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Digital *Dakwah* Empowerment through Cyber Law-Based Legal Assistance in Muhammadiyah Tegalweru

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Abstract

This article examines the pivot of *dakwah* within the Muhammadiyah Tegalweru Branch in Malang Regency. The main focus and urgency of this legal service is to provide education and guidance to *dakwah* practitioners and activists (especially for the Muhammadiyah Tegalweru Branch cadre) to enable them to use digital media effectively and in accordance with the provisions of applicable cyber law in Indonesia. In this assistance, participants gained an understanding of the ethics

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of *dakwah* on social media and of legal regulations related to hate speech, hoaxes, and other digital violations. The method of implementing this service is through socialization and assistance for digital *dakwah* at PRM Tegalweru, based on cyber law, with particular attention to the provisions in the IET Law, the PDP Law, and the Criminal Code. The goal of this legal service is to create *dakwah* activities that are creative, up-to-date, unique, safe, responsible, and relevant to the development of today's information technology. This study contributes by developing a cyber law-based digital *dakwah* assistance model that enhances legal awareness and digital literacy among grassroots religious communities.

KEYWORDS *Dakwah, Muhammadiyah, Tegalweru, Malang, Digital.*

Introduction

Dakwah, taken from *da'a, yad'u*, in Arabic language,[1] is closest in meaning to preaching, a method of conveying the messenger's message in the best way or *shiratal mustaqim*. In this era, *dakwah* faces multiple challenges and opportunities, especially in rural and village areas. Sometimes, *dakwah* is conveyed only through conventional means, such as sermons at the mosque, during *taklim* or Friday prayers. But, since the internet became widely available across Indonesia, the *dakwah* could be delivered through a blended format, via Zoom, Google Meet or Microsoft Teams. However, the *dakwah* practitioners must be aware of the regulation or law issued by the government.

In this study, *dakwah* is conceptualized not merely as a religious obligation of Islamic propagation, but as a social communication process through which religious values are transmitted, negotiated, and translated into collective action. Drawing on communication-for-development and

[1] Syamsul Arifin, Syafiq A. Mughni, and Moh Nurhakim, "The Idea of Progress: Meaning and Implications of Islam Berkemajuan in Muhammadiyah," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 60, no. 2 (December 2022): 547–84, https://doi.org/10.14421/AJIS.2022.602.547-584.

social empowerment theory,[23] *dakwah* in the digital context functions as a participatory communicative practice that mobilizes community resources, builds social capital, and facilitates behavioral or structural change toward socially beneficial outcomes.

The rapid proliferation of the network society has forced traditional legal and sociological structures to confront a profound spatial shift, from mosque based settings to algorithmic social media platforms. This structural transition creates a complex legal and sociological debate. On one side, proponents argue that digital *dakwah* democratizes public knowledge and serves as an unmatched instrument for proactive social engineering. On the opposing side, traditionalists contend that unchecked digital preaching triggers an institutional decay that dilutes religious authority, introduces severe regulatory vulnerabilities under cyberlaw, and fragments horizontal social harmony.

The primary argument in favor of online *dakwah* addresses the severe spatial and temporal friction inherent to conventional, offline preaching, where a sermon's immediate sociological impact is confined to the specific individuals physically present in a single neighborhood at a precise hour. Digital *dakwah* completely dismantles these boundaries through temporal and spatial transcendence, allowing a single religious lecture, infographic, or short-form video to be permanently archived and asynchronously accessed across global jurisdictions. Sociologically, this aligns with Manuel Castells' Network Society Theory,[4] where localized values move freely into transnational networks, ensuring that remote rural villages and international diaspora populations possess identical, high-quality access to moderate religious guidance and progressive ethical frameworks.

From an Indonesian legal-philosophical standpoint, the optimization of online *dakwah* operates as a highly potent instrument of social

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[2] Srinivas Melkote and H. Steeves, *Communication for Development in the Third World: Theory and Practice for Empowerment*, *Communication for Development in the Third World: Theory and Practice for Empowerment*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage publications, 2014), https://doi.org/10.4135/9788132113751.

[3] Jan Servaes, "A Personal Encounter: Some Reflections on Communication for Development and Social Change," in *Learning from Communicators in Social Change: Rethinking the Power of Development*, ed. Jan Servaes (Springer, 2008), 71–82.

[4] Manuel Castells, "The Network Society Revisited," *American Behavioral Scientist* 67, no. 7 (June 2023): 940–46, https://doi.org/10.1177/00027642221092803.

engineering under *Teori Hukum Pembangunan* (Theory of Legal Development), developed by M. Kusumaatmadja. Kusumaatmadja argued that law must not merely maintain static order but must actively direct, accelerate, and safeguard societal progress. Because prominent digital preachers command massive public engagement, their platforms can be strategically leveraged to internalize civic virtues, promote public health awareness, combat systemic corruption, and advance digital literacy. By fusing deep-seated voluntary religious compliance with state statutory objectives, online preaching shapes netizen behavior from the inside out, turning the communicative flow into a dialogic, hyper-personalized ecosystem where users actively engage through interactive feedback loops like comments and live-streams.

Conversely, the argument for preserving the primacy of offline, conventional *dakwah* focuses on the deep-rooted social capital and theological accountability generated within physical religious spaces. Preaching within a physical mosque is not a simple transaction of data transfer; it is a holistic communal ritual that builds genuine social cohesion and localized solidarity (*ukhuwah*). The physical demands of attending a mosque enforce a code of mindfulness, respect, and shared identity that a glowing smartphone screen cannot replicate. When *dakwah* is stripped of its physical and institutional context, it risks being reduced to a transient consumer product designed to satisfy a fleeting digital appetite, leading to what academic literature terms the "flatness of authority." Unlike the offline world, where a preacher's credibility is heavily vetted by established institutional lineages and formal academic credentials, algorithmic curation in the digital sphere prioritizes user engagement and emotional provocation over theological accuracy or depth, allowing hyper-populist or unqualified elements to weaponize religious text for viral reach.

