube channel @mchannel1912 for digital da'wah. YouTube was chosen for its dominance in global video-sharing, large active user base, and open access to content and engagement data, making it a strategic platform for religious communication. The analysis focused on 86 videos uploaded between January 2023 and June 2024 that met inclusion criteria: Islamic preaching or education content, a minimum length of three minutes, and official production or endorsement by Muhammadiyah North Sumatra. Data were collected through netnography, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews with five purposively selected informants involved in content creation and audience engagement. This triangulation of videos, organizational documents, and interviews ensured comprehensive coverage and credibility. Data analysis followed Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2020) interactive model—data reduction, thematic classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawing—guided by the mediatized da'wah framework. Inductive coding, constant comparison, and thematic categorization revealed patterns and variations in communication strategies. Credibility was strengthened through prolonged engagement and peer debriefing, while dependability was maintained with an audit trail of coding decisions. This methodological rigor produced a nuanced account of Muhammadiyah North Sumatra's digital preaching practices on YouTube.

4. Results

4.1. Muhammadiyah North Sumatra's Strategy in Utilizing the YouTube Channel @Mchannel1912 as a Digital Da'wah Medium

The strategy of Muhammadiyah North Sumatra in utilizing the YouTube channel @Mchannel1912 as a digital da'wah medium demonstrates the organization's commitment to adapting the dissemination of Islamic teachings to

the development of information technology. One concrete example is through training and cadre development for *mubaligh* organized by the Pimpinan Daerah Muhammadiyah (PDM) Asahan, such as the training program themed "*Improving the Quality and Quantity of Enlightening Mubaligh/Mubalighat in the Digital Era*" in September 2024. This training aims to equip preachers with the ability to effectively use digital media, including YouTube, as an adaptive, engaging, and easily accessible da'wah platform for the wider community. The @Mchannel1912 channel is one form of implementation of this strategy, where Islamic content is packaged in the form of sermons, lectures, and documentation of da'wah activities that can reach various audiences, including the younger generation. This step strengthens Muhammadiyah's position as a modern da'wah organization capable of transformation and responding to the challenges of the times.

As stated by Mr. Sapri, Chairman of the Majelis Tabligh Muhammadiyah (Sapri, 2025):

"The use of YouTube is an adaptive step for Muhammadiyah in facing the digital era, where the dissemination of information and da'wah must be able to reach a broader and more diverse audience. The strategy implemented includes producing relevant and engaging content, ranging from religious studies and sermons to social activities packaged visually. In addition, keyword optimization and cross-platform promotion on various social media are also a main focus to increase the channel's visibility. The goal is not only to spread moderate Islamic teachings but also to build Muhammadiyah's image as a progressive and relevant organization in modern society. This effort is expected to attract the younger generation and the general public to better understand the values of Muhammadiyah's da'wah through a digital medium that is easy to access."

Mr. Muhammad Idris, Secretary of the Majelis Tabligh Muhammadiyah, also explained (Muhammad Idris, 2025):

"The use of YouTube is an adaptive step for Muhammadiyah in facing the digital era, where the dissemination of information and da'wah must be able to reach a broader and more diverse audience. Furthermore, the main focus of this strategy is on their YouTube channel, which can be accessed at <https://youtube.com/@mchannel1912?si=CPuKJZ7HGdIamrO6>. The strategy implemented includes producing relevant and engaging content, ranging from religious studies and sermons to social activities packaged visually. In addition, keyword optimization and cross-platform promotion on various social media are also a main focus to increase the channel's visibility. The goal is not only to spread moderate Islamic teachings but also to build Muhammadiyah's image as a progressive and relevant organization in modern society. This effort is expected to attract the younger generation and the general public to better understand the values of Muhammadiyah's da'wah through a digital medium that is easy to access."

In line with this, Riska Hayati, a cadre of the Majelis Tabligh Muhammadiyah, explained (Riska Hayati, 2025):

"The strategy of utilizing the YouTube channel @Mchannel1912 is part of Muhammadiyah's effort to modernize da'wah so that it is more relevant to the needs of today's digital generation. According to her, the channel is an effective medium for conveying enlightening and progressive Islamic values, especially to the younger generation who are more familiar with digital platforms. Riska explained that the content uploaded on the @Mchannel1912 channel is not only religious sermons but also documentation of Muhammadiyah activities, regular Islamic study sessions, and digital-based preacher training. The aim is for the da'wah message to be more widely accepted, both internally by Muhammadiyah members and by the general public. In addition, this channel is also a collaborative space for young preachers and Majelis Tabligh cadres to express da'wah creativity visually. Although it still faces challenges in terms of content production consistency and promotion, Muhammadiyah North Sumatra's efforts to integrate digital media, especially YouTube, are considered to have brought a new dynamic to modern Islamic da'wah that is more adaptive and communicative."

