



## Role of Information Technology on Preaching Islam (Da'wah)

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**Abstract:** Since the digital age came into existence, the whole societal way of preaching religion have been altered in a better way. The internet became a resourceful source where most people can engage their thoughts, preach and disseminate their teachings. Many religious background people have already been engaged in the information technology to promote their religious teachings. The website development and preaching, utilization of social media and promoting religious teachings through mobile are one of the channels. Da'wah or Islamic preaching has been on such online medium and information technology that had played a vital role in distributing it in various regions around the world. It's like a global preaching technique where one can invite anyone on Da'wah without caring for distance, cost or resource. With that, online Da'wah courses, websites and blogs are the tools of preaching Islam and act as an effective way to promote them. This research is proposing the positive role of Information technology with a discussion on limitations which can be described in comparative way. That way, this research outlines the role of Information technology and its effectiveness on preaching of Da'wah in descriptive way.

**Keywords:** Da'wah, Information technology, Advantages and Limitations.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Da'wah or Islamic way of preaching is the Quranic acceptable way of inviting anyone into Islam, distributing the knowledge of Islam, disseminating Islamic principles and promoting Islam. Da'wah is an Arabic term that has been introduced in Quran in Surah Al rum chapter 30:25 which means to summon or to invite. Da'wah is the Islamic way to preach which involves the dissemination of Islamic principles to reinstate the true meaning of Islam. The literal implication of Da'wah is defined by Zeinab Al Ashry (2014) as:

*"When Da'wah is used in combination with Islam it means to invite mankind to submit to Allah willingly, meaning to worship Him alone, follow His Straight Path, and keep away from all sorts of disbeliefs and evil."*[4]

The traditional way of Da'wah had been quite evident as the whole group of Islamic scholars use to move with the vision of converting other people towards Islam and making them more close to the teachings of Islam. However, since the digitization of life, the ways of preaching and other social ways changed dramatically ([7],[3]). Now new roles of Information and technology came into existence and it played a vital role in globalizing the effect. This has provided new state of the art, opportunities and changes in the act of preaching. The traditional way of door to door preaching has been replaced by new ways of information technological roles in this century. Islamic Da'wah derives its name from the aspiration of return on sources; i.e., the Quran, the Sunnah (tradition of the Prophet, sayings and deeds of Muhammad) and the Shari'ah (the revealed law) [17]. The trend of Globalization also impact on the Da'wah and it might be the first reason why it would be the most prominent reason above all. Globalization is experienced differently in developed countries than in underdeveloped countries or developing, as it prefers to call them now, or the countries on the periphery. This led to the difference of acceptance in terms of positive impact and negative impact of Information technology on the preaching of Islam. In this perspective, this research paper would outline the role of Information technology on Da'wah in comparative way.

### II. POSITIVE ROLE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The digital age widen the access to each other and lower the gap between two people. Thus creating the opportunities to meet each other and moving with the aim of disseminating the positivity of Islam. For that, different roles of Information technology includes following main point involving:

#### **Globalizing Da'wah:**

With the help of online media and internet, the whole world has become a global image. Now, education, news and other mediums can be transferred from one end to another in no time. This led to the development in Da'wah

as many Islamic scholars started a well formed trend which involves the factor of using this global trend [11]. This trend includes online videos of Da'wah, website links, different blogs and social media platform (Twitter and Facebook majorly) in distributing the teachings of Islam.

This way, the teaching of Islam's were preached through the channel of Internet and Global media where it promoted the factors of showing the positive and enlightened side of Islam. In the new context of socio-political globalization, this must take into account how many citizens of the region are adapting ideological and behavioral guidelines created by Islamic Scholars through Da'wah in other times in order to adapt them to their needs in the world that surrounds them [6]. The new information technologies and communication are allowing that these transformations occur very quickly and with a growing degree of influence of IT in different social structures. This globalization of Da'wah explain the ideological projection that refers to integrating Islam as instrument of action, mobilization or identification policy. This way it would portray the positivity of Islam and it would also help in reducing the misconception about Islam worldwide. This globalization trend would reach the farthest corner around the world with just the medium of internet, giving a solid ground exposure.

### ***Humongous Promotion:***

Information technology has connected the world in the form of global village and like globalization, online medium can act as a viable promotion technique ([18],[13]). Many Islamic scholars like Mufti Ismael Menk, Noman Ali Khan, Bilal Philips and so many are using social media as a way to promote Da'wah. The role of information has adjoined the distance and users with one another as someone sitting in Bangladesh can listen to a *Bayyan* from Islamic scholar from America. Da'wah acquires currently modern, eclectic forms of expression and, even, iconoclasts. It can manifest itself in personal options that affect consumer habits or rules of behavior, in forms cultural identification, in styles of doing business, etc. Thus this influence the consumer group or in this case the audience towards Islamic preaching and information and technology promotes such action [14].