From a regulatory perspective, online *dakwah* poses serious challenges to the core legal value of legal certainty (*kepastian hukum*).[5] While offline *dakwah* is naturally self-regulated by local cultural context and community social norms (*kearifan lokal*), online *dakwah* operates within a paternalistic cyberlaw framework, specifically the Electronic Information and

[5] Moh. Fadli and Syofyan Hadi, *Kepastian Hukum: Perspektif Teoretik*, 1st ed. (Malang: PT. Nuswantara Media Utama, 2023).

Transactions Law (UU ITE). Because digital content is frequently sliced into short, sensational clips stripped of their original context, sermons are often weaponized by opposing factions online, triggering severe horizontal friction, polarization, and legal disputes regarding defamation, hate speech, and religious blasphemy. The ambiguity of clauses within the UU ITE creates a hostile legal environment where the line between legitimate spiritual expression and criminal incitement becomes precariously blurred, undermining the standard of clear and precise legislation.

Ultimately, a comprehensive comparative analysis demonstrates that neither medium can completely substitute the other without exposing society to systemic structural vulnerabilities. While conventional, offline *dakwah* preserves the sanctity of textual interpretation, minimizes legal friction, and anchors community-level social cohesion, it suffers from severe physical limitations that exclude large portions of a modern, highly mobile populace. Conversely, while online *dakwah* offers unparalleled access, breaking down elite monopolies and advancing civic values on a massive scale, it introduces profound risks of polarization, algorithmic radicalization, and constant cyberlaw infractions. For a pluralistic nation navigating rapid digital transformation, the optimal solution requires a coherent, hybrid socio-legal framework where the state and religious institutions use digital networks to optimize accessibility and drive proactive civic development, while simultaneously preserving conventional institutional spaces to serve as the ultimate anchors for theological accountability, legal certainty, and deep-seated communal harmony.[6] So, to make the *dakwah* in the digital age smoothly received by the audience, this paper examines the use of social media and related tools, as practiced in Tegalweru village, specifically in Muhammadiyah Tegalweru Branch.

The Muhammadiyah Tegalweru Branch or Pimpinan Ranting Muhammadiyah Tegalweru (hereinafter referred as PRM Tegalweru) is a new branch under the PCM Dau. As a new entity, PRM Tegalweru, which is located in Tegalweru Village, Dau District, Malang Regency, does not have adequate Human Resources (HR), facilities and infrastructure. PRM

[6] Ariefulloh Ariefulloh et al., "Restorative Justice-Based Criminal Case Resolution in Salatiga, Indonesia: Islamic Law Perspective and Legal Objectives," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 23, no. 1 (May 2023): 19–36, https://doi.org/10.18326/IJTIHAD.V23I1.19-36.

Tegalweru focuses its organizational activities on the Siti Aisyah Mosque, which is a waqf on land owned by Abah Bari. The current chairman of PRM Tegalweru, Mas Ikhsan, is the biological son of Abah Bari. One of the obstacles experienced by PRM Tegalweru is limited access to digital media and lack of understanding of *dakwah* in cyberspace. So, through this community service or legal service, it is hoped that the obstacles in PRM Tegalweru can be overcome.

Simplicity is seen in all forms of *dakwah* activities of PRM Tegalweru. With a total of 23 WAG members, PRM Tegalweru still routinely holds *dakwah* activities, such as monthly study sessions, home visits to members' homes, social activities such as community services, and charitable contributions in collaboration with third-party partners, such as LazisMu, IMM and so on. The only active social media presence is an Instagram account, @mushollasitiasiyah, bearing the PRM Tegalweru bio. The social media account posted PRM Tegalweru study activities in the form of posters and captions which were also invitations. Unfortunately, there are no other channels and social media channels to post syiar and *dakwah* on PRM Tegalweru, so this legal service is expected to overcome the problems of partners in spreading their *dakwah* in cyberspace.

The situation at PRM Tegalweru is genuinely concerning. Although it operates in a predominantly Nahdlatul Ulama rural area, Muhammadiyah activity remains visible at least on a monthly basis. Several members from nearby residential complexes such as Bumi Madinah, Medina Residence 2, and Grand Aleena are active contributors to PRM Tegalweru. The majority of these members work in AUM such as UMM, RSI Aisiyah and so on. Thus, through this legal service program, it is hoped young people native to Tegalweru Village will be encouraged to join and actively engage in Muhammadiyah *dakwah* activities at the Siti Aisyah Mosque and PRM Tegalweru in general.

Prior research addressing a similar topic, written by Agung Fathul Muhtadin et al., found that digital *dakwah* strengthens religious moderation in Indonesia.[7] While Asna Istya Marwantika examined trends

[7] Agung Fathul Muhtadin et al., "Meningkatkan Moderasi Beragama Melalui *Dakwah* Digital," *Dakwah: Jurnal Kajian Dakwah Dan Kemasyarakatan* 28, no. 1 (December 2024): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.15408/*DAKWAH*.V28I1.38319.

in digital *dakwah* through a literature review, identifying which media to use, communication strategies, and audience transformation, highlighting growing academic interest in the field,[8] Aang Ridwan similarly addressed these themes in his research.[9] Separately, Nase et al. examined ethical communication in digital *dakwah*,[10] as also specifically addressed by Fathul Amin and Agus Ali Sururi in their discussion of young audiences in digital *dakwah*.[11]

In another research, Hew Wai Weng shows that online and offline *dakwah* function in complementary rather than substitutive ways, with visual persuasion on social media extending, rather than replacing, traditional preaching.[12] This reconfiguration is closely tied to shifts in religious authority: Martin Slama demonstrates, through a Bourdieusian lens, how social media transforms preacher–follower relationships into more dialogic and reciprocal exchanges of social and economic capital,[13] while Dindin Solahudin and Moch. Fakhruroji similarly argue that social media has become a productive space for religious populism, enabling wider participation but simultaneously destabilizing conventional structures of religious authority.[14] Complementing these authority-centered analyses,

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[8] Asna Istya Marwantika, "Pemetaan Aliran Pemikiran *Dakwah* Ditinjau Dari Periodisasi Gerakan *Dakwah* Dan Konsep Keilmuan," *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama* 7, no. 01 (April 2015): 17–37, https://doi.org/10.37680/QALAMUNA.V7I01.364.