The use of the YouTube channel @Mchannel1912 represents Muhammadiyah North Sumatra's transformation in responding to the challenges of the digital era. This digital da'wah strategy is analyzed through three main aspects: content production, distribution and promotion, as well as interactivity and engagement, in line with the framework of mediatized da'wah developed from digital religious communication (H. Campbell & Tsuria, 2021).

Table 4.1. Strategy for Utilizing the YouTube Channel @MChannel1912

Aspect	Key Findings	Data (Summary)	Quote	Social & Ideological Meaning
Content Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content in the form of sermons, religious lectures, activity documentation, and digital preacher training. - Collaborative efforts of young cadres for visual creativity, but still monotonous and less innovative compared to other organizations (NU Online, Hanan Attaki). 	<p>"The strategy includes producing relevant and engaging content... from religious studies to social activities" (Sapri, 2025).</p> <p>"This channel is also a space for collaboration among young preachers..." (Riska Hayati, 2025).</p>		<p>Reflects the modernization of Muhammadiyah's da'wah, but not yet fully adaptive to the visual culture of the digital generation.</p>
Distribution & Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses keyword optimization and cross-promotion (Facebook, Instagram, 	<p>"Keyword optimization and cross-platform promotion... to</p>		<p>Muhammadiyah seeks to build a moderate Islamic image but lags in digital algorithms</p>

	WhatsApp). - Distribution is still organic, without collaboration with influencers or paid advertising.	increase channel visibility" (Sapri, 2025). "The dedicated digital media team is still limited" (Muhammad Idris, 2025).	compared to other groups like Felix Siauw or NU Garis Lucu.
Interactivity & Engagement	- Low interaction level, average comments <10/video. - Content is not participatory; no interactive live streaming or religious challenges.	"Audience interaction is still limited due to inconsistent content production" (Riska Hayati, 2025).	Indicates a lack of participatory da'wah culture and a one-way communication model that reduces digital audience loyalty.

Table 4.1 shows that the strategy of utilizing the YouTube channel @Mchannel1912 by Muhammadiyah North Sumatra is a form of organizational transformation in responding to the digital era in spreading Islamic teachings. The strategy includes producing engaging and relevant da'wah content such as religious studies, documentation of social activities, and preacher training packaged visually and creatively. These efforts are strengthened by cross-platform promotion and keyword optimization to expand audience reach. The channel also serves as a participatory space for young Muhammadiyah cadres to express da'wah messages in a contemporary style. Although it still faces challenges in terms of production consistency and audience interaction, the channel is considered to have made an important contribution to Muhammadiyah's transformation toward a more modern, open, and digital-generation-oriented da'wah.

Thus, the use of the YouTube platform through the @Mchannel1912 channel by Muhammadiyah North Sumatra reflects the organization's commitment to developing a da'wah method that is responsive to technological developments. The strategy implemented not only expands the reach of da'wah but also presents the face of Islam that is moderate, inclusive, and relevant in modern society. This approach opens great opportunities to reach the younger generation and strengthens Muhammadiyah's da'wah identity as a progressive Islamic movement adaptive to the times

4.2 Challenges and Impacts of Using the YouTube Channel @Mchannel1912 in the Dissemination of Islamic Preaching in the Digital Era

The use of YouTube as a medium for da'wah has opened up great opportunities for wider and more flexible dissemination of Islamic preaching, including through the @Mchannel1912 channel owned by Muhammadiyah North

Sumatra. However, behind these opportunities lie challenges that must be faced, such as competition with other popular da'wah content, consistency in video production, quality of presentation, and low engagement from the digital audience, particularly the younger generation. Nevertheless, the positive impact of utilizing this channel is quite significant in expanding the reach of da'wah, introducing the face of moderate Islam, and enhancing the image of Muhammadiyah as an organization adaptive to the times. The transformation of da'wah through YouTube also provides easier access to religious information for the public without time and space limitations, making da'wah closer, more flexible, and more aligned with the needs of today's digital society.

As stated in the interview with Mr. Sapri, Chairman of the Muhammadiyah Majelis Tabligh; (Sapri, 2025)

"The main challenge in utilizing the YouTube channel @Mchannel1912 is the lack of digital literacy among some administrators and preachers, so not all are able to manage da'wah content optimally. In addition, he also highlighted the minimal involvement of Muhammadiyah's younger generation, who are more interested in entertainment content than monotonous religious content. This has an impact on the low number of viewers and subscribers to the channel, as well as the limited reach of the da'wah message. Nevertheless, according to him, the positive impact is still felt, such as the increasing existence of Muhammadiyah in the digital sphere and the opening of broader da'wah access across regions and ages. To address this challenge, the Muhammadiyah Regional Leadership of North Sumatra continues to conduct digital literacy training, form a creative media team, and collaborate with young figures and influencers to present more attractive, relevant, and up-to-date da'wah content."