It is clear that, online medium like internet, social media and now mobile app have granted a huge market of accessibility. More than 1.6 billion Muslims reside around the world and this huge audience can access the means. These information technological tools have promote on various sectors and Islamic preaching came into deliverance. For these Islamic scholars, Da'wah is not only a creed, but a system that encompasses all of the social, political, legal and economic elements that they should guide the life of the Muslims and society [6].

Furthermore, online medium have disseminated a small section of blog or Da'wah video around the world and it is available on YouTube. So now a person regardless of his creed, religion, ethnicity or even age group can simply access the Da'wah videos. This act as a promotional campaign with the help of Information technology, distributing Da'wah at every corner of the world.

### ***Providing Accessibility:***

Like the promotion technique, providing accessibility involves different technological inventions which have granted this technique. As explained, more than 1.6 Muslims reside in various corners around the world and they require an accessibility towards Da'wah. The fundamental principle of Da'wah is to invite someone through any accessible medium and latest technologies have provided a hallmark accessibility ([1],[16]). Information technological development included the social media and online media have mostly impacted on improving the accessibility and transforming the new structures of accessible Da'wah videos, blogs and lectures.

The processes of transformation of Islamic preaching have been important and continuous, and have been marked by generational changes, the relations with the influence of technological power and regional geopolitical contexts around the world. This created the abilities of accessibility of such Islamic preaching and latest technological development like E-Quran or mobile apps have provided such accessible tools. Information technologies are moving towards such hallmark accessible achievements which Muslim world most required in terms of Da'wah. This accessibility aren't limited to just Muslims as millions of non-Muslim can be invited to study about Islam and learn a substantial amount of information related to it [16].

This accessibility might be the reason of promoting and globalizing the Da'wah on international level and against other religions, Islam has larger audience. Thus accessibility can be the hallmark achievement behind the Islamic promotion around the world and since the worst imagery of Muslims after 9/11, it can help in reducing that. Da'wah is the first and far most, the true projection of Islam as it can invite several non-Muslim's to see the positivity of Islam and its fundamental principles.

### ***Technological evolution:***

Muslim societies around the globe are living large transformations during the last quarter of a century as a result of its internal technological evolution and globalization processes. One of the results has been that they achieved that the Islamic Scholars had fostered about identities and new ways of Islamic preaching. Their Da'wah objective was to attract followers and to achieve Islamic promotion, in such a way that they made this as a promotional project on global level [8].

The new Islamic scholars are acquiring various forms of technological tool in their preaching technique, coping up with the technological evolution around the world. Thus, the development of technology and IT digital age has evolved the Da'wah in form of modernization, describing the digital evolution [12]. However, another form of Da'wah activism influenced from social media or technology tools include a modern and more effective form of Islamic preaching.

Da'wah activism is undergoing transformation processes accelerated in different directions. These transformations have a common trait is that they are linked to the processes of globalization that they call into question the traditional border. These borders are adjoined in the global technological evolution and thus new methods or "modern Da'wah" would emerge. As indicated by Egdunas Raciuis, the global technological culture in particular has created Muslim identities in transnational way, enabling politically that they have allowed to tell that Islamic preaching has become an integral part of the culture and society [15]. Thus new technological reforms in Muslim society as well as culture would move towards evolution where every social aspects would be influenced by technology.

#### ***Better Projection of Islam:***

Conclusively, the best part of the role of Information technology on Islamic preaching would be the best imagery of Islam and its principles. Muslims around the world suffered the worst fate after 9/11 and different Islamic scholars are trying to show the true meaning of Islam. Information technology can be a viable tool in disseminating the best projection of Islam against the terrorist projection of Islam [2]. Thus, the stereotyping of Islam can also be reduced and creating opportunities for betterment of Da'wah. This is most effective way of describing the beautiful image of Islam and help in reducing the misconception related to it.

### **III. NEGATIVE IMPACT**

Information technology is a collection of several tools to promote, gain access and disseminate different forms of valuable tools. However, the wrong utilization of Information technology can also lead to some worst forms of impact on the Da'wah and ultimately on Islam. For that, this research paper includes the negative role of Information technology and how it can involve in creating challenges for the Islamic Preaching. Information technologies are turning to new forms of organization to deal with the new challenges that presented in an increasingly globalized world. This involves the challenges of misconception, false information, wrong projection and many more described below:

#### ***Misconception in Islamic Principles:***

Internet is a valued tool to disseminate every bit of information around the world and as explain above, it can be a valued tool against other traditional ways. Every bit of information included in Da'wah can be distributed through internet, mobile apps, social media and other technological mediums. In the same way, misconception and misinformation can also be spread through Internet media, creating problems in Da'wah. This led to the loss of real projection of Islam and reducing the validated information associated with the Da'wah.