[9] Aang Ridwan, "*Dakwah* Dan Digital Culture: Membangun Komunikasi *Dakwah* Di Era Digital," *LANTERA: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam* 1, no. 1 (December 2022): 74–84, https://doi.org/10.30999/LANTERA.V1I1.2526.

[10] Nase Nase, Holina Holina, and Yoshy Hendra Hardiyan Syah, "Phenomenon of Digital *Dakwah*: Analysis of Religious Moderation and the Ethics of *Dakwah* Communication on Social Media," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 45, no. 2 (December 24, 2025): 313–40, https://doi.org/10.21580/JID.V45.2.27992.

[11] Fathul Amin and Agus Ali Sururi, "*Dakwah* Digital: Mengukur Dampak Dan Efektivitas Kampanye *Dakwah* Online Terhadap Audiens Muda," *PROGRESIF: Jurnal Dakwah, Sosial, Dan Komunikasi* 2, no. 1 (February 2025): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.63199/PROGRESIF.V2I1.31.

[12] Wai Weng Hew, "The Art of *Dakwah*: Social Media, Visual Persuasion and the Islamist Propagation of Felix Siauw," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 46, no. 134 (January 2018): 61–79, https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.1416757.

[13] Martin Slama, "A Subtle Economy of Time: Social Media and the Transformation of Indonesia's Islamic Preacher Economy," *Economic Anthropology* 4, no. 1 (January 2017): 94–106, https://doi.org/10.1002/SEA2.12075;WGROUP:STRING:PUBLICATION.

[14] Dindin Solahudin and Moch Fakhruroji, "Internet and Islamic Learning Practices in Indonesia: Social Media, Religious Populism, and Religious Authority," *Religions 2020, Vol. 11, Page 19* 11, no. 1 (December 2019): 19, https://doi.org/10.3390/REL11010019.

several studies foreground the diversification of *dakwah* media and its empowerment potential.

Arina Rohmatul Hidayah illustrates how podcasts have emerged as an alternative *dakwah* medium suited to the listening habits of digital-era audiences,[15] while Zainal Abidin Achmad, Rachmah Ida, Mustain, and Ronald Lukens-Bull reveal how *dakwah* is increasingly synergized with local cultural programming to strengthen its social embeddedness.[16] Most directly relevant to the empowerment dimension, Yuyun Affandi, Agus Riyadi, Imam Taufiq, Abdurrohman Kasdi, Umma Farida, Abdul Karim and Abdul Mufid frame *dakwah* as a vehicle for revitalizing "spiritual capital" toward environmentally and gender-responsive social outcomes, positioning *dakwah* explicitly as a mechanism of community empowerment rather than mere religious transmission.[17] Last, Bouziane Zaid, Jana Fedtke, Don Donghee Shin, Abdelmalek El Kadoussi, and Mohammed Ibahrine extend this discussion to the millennial and Gen Z context, showing how social media influencers reimagine religious authority and practice, thereby broadening participation in religious meaning-making among younger, digitally native Muslims.[18]

Collectively, these studies indicate that digital *dakwah* is not a neutral extension of traditional preaching but a participatory, capital-generating social process, one that reshapes authority structures, diversifies communicative media, and increasingly functions as an instrument of community empowerment, a conceptual trajectory this study builds upon. This study differs from previous research primarily in its *locus* and service-

[15] Arina Rohmatul Hidayah, "Theorization the Use of Podcasts as an Alternative Medium of Da'wah and Its Impact on the Audience: The Case of Indonesia," *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 29, no. 4 (December 2021): 2635–51, https://doi.org/10.47836/PJSSH.29.4.29.

[16] Zainal Abidin Achmad et al., "The Synergy of Islamic Da'wah and Madura Culture Programmes on Nada FM Sumenep Radio, Indonesia," *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* 37, no. 2 (2021): 111–29, https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2021-3702-08.

[17] Yuyun Affandi et al., "Da'wah Qur'aniyah Based on Environmental Conversation: Revitalizing Spiritual Capital Ecotheology, Environmentally Friendly, Gender Responsive," *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 30, no. 1 (January 2022): 159–70, https://doi.org/10.47836/PJSSH.30.1.09.

[18] Bouziane Zaid et al., "Digital Islam and Muslim Millennials: How Social Media Influencers Reimagine Religious Authority and Islamic Practices," *Religions 2022, Vol. 13, Page 335* 13, no. 4 (April 2022): 335, https://doi.org/10.3390/REL13040335.

oriented purpose. Through this legal service paper, the authors address the challenges and opportunities of *dakwah* in the digital era. This paper also offers concrete recommendations to readers, while the findings may be replicable in other *dakwah* contexts around the world. This study contributes by developing a cyber law-based digital *dakwah* assistance model that enhances legal awareness and digital literacy among grassroots religious communities.