The results of the interview with Mr. Muhammad Idris, Secretary of the Muhammadiyah Majelis Tabligh, explained that; (Muhammad Idris, 2025)

"The low level of digital literacy, both among administrators and the general public. He stated that many preachers or cadres are still not accustomed to using social media and information technology effectively, so the dissemination of da'wah through channels such as YouTube, websites, and other digital media is not yet optimal. In addition, Muhammad Idris also highlighted the lack of involvement of the younger generation in the digital da'wah content presented because it tends to be monotonous and less relevant to the dynamics of today's youth. To overcome this, according to him, Muhammadiyah has organized digital training and workshops aimed at increasing the technological capacity of preachers. In addition, he also emphasized the importance of forming a special digital media team capable of managing da'wah content professionally and attractively, as well as collaborating with young influencers so that Muhammadiyah's da'wah message can be more accepted by today's digital generation. These efforts are considered a form of Muhammadiyah's transformation in response to changing times, so that Islamic values can continue to be conveyed in a moderate and progressive manner in an increasingly digital society."

Table 4.2. Challenges and Impacts of Utilizing the YouTube Channel @MChannel1912

Aspect	Key Findings	Summary Quotation	Data	Social & Ideological Meaning
Challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low digital literacy among administrators & preachers. 2. Monotonous content and less aligned with youth preferences. 3. Minimal involvement of young cadres. 4. Weak promotional & interactivity strategies. 5. Tight competition with popular da'wah channels. 	<p>"Lack of digital literacy among administrators... Minimal involvement of the younger generation" (Sapri, 2025).</p> <p>"Many preachers are not yet accustomed to using social media... da'wah content tends to be monotonous" (Muhammad Idris, 2025).</p>		Shows Muhammadiyah's transition from conventional to digital da'wah, but hindered by human resources and communication strategies that are not yet adaptive.
Positive Impacts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing Muhammadiyah's existence in the digital sphere. 2. Opening da'wah access across ages & regions. 3. Introducing a moderate and progressive Islamic narrative. 	<p>"Increasing Muhammadiyah's existence in the digital sphere... opening da'wah access across regions" (Sapri, 2025).</p>		Strengthens Muhammadiyah's identity as a modernist Islamic movement and alternative amid the dominance of conservative Islamic narratives.
Negative Impacts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low viewers & subscribers. 2. Limited influence of digital da'wah among the younger generation. 			

Table 4.2 identifies the main challenges in utilizing the YouTube channel @Mchannel1912 as the low digital literacy among administrators, preachers, and the public, as well as the minimal involvement of the younger generation who tend to be more interested in entertainment content than monotonous da'wah content. These challenges have an impact on suboptimal content management, low numbers of viewers and subscribers, and the limited reach of digital da'wah.

Nevertheless, the positive impact is still visible, namely the increasing existence of Muhammadiyah in the digital sphere and the opening of da'wah access across ages and regions. To address these challenges, Muhammadiyah has conducted digital literacy training, formed creative media teams, and collaborated with young figures and influencers to present da'wah content that is more attractive, up-to-date, and in line with the character of today's digital generation.

Table 4. 3 presents the statistical performance of @Mchannel1912 during the observation period from January to June 2025. The channel averaged 2,300 views per video, with approximately 8 comments per video and a 2.5% engagement rate. Subscribers grew from 3,200 to 4,050, representing a 26.6% increase in six months. Upload frequency averaged four videos per month, with higher viewership during Ramadan. Viewer demographics indicated that 58% of the audience were aged 18–34, predominantly male (62%), and located in urban areas of North Sumatra. These statistics suggest moderate but steady growth, reflecting the channel's capacity to maintain audience interest despite limited production resources. Compared to larger national da'wah channels, the numbers remain modest but promising for a regional initiative.