Furthermore, it would led to the loss of cultural identity, that it replaces the globalization, which manifests itself, inter alia, the use of words in other languages and the tendency to replace the cultural heritage. This misconception would create false cultural identity about Islam and enemies of Islam can manipulate it in different way [4]. This would either create "*Bidd'ah*" which means invention in Islam and would lead to misconception associated with the Islamic principles. This wrong information might impact on religiosity about Islam and alarmingly, creating more problems on Global scale.

Religiosity means that people experience the relationship with religion and their faith. The growing role of information technology in contemporary Muslim societies has been accompanied a process of individualization of religious beliefs, which It has led to greater diversity within Islam, both in the field practices and in its social and political dimension. This individualization faith implies that people have a few more options to select, modify and adapt their ways of believing and express their beliefs ([10],[2]). Thus this lead to the invention of *Bidd'ah* and worsening the situation for Muslim community around the world. This need to be handled carefully otherwise the results would be catastrophic and the damage of false and misinformed image lurked the Muslim society.

Other modern phenomenon that is reflection and cause of the rise of misconception is the proliferation of Islamism or terrorist Islamic groups in different channels of television broadcast via satellite and the Internet. Some of them are banned religious scholars and have a theological discourse with continuous references to traditional false sources. These banned scholars also project the false imagery of Islam and it should have to be dealt with utmost validity to describe the best and pure reflection of Islam.

### **IV. RECOMMENDATION STRATEGIES**

Considering the negative role in form of misconception, creation of *Bidd'ah*, and false projection of Islam because of terrorist Islamism, there can be certain recommended strategies that describe a valued role of Information technology [2]. As explained descriptively in the positive role of Information technology on Islam, this research

would propose a tabular strategies to improve reliability/validity, pure reflection, real projection and an effective Da'wah. These strategies are tabularized as below:

**Table I: Recommended strategies**

Strategy	Impact	Remarks
Active Da'wah promotion on online medium	Promotion	This active Da'wah promotion would require a highly engaged team on online medium including website, social media, blogs and YouTube channels to describe the positivity of Islam [1]. With that, it can also challenge the misinformed part of Da'wah if they find anyone on online portal.
Reliable Da'wah websites, blogs and apps	Reliability and Validity	Reliable Da'wah websites should have to be confirmed by local or global Da'wah centers and several Islamic scholars should have to endorsed the lesson and teachings taught through such online mediums. This would greatly improve the reliability of such online Islamic preaching and would reduce misconception about Da'wah ([5],[11]).
Endorsement from global Da'wah centers	Validity	Global Da'wah centers and Islamic scholars must endorse every Da'wah website or blog they can find for the betterment of Islamic preaching [16]. This is most needed for the Islamic scholars to endorse their Da'wah page and social media profiles which can be a source to create misconception about Islam and its fundamental teachings.
Controlled globalization	Validity and real projection of Islam	While Da'wah fundamentals are inspired by the past and looking into the origins of Islam the bases, real fundamentals should prevail in the societies of today globalization [7]. However, is directed towards the future and it shouldn't involve inventions like Bidd'ah.
Future technological trends implication	Globalization and trends	Modern Da'wah should have to be evolved with time and structure with valid features. This would distribute the positivity of Islam around the corners of the world and produce better results in the coming years and would be more effective than previous approaches in the Islamic preaching.

## V. Conclusion

Islamic preaching is a process of continuous motion and moving with the societal norms and influencing others in most distinguish way of life. Traditional methods of Da'wah are getting outdated and now the need of new and modern way of Da'wah needs to be implemented. The fact that the religious field has diversified and become more self-employed has an important consequence and is that the authorities' religious traditional have been losing influence and credibility of mass populations ([12],[9]). With that, the issue of misconception and false projection of Da'wah have been explained concretely above, describing how worst it projects on the Islamic Da'wah. Comparing these two, the role of technology in comparative way includes both the advantages and disadvantages. Thus, the need of this research to present the comparative analysis of the role of Information technology on Da'wah and how different Islamic scholars are contributing towards it.

These scholars have utilized the technology of cyberspace, online medium and internet to provide modern Da'wah techniques. In parallel, there has been a proliferation of individuals that have a great religious influence on believers, as some Islamic scholars, Cyber-muftis, Imams of neighborhood mosques and entrepreneurs that they promoted Da'wah [5]. This cyberspace influence, disseminated the positivity about Islam through modern techniques of Da'wah which become most famous on various accounts.

Furthermore, modern communication technologies and innovations in the construction of cultural codes and structures solidarity and mutual support have created a sense of Modern Da'wah. It involves several new positive roles of globalization, more accessibility, humongous promotion and better projection of Muslim world. Da'wah is the invitation doctrine in Quran and with modern technologies, this doctrine can be disseminated around the world with the aim of inviting all people under the oneness of Muslim world.

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