Methods

The implementation method is prepared to solve the priority problems of partners systematically and measurably through several main stages, namely:

a. Socialization
   1) Convey the urgency of digital *dakwah* for members of PRM Tegalweru;
   2) Explain the benefits of using social media as a digital *dakwah* platform in the PRM Tegalweru;
   3) Identify the specific needs of partners through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

b. Training
   1) Training on the preparation of digital *dakwah* content;
   2) Training on the preparation of structured digital *dakwah* plans.

c. Application of Technology
   1) Implementation of training results in the form of content on Instagram social media;
   2) Customization of the use of applications such as Canva, CapCut, and Google Workspace and so on.

d. Initial Assistance and Evaluation
   1) Direct and online supervision to ensure that the understanding and creation of digital *dakwah* content runs well;
   2) Improvement of digital *dakwah* results or content from the review of the service team;

3) Trial use of Canva, CapCut, and Google Workspace applications and so on to create digital *dakwah* content for the next Tegalweru PRM activities.

e. Technical Sustainability
   1) Preparation of a structured digital *dakwah* plan;
   2) Appointment or formation of a Digital *Dakwah* Team at PRM Tegalweru;
   3) Facilitation of premium accounts for PRM Tegalweru to create digital *dakwah* content.

f. Partner Participation
   1) Presenting all members of PRM Tegalweru in socialization and training;
   2) Provide existing *dakwah* documents or materials to be analyzed and digitized;
   3) Provide facilities and facilities during the activity.

g. Program Evaluation and Sustainability
   1) Formative evaluation is carried out at each stage (socialization, training, implementation) to ensure the achievement of short-term targets;
   2) The summative evaluation is carried out at the end of the program by measuring the amount of *dakwah* content that is digitized, the level of understanding of PRM Tegalweru members towards digital *dakwah* and cyber law and PRM Tegalweru readiness in implementing digital *dakwah* content in the next activity.

This study involved 30 participants, comprising members of the PRM Tegalweru and a guest speaker, who were directly engaged in the transition from conventional to digital *dakwah* methods. Data were collected through a before-and-after design, in which participants' initial condition, represented by their existing plans, readiness, and competencies in conventional *dakwah* delivery, was measured prior to the intervention, and subsequently compared with their condition after undergoing the digital *dakwah* transformation process.

The "before" measurement captured participants' baseline understanding, planning, and practice of *dakwah* through conventional

(offline, face-to-face) approaches, while the "after" measurement assessed the extent to which participants had adopted, planned, and implemented digital *dakwah* strategies (e.g., social media-based content, online community engagement) following the intervention. To determine whether observed changes could be attributed to the digital *dakwah* intervention rather than external factors, this study controlled for participants' prior digital literacy, length of involvement in the community, and frequency of training exposure, ensuring that variation in outcomes reflected the effect of the digital transformation process itself rather than confounding influences. This before-after comparison, supported by interviews and observation checklists, allows the study to substantiate claims about the effectiveness of the conventional-to-digital *dakwah* transition among the 30 participants.

Results and Discussion

Legal service activities at PRM Tegalweru have been scheduled through meetings and structured coordination carried out by service providers. In the meeting, it was decided that the activity would be carried out on February 21, 2026, at the Siti Aisyah PRM Tegalweru Mosque, by inviting expert speakers, namely Abi Sahli, an expert in branding and the use of digital content for *dakwah* needs. Other technical agendas will be formulated through a brief coordination and monthly routine meeting of PRM Tegalweru on Monday, February 2, 2026. Later, this activity will be a series of Ramadan messages for PRM Tegalweru.

A. Understanding Cyber-law, Legal Awareness and Digital Literacy

Cyber law refers to the body of legal principles governing activities, rights, and responsibilities in digital/online spaces, covering areas such as data protection, cybersecurity, digital rights, and online transactions. A useful theoretical lens comes from the distinction between cyber-libertarianism (minimal regulation, prioritizing individual freedom), cyber-paternalism (favoring state intervention to protect users), and cyber-

collectivism (balancing individual rights with community welfare), a framework that explains why different countries regulate online activity differently.[19]

Legal awareness (sometimes called legal consciousness) refers to how individuals understand, internalize, and act in relation to law, including whether they view law as relevant to their daily lives, whether they know their rights, and how they respond to legal information. A leading contemporary framework identifies three scholarly approaches to studying it: the Identity school (how legal consciousness shapes identity), the Hegemony school (how legal consciousness sustains or challenges power structures), and the Mobilization school (how it drives people to act or make claims).[20]

Digital literacy is conceptualized as a multi-dimensional set of skills needed to function effectively in digital environments, going beyond basic technical operation to include cognitive, social, and emotional competencies. The most widely cited framework identifies distinct skill types: photo-visual literacy (interpreting visual digital interfaces), information literacy (critically evaluating online information), branching/hypertextual literacy (navigating non-linear digital content), and socio-emotional literacy (safely and appropriately engaging in online social spaces).[21] The critical connective thread across all three theoretical and conceptual frameworks above reveals that the shift to digital *dakwah* is not simply a technological or content-strategy change, it is a legally bounded, awareness-dependent, and skill-mediated process. Each theory explains a different layer of why the conversion process succeeds, stalls, or varies across the participants, which is why all three frameworks are essential to the analysis.

B. Conventional *Dakwah*: Finding and Solve the Problem

[19] Adan Razaq, "Theoretical Foundations of Cyber Law : Comparative Perspectives on Privacy, Security, and Societal Needs," 2014.

[20] Lynette J. Chua and David M. Engel, "Legal Consciousness Reconsidered," *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 15, no. Volume 15, 2019 (October 2019): 335–53, https://doi.org/10.1146/ANNUREV-LAWSOCSCI-101518-042717/CITE/REFWORKS.

[21] Hasan Tinmaz, Mina Fanea-Ivanovici, and Hasnan Baber, "A Snapshot of Digital Literacy," *Library Hi Tech News* 40, no. 1 (January 2023): 20–23, https://doi.org/10.1108/LHTN-12-2021-0095.

Conventional mosque-based *dakwah* (religious preaching) is inherently constrained by rigid spatial and temporal boundaries, which severely limit its reach in a modern, fast-paced society.[22] A sermon delivered from a physical pulpit (*mimbar*) is restricted by the geographic catchment area and the physical square footage of the building, reaching only the congregation present at that specific hour. Furthermore, this traditional format requires absolute synchronicity; once the oral sermon concludes, the information vanishes without a native mechanism for the audience to archive, pause, or rewatch the content. This spatial and temporal friction creates an unequal distribution of knowledge, rendering conventional methods structurally incompatible with the lifestyle of urban, mobile populations who cannot always adhere to fixed schedules.