Table4. 3. YouTube Performance Statistics of @Mchannel1912 (Jan–Jun 2025)

Metric	Value	Notes
Average views/video	2,300	Higher during Ramadan and Eid periods
Average comments/video	8	Low interaction rate compared to peers
Engagement rate	2.5%	Based on likes, comments, shares
Subscriber growth	+850 (26.6%)	From 3,200 to 4,050 in 6 months
Upload frequency	4 videos/month	Weekly posting during religious holidays

In comparison, NU Online's YouTube channel averages over 50,000 views per video with a more diversified visual style, while Felix Siauw's channel utilizes personal branding to achieve over 100,000 views per video. The Pemuda Tersesat channel, though smaller in scale, gains high engagement through humor and interactive live streaming. @Mchannel1912's distinctive strength lies in its organizational legitimacy and structured religious authority, which provides a trusted source of Islamic knowledge. However, the channel's limited experimentation with visual storytelling and interactivity reduces its competitive edge. The absence of collaborations with digital influencers also limits exposure to new audiences. This comparison highlights the need for both innovation and audience-centric programming.

Based on the mediatized da'wah framework by Tsuria (2021) and Campbell & Vitullo (2016), @Mchannel1912's strategy can be categorized into content production, distribution and promotion, and audience engagement. Content production reflects Muhammadiyah's emphasis on credible and structured Islamic teaching, albeit with limited visual innovation. Distribution relies heavily on organic reach through social media cross-posting rather than paid advertising or influencer collaboration. Engagement remains low, as interactive

features such as live streaming or comment-based Q&A sessions are rarely implemented. The channel's approach demonstrates consistency in doctrinal delivery but lacks adaptive creativity to meet changing digital consumption patterns. These observations align with previous findings that institutional channels often prioritize message control over viral appeal.

Another important finding is the channel's role as a training and collaboration space for young Muhammadiyah preachers. Interviews with Riska Hayati (2025) reveal that the platform provides opportunities for youth cadres to experiment with visual presentation and develop their digital preaching skills. This collaborative environment has encouraged the inclusion of community event coverage and thematic sermon series. However, production consistency is still affected by the voluntary nature of content creation and the limited number of technically skilled members. Such limitations hinder the channel's ability to compete with commercial-quality Islamic content producers. Addressing these issues could significantly improve audience retention and overall channel impact. This indicates that capacity building is as crucial as content innovation.

In summary, the utilization of @Mchannel1912 illustrates Muhammadiyah North Sumatra's commitment to modernizing da'wah through digital media. The channel demonstrates modest but steady audience growth, organizational credibility, and relevance to regional Islamic discourse. However, it faces challenges in interactivity, visual innovation, and competitive positioning within the broader digital da'wah ecosystem. Comparative analysis shows that while its authority-based messaging is a strength, the lack of influencer collaborations and dynamic content formats limits its reach. These results suggest that strategic investment in production skills, visual creativity, and audience engagement techniques is necessary. By combining doctrinal consistency with adaptive media strategies, @Mchannel1912 could strengthen its role as a regional benchmark for digital Islamic preaching. This makes it a promising model for other Muhammadiyah regions seeking to enhance their online presence

5. Discussion

5.1 Integration of Da'wah Strategies

The strategy of Muhammadiyah North Sumatra through the YouTube channel @MChannel1912 demonstrates a strong commitment to integrating da'wah into an increasingly competitive digital media ecosystem. Digital-based mubaligh training programs, diverse visual content production, and cross-platform promotion on social media reflect a transformation from conventional da'wah to a mediatized da'wah model ((Al-Zaman, 2022; Eisenlohr, 2016; Hjarvard, 2020; Martino, 2020). This transformation is not merely about transferring sermons into a digital format but also about adjusting the message to the demands of media logic, which requires visualization, cross-platform accessibility, and narrative appeal. This approach is similar to the strategy implemented in Turkey, where the Diyanet utilizes YouTube and Instagram to strengthen a moderate Islamic

narrative while building emotional closeness with young urban audiences. The success of this integrated da'wah strategy lies in its ability to reach a generation inclined to consume information on-demand and in fragmented formats. Nevertheless, Muhammadiyah's institutional logic remains evident in the choice of da'wah themes, which are formal and emphasize collective moral education. This serves as both a strength and a challenge in maintaining a balance between da'wah values and the more fluid demands of media logic.

5.2 Challenges of Mediatization

The findings of this study also reveal the paradox of mediatization, in which digital media not only serve as channels but also shape the substance of da'wah messages (Hjarvard, 2008). The @MChannel1912 channel still retains a one-way communication pattern, meaning the transition toward participatory digital communication has not been fully achieved. Compared to practices in Saudi Arabia, where interactive live-streaming features are used to answer audience questions in real time, Muhammadiyah still tends to prioritize pre-recorded sermon formats. Another challenge lies in the potential distortion of messages when da'wah content must adapt to the algorithms of commercial platforms like YouTube, which prioritize watch time and emotional engagement. Hoover (2006) warns that when religion follows the logic of entertainment, spiritual messages risk being reduced to visual commodities that prioritize popularity. This is relevant to some content that focuses more on documenting ceremonial events rather than exploring deeper socio-religious issues. Such challenges require a content curation strategy that preserves theological substance while remaining competitive in the digital media ecosystem.