From a communicative perspective, the physical and architectural design of conventional religious spaces enforces a top-down, asymmetric model of information flow. The preacher functions as the absolute, centralized authority while the congregation remains entirely passive, lacking an immediate channel to ask clarifying questions, seek personalized counsel, or engage in dialogic learning. This structural passivity often alienates younger generations, such as Millennials and Generation Z, who thrive on collaborative and interactive digital engagement.[23] More critically, this one-way communication creates an accountability vacuum; if a conventional speaker disseminates misleading, unverified, or polarizing narratives, the audience lacks the means to fact-check or counter the claims in real time, allowing problematic ideas to go unchallenged within that localized space.

Thus, conventional mosque-based preaching presents distinct demographic and social comfort barriers that can inadvertently exclude segments of the broader public. Attending physical religious services demands compliance with strict social codes, specific attire, and localized institutional norms, which can feel intimidating or exclusionary to

[22] Rafinita Aditia and Evi Hafizah, "Transformation of the Spread of Islamic Messages through the Transition from Traditional Media to Digital Media in Contemporary Da'wah," *Jurnal Al Nahyan* 1, no. 1 (September 2024): 14–23, https://doi.org/10.58326/JAN.V1I1.209.

[23] Hew Wai Weng, "On-Offline *Dakwah*: Social Media and Islamic Preaching in Malaysia and Indonesia 1," in *Mediatized Religion in Asia* (Routledge, 2018), 89–104, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315170275-9.

individuals who are marginalized or still tentatively exploring their faith. Consequently, conventional *dakwah* predominantly caters to those who are already highly observant and integrated into the mosque's ecosystem. By failing to lower these social barriers, traditional methods struggle to reach broader, secularized, or hesitant demographics who are instead seeking accessible, non-judgmental guidance, a structural gap that highlights the necessity of transforming religious outreach through digital platforms. This transformation also tried to be carried out by this legal community services, which targeted PRM Tegalweru as a partner.

PRM Tegalweru as a partner in this legal service is included as a category of economically unproductive community groups (the general public), so some of the problems related to this legal service partner will be described as: low digital *dakwah* literacy. PRM Tegalweru may not be making full use of digital platforms for *dakwah* activities. This can include the absence of a dedicated team or competent human resources in information technology, lack of understanding in producing attractive *dakwah* content digitally and limitations in choosing appropriate *dakwah* media or platforms (e.g. YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, podcasts, etc.). Due to those problems, *dakwah* does not reach the younger generation or the wider community who are now more active in the digital world.[24]

The digital age has prompted a range of laws and regulations in Indonesia. This means that social media activities and *dakwah* content must comply with government regulations. Limited understanding of cyberlaw in digital activities has emerged as a significant problem. In the context of digital *dakwah*, there are many potential violations of the law that are not realized, such as: dissemination of content that has the potential to violate the IET Law (e.g. hate speech, hoaxes, copyright infringement).[25] The most critical concern is the lack of digital communication ethics in conveying *dakwah* messages, which creates potential legal exposure for

[24] Ibnu Kasir and Syahrol Awali, "Peran *Dakwah* Digital Dalam Menyebarkan Pesan Islam Di Era Modern," *Jurnal An-Nasyr: Jurnal Dakwah Dalam Mata Tinta* 11, no. 1 (June 2024): 59–68, https://doi.org/10.54621/JN.V11I1.842.

[25] Zaka Firma Aditya and Sholahuddin Al-Fatih, "Indonesian Constitutional Rights: Expressing and Purposing Opinions on the Internet," *International Journal of Human Rights* 25, no. 9 (2021): 1395–1419, https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2020.1826450.

asatidz and Muhammadiyah organizations that do not understand the legal limits of preaching in cyberspace.

Another issue is the lack of infrastructure and support systems for digital *dakwah*. PRM Tegalweru likely faces technical obstacles and inadequate facilities, such as: absence of adequate video recording or editing tools and lack of access to training or technical assistance. These problems have slowed innovation in *dakwah* methods, leaving them out of step with the times. A final concern relates to *dakwah* strategies relevant to the digital era. PRM Tegalweru may not have a targeted digital *dakwah* strategy, for example: there is no planning of *dakwah* content based on the needs of the audience, lack of integration of digital *dakwah* with conventional or offline *dakwah* activities. *Dakwah* becomes less effective, and its results are difficult to gauge.

On the other hand, *dakwah* on social media is fully permissible in Indonesia, backed by the constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech and religion. Over the last decade, it has evolved into a vital pillar of the nation's contemporary digital landscape, allowing religious leaders to connect with massive public audiences. However, this constitutional freedom is not absolute and must strictly operate within the boundaries of Indonesian positive law and formal state regulations.

The primary legal constraint governing digital preaching is the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE),[26] particularly its provisions regarding hate speech and inter-group hostility (SARA). While the law does not restrict the act of preaching itself, it strictly penalizes any online content intended to incite hatred or discrimination against individuals based on ethnicity, race, or religion. Furthermore, digital *dakwah* must comply with the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP) concerning religious blasphemy,[27] meaning sermons that actively insult other faiths or promote public incitement can lead to direct criminal prosecution.

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[26] Usman Hamid, "UU ITE Dan Merosotnya Kebebasan Berekspresi Individu Di Indonesia," The Conversation, 2019.

[27] Faisal et al., "Genuine Paradigm of Criminal Justice: Rethinking Penal Reform within Indonesia New Criminal Code," *Cogent Social Sciences* 10, no. 1 (2024): 15, https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2301634.