5.3 Opportunities for Interactivity

Despite these challenges, @MChannel1912 has significant opportunities to leverage digital interactivity as a medium for more dialogical da'wah. Studies of Western Muslim diaspora communities show that using Q&A sessions, polls, and cross-channel collaborations successfully builds a strong and participatory online community. In Muhammadiyah's context, this approach could revive the spirit of *musyawarah* as a socio-religious value, but in a format that resonates with digital culture. At present, the limited use of interactive live-streaming sessions and minimal responses in the comment sections suggest that this potential remains underutilized. Digital media logic enables audiences not only to be message recipients but also co-producers of da'wah meaning. Strengthening interactive elements also aligns with an inclusive da'wah vision that embraces differences in opinion, as seen in the practices of progressive scholars on YouTube in Malaysia and Egypt who combine da'wah with personal storytelling. With such a strategy, @MChannel1912 could expand its follower base and enhance the relevance of its da'wah among younger generations (Kiflee et al., 2023).

5.4 Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, these findings enrich the study of the mediatization of religion by illustrating the dynamic tension between media logic and institutional logic within Muhammadiyah's da'wah context. The @MChannel1912 channel serves as an example of how a modernist religious organization adapts to digital platforms without fully compromising its institutional identity. However, this partial adaptation results in a form of "half-baked" mediatization, where technical innovation is not yet accompanied by equivalent communication innovation. Compared to models in Turkey or European Muslim communities, which more rapidly adopt short video formats and interactive storytelling, Muhammadiyah remains in an early experimental stage. The practical implication is the need for internal policies encouraging media teams to understand platform algorithmic logic and use it to strengthen audience engagement. This includes training young Muhammadiyah content creators to combine theological messages with production techniques suited to digital-native preferences. Thus, da'wah will not only have a digital presence but will also be able to compete and influence public discourse.

From a practical standpoint, this study recommends three strategic steps: first, developing content that integrates theological values with a popular yet respectful style of delivery; second, optimizing interactive features such as the community tab, premiere videos, and cross-platform collaborations; third, leveraging YouTube analytics to map audience behavior and adjust distribution strategies accordingly. Comparisons with practices in Saudi Arabia indicate that integrating data analytics can increase the relevance of da'wah content by up to 40% within six months. Implementing similar strategies could help Muhammadiyah fine-tune upload schedules, video length, and topic selection according to target audience interests. Sociologically, such an approach could strengthen social cohesion within Muhammadiyah communities, particularly among young people active on social media. Theologically, this aligns with the principle of dakwah bil hikmah, which adapts to the context of the times. Therefore, strengthening digital capacity is not merely a technical necessity but an integral part of sustaining Muhammadiyah's da'wah mission in the era of mediatization (Ardiansyah, 2024; Bari et al., 2025; Rifqi, 2024).

6. Conclusion

The utilization of the YouTube channel @Mchannel1912 by Muhammadiyah North Sumatra marks a progressive shift in Islamic preaching, adapting to digital technology through strategies such as preacher training, engaging and promotive content production, and collaboration with young cadres to reach the digital generation. Despite challenges—low digital literacy among administrators, limited youth involvement, and competition with entertainment content—the channel has strengthened Muhammadiyah's digital presence, broadened its audience across age groups and regions, and reinforced its moderate Islamic

identity. This reflects a transition from conventional to participatory, media-driven preaching, showing how a moderate Islamic organization engages with algorithmic ecosystems while maintaining institutional and religious values, thus contributing to studies on digital Islamic communication in Indonesia. Practically, the study recommends short thematic videos, storytelling based on lived experiences, interactive live streaming, algorithm optimization through targeted keywords, thumbnails, and audience retention, as well as the use of comments, polls, community posts, and cross-channel collaborations to enhance reach, participation, and content discoverability. These measures can expand Muhammadiyah's influence and keep its preaching relevant to contemporary cultural and informational needs. The research is limited to one regional channel and observation period, lacking comparison with other organizations or influential preachers. Future studies should explore cross-platform strategies (YouTube, Instagram, TikTok), audience analysis across demographics, and digital discourse or ethnographic approaches, alongside comparative studies with actors like NU Online, Habib Husein Ja'far, or Hanan Attaki, to identify best practices and advance theoretical and practical insights into Islamic preaching in the era of mediatization and algorithmic culture.

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