Beyond statutory law, digital preaching is governed by a well-established socio-legal framework rooted in Indonesia's mainstream religious authorities. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued Fatwa No. 24 of 2017 concerning digital interactions,[28] which mandates that social media use must serve ethical, constructive purposes. This edict strictly forbids the use of religious content as a vehicle for slander (*fitnah*), hoaxes, or polarization, while reinforcing the Quranic principle of *tabayyun* (rigorous verification) before sharing information.

Concurrently, the Ministry of Religious Affairs heavily promotes the paradigm of *Moderasi Beragama* (Religious Moderation) within digital spaces. This policy encourages online *dakwah* to remain inclusive, culturally sensitive, and firmly aligned with the state philosophy of Pancasila. Ultimately, Indonesia's cyber-paternalist approach welcomes social media preaching as a positive force for social development, provided it does not disrupt public order or threaten the country's pluralistic harmony.

So, through this legal service, it is hoped that benefits will be obtained that answer the above problems, namely to increase digital *dakwah* literacy, increase insight into cyber law in the digital era, increase supporting infrastructure for digital *dakwah* and provide alternative solutions and effective digital *dakwah* strategies

C. Promoting *Dakwah* Digital in PRM Tegalweru

The theoretical framework of cyberlaw in Indonesia anchors itself on a fundamental tension between global digital boundaries and national sovereignty. At its core, the Indonesian legal framework rejects classical cyber-libertarianism, which views the internet as an unregulable, borderless realm. Instead, it adopts a strict cyber-paternalism paradigm. This structural perspective allows the state to assert broad extraterritorial sovereignty over any digital actions or infrastructures that directly affect its national interests

[28] Indra Satriani and Rafinita, "Eksistensi Fatwa MUI No. 24 Tahun 2017 Sebagai Pedoman Dalam Penggunaan Media Sosial Bagi Masyarakat Islam," *Al Qodiri : Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 18, no. 1 (April 2020): 129–48.

or citizens, a jurisdictional principle formally codified under Article 2 of the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE).[29]

To analyze how this virtual space is regulated in practice, modern legal scholarship in Indonesia frequently incorporates Lawrence Lessig's Code Theory.[30] Lessig's model argues that behavior in cyberspace is governed by a dynamic network of four distinct structural forces: formal law, social norms, market dynamics, and technological architecture. Within the Indonesian context, this theoretical balance highlights the limitations of using state legislation alone to curb digital threats. It demonstrates that fighting cybercrime or data breaches effectively requires a synchronized effort where standard statutory rules are augmented by algorithmic content filtering, technical architecture overseen by the state, and a continuous push to reshape netizen social culture through digital literacy.

Domestically, these global digital concepts are filtered through Indonesia's foundational legal philosophy: Mochtar Kusumaatmadja's Theory of Legal Development (*Teori Hukum Pembangunan*).[31] Adapted from the Western concept of law as an instrument of social engineering, this original Indonesian theory dictates that legislation must not merely act as a passive, punitive text that reacts to crimes. Rather, it must serve as a proactive tool to direct, accelerate, and safeguard social and economic progress. Consequently, newer frameworks like the Personal Data Protection Law (UU PDP) or guidelines on Artificial Intelligence are conceptually justified under this theory as mandatory socio-legal instruments designed to structure a secure digital economy while actively protecting the fundamental rights of modern citizens.

Ultimately, contemporary Indonesian cyberlaw research applies these paradigms alongside Gustav Radbruch's classic legal values to balance the

[29] Adelina Sitanggang et al., "Penegakan Undang-Undang ITE Terhadap Kasus Judi Online," *Mediation: Journal of Law* 2, no. 4 (December 2023): 16–22, https://doi.org/10.51178/MJOL.V2I4.1620.

[30] Lawrence Lessig, "The Law of the Horse: What Cyberlaw Might Teach," *Harvard Law Review* 113, no. 2 (December 1999): 501, https://doi.org/10.2307/1342331.

[31] Nor Fadillah, "Tinjauan Teori Hukum Pembangunan Mochtar Kusumaatmadja Dalam Undang-Undang Ibu Kota Negara (IKN)," *Supremasi Hukum: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Hukum* 11, no. 1 (August 2022): 45–65, https://doi.org/10.14421/SH.V11I1.2559.

triad of justice, utility, and predictability.[32] Scholars consistently invoke the principle of legal certainty (*kepastian hukum*) to critique ambiguous clauses (commonly termed *pasal karet*) within the UU ITE that fail the lex certa standard of clarity and precision. By combining Radbruch's certainty metrics with constitutional principles, current academic literature builds a strong theoretical case for "digital sovereignty" (*kedaulatan digital*), arguing that data generated within the nation must be structurally governed as a protected public asset under state authority.

As a theoretical framework, cyberlaw has also grown into a productive lens for understanding the *dakwah* sector. The implementation of cyber-law-based digital *dakwah* assistance at the Muhammadiyah Branch Executive (PRM) Tegalweru Malang Regency is projected to produce significant changes both in terms of human resource capacity, *dakwah* governance, and legal awareness in the use of digital space. This program is expected not only to have a short-term impact in the form of increasing knowledge, but also to produce sustainable real achievements in digital *dakwah* practices at the branch level.

Across the globe, the rapid intersection of technology and faith has forced legal and religious institutions to innovate, resulting in highly successful models of digital preaching that balance mass reach with structural accountability. By moving beyond a simple transfer of text onto digital screens, successful global practices demonstrate that online spiritual outreach can become a profound force for positive social engineering, digital literacy, and civic harmony. These models offer vital insights for pluralistic nations navigating the tensions between constitutional freedoms and state regulatory frameworks.

In Singapore, the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) provides a premier benchmark for institutionalized digital preaching.[33] MUIS has masterfully navigated the digital public sphere by establishing a centralized online repository and active social media presence that delivers

[32] Agus Setiawan, "Penalaran Hukum Yang Mampu Mewujudkan Tujuan Hukum Secara Proporsional," *Jurnal Hukum Mimbar Justitia* 3, no. 2 (2017): 204, https://doi.org/10.35194/jhmj.v3i2.257.

[33] Mohd Murat Bin Md Aris, "When Dispute Threatens Harmony in the Public Sphere: Discerning the Dynamics of State-Religion Relation with Particular Reference to Singapore's Muslim Scholars" (University of Cape Town, 2022).

contextualized religious guidance tailored for a diverse, urban minority populace. Rather than leaving digital content creation entirely to unregulated algorithmic forces, MUIS proactively trains religious teachers through the Asatizah Recognition Scheme (ARS), ensuring they possess the digital literacy required to curate moderate, inclusive, and socially cohesive messaging online. This practice successfully satisfies the public's cognitive and spiritual needs while systematically neutralizing the threat of online radicalization or foreign extremist influences before they can destabilize horizontal public order.

Moving to the Middle East, the United Arab Emirates has pioneered a highly efficient framework of state-guided digital preaching that treats online religious discourse as an instrument of national development. The General Authority of Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Awqaf) uses advanced multi-channel digital networks, including interactive mobile applications and smart streaming services, to broadcast unified, moderate religious values.[34] The UAE model achieves success by directly linking digital preaching with modern civic virtues, using online sermons to actively promote tolerance, public health initiatives, and national security values. By establishing a robust technological infrastructure and providing clear and accessible communication channels, these institutions have been able to reduce demographic barriers, encourage broader public engagement, particularly among technology-savvy younger generations, and ensure effective institutional oversight and legal certainty.[35]

In Western contexts, the success of transnational digital platforms like Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research highlights the power of hybrid, peer-reviewed digital outreach.[36] Operating primarily out of the United States but commanding a global audience, Yaqeen addresses the "flatness of authority" crisis by subjecting all of its digital videos, infographics, and essays to a rigorous internal academic review process before publication.

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[34] Sofien Bessais, Habeebullah Zakariyah, and Azman Mohd Noor, "The Possibility of Establishing an Endowment (Waqf) from the Islamic Financial Institutions' Provisioned Funds in the United Arab Emirates," *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management* 17, no. 6 (October 2024): 1120–35, https://doi.org/10.1108/IMEFM-12-2023-0466.

[35] Rofi Wahanisa et al., "Achieving Public Information Transparency in The Dissemination of Local Regulations," *Yuridika* 38, no. 3 (2023), https://doi.org/10.20473/ydk.v38i3.48345.

[36] Craig Considine, *The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View*, 2020.

This practice directly counters the algorithmic tendency to prioritize emotional provocation over intellectual depth. By producing highly sophisticated, visually engaging content that dismantles extremist narratives while simultaneously addressing modern philosophical doubts, they have democratized high-quality religious education for diaspora communities worldwide, demonstrating that online preaching can achieve viral reach without sacrificing intellectual or ethical integrity.

Ultimately, these international best practices reveal that the most successful digital preaching frameworks do not choose between unregulated freedom and oppressive censorship. Instead, they leverage advanced technical architecture, prioritize institutional vetting, and align spiritual content with broader civic development goals. By embedding structural accountability directly into digital workflows, these global models effectively mitigate the risks of online polarization and legal infractions, offering a sustainable blueprint for using digital networks to foster both individual spiritual fulfillment and national public harmony.

As noted above in the discussion of best practices for digital *dakwah* implementation, the first predicted outcome is an increase in digital literacy and understanding of cyber law among PRM Tegalweru administrators and cadres. Through structured mentoring, participants are expected to understand the basic principles of cyber law, such as restrictions on freedom of expression,[37] digital media ethics,[38] personal data protection,[39] and legal responsibility for *dakwah* content produced and disseminated. This increase in understanding will be reflected in the ability of participants to sort information, compile legally safe *dakwah* content, and avoid digital practices that have the potential to violate laws and regulations. This legal service is documented in the flyer below.

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[37] Rahayu Rahayu et al., "Human Rights Defenders in Indonesia's Digital Age: Navigating Limited Spaces in the Quest for Digital Democracy," *Sriwijaya Law Review*, July 2024, 358–75, https://doi.org/10.28946/slrev.Vol8.Iss2.3860.pp358-375.

[38] Nase, Holina, and Syah, "Phenomenon of Digital Da'wah: Analysis of Religious Moderation and the Ethics of Da'wah Communication on Social Media."

[39] Relys Sandi Ariani, Luna Dezeana Ticoalu, and Herlin Sri Wahyuni, "Mengoptimalkan Peran Lembaga Perfilman Indonesia: Analisis Aspek Hak Cipta Terhadap Praktik Siaran Video Ilegal," *Jurnal Kajian Pembaruan Hukum* 1, no. 2 (July 2021): 175, https://doi.org/10.19184/jkph.v1i2.24475.



Figure 1. Digital *Dakwah* Workshop Flyer

The next concrete outcome is the formation of a better-managed digital *dakwah* system within PRM Tegalweru. The mentoring program is predicted to encourage the birth of a branch-level digital *dakwah* team or unit that has a clear division of roles, ranging from content planners, social media managers, to ethics and legal compliance supervisors . The existence of this team is an important indicator that digital *dakwah* is no longer individual and sporadic, but institutionalized in the organizational structure of the branches. The audience and activities of this legal service at PRM Tegalweru are shown below.

In addition, this program is expected to produce real products in the form of digital *dakwah* guidelines based on cyber law. This guideline serves as a practical reference for administrators and cadres in producing and disseminating *dakwah* content in digital media. The existence of the document is a concrete achievement that can be used sustainably, even replicated by other branches of Muhammadiyah that have similar characteristics.

In terms of *dakwah* practice, this assistance is predicted to improve the quality and reach of PRM Tegalweru *dakwah* in the digital space. The resulting *dakwah* content is expected to be more systematic, educational, moderate, and in accordance with progressive Islamic values. The optimal use of social media and digital platforms will expand the audience of *dakwah,* not only limited to local worshippers, but also the wider community. This achievement can be measured through increasing the intensity of content uploads, audience interaction, and consistency of the *dakwah* message conveyed.

Another expected impact is a decrease in the potential for legal risks and social conflicts due to digital *dakwah* activities. With the increasing awareness of cyber law, PRM Tegalweru administrators and cadres are predicted to be more careful and responsible in digital media. This is an important real achievement, considering that cyberspace often raises legal problems and social polarization if not managed wisely.

In the medium term, this cyber law-based digital *dakwah* assistance is projected to strengthen the role of PRM Tegalweru as a *dakwah* center that is adaptive to technological developments, as well as a model of best practice for other Muhammadiyah branches. Thus, the results and achievements of this program not only have an impact on increasing the internal capacity of the organization, but also contribute to strengthening Islamic *dakwah* that is ethical, progressive, and law-abiding in the digital era. The result of this legal service already published in several online news, such as;

1. https://fh.umm.ac.id/kuatkan-*dakwah*-via-medsos-tim-pkm-fh-umm-dampingi-prm-tegalweru/.
2. https://www.malanghub.com/news/dosen-fh-umm-berikan-pendampingan-*dakwah*-digital-di-prm-tegalweru.

The implementation of digital *dakwah* (religious preaching, as well as implemented in PRM Tegalweru above) through social media platforms has fundamentally democratized the dissemination of religious knowledge, dismantling traditional, hierarchical monopolies on spiritual authority. Historically, access to religious interpretation was concentrated within centralized, geographically bound institutions and elite groups. By transforming social media into a modern digital agora, digital platforms allow a highly diverse array of moderate and progressive voices to actively participate in the public sphere.[40] Legal literacy constitutes an important instrument for strengthening community capacity by enhancing public understanding of applicable legal frameworks and enabling individuals to manage community affairs in accordance with the law.[41] In this regard, the development of an inclusive model of communicative action can further lower barriers to public access to legal and religious literacy, while fostering broader community engagement and providing constructive, peaceful counter-narratives to extremist ideologies. Through this approach, literacy serves not only as a means of increasing public awareness but also as a foundation for strengthening social resilience, inclusivity, and respect for the rule of law.

Furthermore, social media preaching achieves complete temporal and spatial transcendence, removing the physical friction points inherent to traditional brick-and-mortar pulpits. Boundless digital networks ensure that a single sermon or ethical teaching can be permanently archived, asynchronously accessed, and instantaneously shared across fluid national borders. This operational shift aligns closely with the dynamics of a globalized network society, where localized values spread freely across transnational spaces, granting remote rural communities and global diaspora populations identical, high-quality access to mainstream religious guidance and civic values.

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[40] Bayu Dwi Anggono et al., "Interrogating the Legal Foundations of Digital Transformation: Balancing Economic Growth and Social Welfare in the Era of Disruption," *Volksgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Konstitusi* 8, no. 1 (2025): 191–211, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24090/volksgeist.v8i1.12211.

[41] Suhadi Suhadi et al., "Enhancing Nazir Capacity through Legal Literacy of Land Trust to Ensure Legal Certainty in Waqf Land Management," *Jurnal Pengabdian Hukum Indonesia* 7, no. 2 (2024), https://doi.org/10.15294/jphi.v7i2.6693.

From a structural perspective, digital *dakwah* operates as a highly potent instrument of social engineering within Indonesia's unique socio-legal landscape. Because digital preachers wield massive, direct public engagement, their platforms frequently serve as vehicles for distributing vital civic virtues, public health initiatives, and legal awareness campaigns. When structural religious values are fused with public education on topics like environmental conservation or anti-corruption, social media preaching directly reinforces Mochtar Kusumaatmadja's Theory of Legal Development (*Teori Hukum Pembangunan*). It reshapes societal behavior from within, using voluntary religious compliance to reinforce state statutory goals and maintain horizontal public order.

Additionally, the transition to digital spaces introduces a mechanism of hyper-personalization and interactive community engagement that traditional one-way media completely lacks. Leveraging algorithmic curation and native platform features like live-streaming, comments, and direct messaging, creators can continuously tailor their communication styles to resonate with specific demographics, particularly younger generations. This turns abstract theological concepts into practical, localized solutions for daily crises, allowing users to actively seek out and engage with religious content to meet immediate cognitive and social needs, thereby building highly resilient virtual support networks.

Ultimately, these combined factors reveal that the implementation of digital preaching acts as a transformative societal catalyst rather than a mere change in medium. While it introduces complex regulatory responsibilities under Indonesia's paternalistic cyberlaw framework, such as navigating the strict boundaries of the UU ITE, the fundamental socio-legal benefits remain profound. By merging constitutional freedoms with systemic digital outreach, social media preaching successfully balances individual spiritual expression with broader national interests, driving both digital literacy and societal development forward in a pluralistic state.

Conclusion

The cyber law-based digital *dakwah* mentoring program at the PRM Tegalweru in Malang Regency is a strategic effort to address the challenges of *dakwah* in the digital era. This program strengthens the capacity of PRM administrators and members to use digital media wisely, ethically, and in accordance with the law. By improving digital literacy and understanding of cyber law, *dakwah* can not only reach a wider audience but also avoid potential legal risks and social conflict. This mentoring program encourages the development of a more structured, collaborative, and sustainable digital *dakwah* governance system, in line with the progressive Islamic values that characterize Muhammadiyah's *dakwah.*

To ensure the sustainability of this program, it is recommended that PRM Tegalweru establish and strengthen a permanent digital *dakwah* team and develop internal guidelines as a reference for digital media use. Continued mentoring activities should be conducted periodically, particularly to keep abreast of developments in cyber law and digital technology regulations. In addition, synergy is needed with Muhammadiyah Branch Leadership, Muhammadiyah Business Units, and related stakeholders to expand the reach and replication of good practices of cyber law-based digital preaching at a wider level.

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