

***SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS UTILIZATION FOR DA'WAH BY SELECTED MUSLIM SCHOLARS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA***

**MEDIA SOSIAL DAN PEMANFAATANNYA UNTUK DAKWAH OLEH UMAT MUSLIM TERPILIH DI NIGERIA UTARA**

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**Muhammad Maga Sule**

[mohammed.maga@yahoo.com](mailto:mohammed.maga@yahoo.com)

*Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria*

**Lawal Abdulkareem**

[lawalimail@gmail.com](mailto:lawalimail@gmail.com)

*Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria*

**Abstract**

*Social media has become an integral component of Muslims' personal and public lives throughout the world. The paper looked at how selected Muslim scholars used social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter, YouTube, and Zoom to conduct Da'wah in Northern Nigeria, using a sample of scholars from the three geopolitical zones of Northern Nigeria, namely the North-West, North-Central, and North-East. The goal of this study is to see how Muslim academics in Northern Nigeria use social media for Da'wah. Northern Nigeria was chosen for this study because it is a crucial location with a long history of Islamic growth. In-depth surveys of various pages/channels on social media platforms were surveyed, and this was supplemented with observation and depth interviews to get data. The researchers chose twenty-one scholars for the study and conducted a poll on their different social media pages/channels to determine their level of social media technology use for Da'wah. The study's findings indicated that the sampled Muslim scholars found it convenient to electronically offer their teachings and to upload video and audio of their Da'wah lectures on various social media platforms. According to the findings, Muslim scholars should continue to use social media platforms to assist present the image of Islam and Muslims.*

**Keywords:** *Social media, Da'wah, Utilization, Muslim Scholars, Northern Nigeria*



## Abstrak

*Media sosial telah menjadi komponen integral dari kehidupan pribadi dan publik umat Islam di seluruh dunia. Makalah ini melihat bagaimana ulama Muslim terpilih menggunakan platform media sosial seperti Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter, YouTube, dan Zoom untuk melakukan Dakwah di Nigeria Utara, menggunakan sampel ulama dari tiga zona geopolitik Nigeria Utara, yaitu Utara-Barat, Utara-Tengah, dan Timur Laut. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk melihat bagaimana akademisi Muslim di Nigeria Utara menggunakan media sosial untuk berdakwah. Nigeria Utara dipilih untuk penelitian ini karena merupakan lokasi penting dengan sejarah panjang pertumbuhan Islam. Survei mendalam dari berbagai halaman/channel di platform media sosial disurvei, dan ini dilengkapi dengan observasi dan wawancara mendalam untuk mendapatkan data. Para peneliti memilih dua puluh satu ulama untuk penelitian ini dan melakukan jajak pendapat di halaman/saluran media sosial mereka yang berbeda untuk menentukan tingkat penggunaan teknologi media sosial mereka untuk Dakwah. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa para cendekiawan Muslim sampel merasa nyaman untuk menawarkan ajaran mereka secara elektronik dan mengunggah video dan audio ceramah Dakwah mereka di berbagai platform media sosial. Menurut temuan tersebut, cendekiawan Muslim harus terus menggunakan platform media sosial untuk membantu menghadirkan citra Islam dan Muslim.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Media Sosial, Da'wah, Penggunaan, Ulama Muslim, Nigeria Utara*

## A. Introduction

In recent years, interactions between humans have completely changed with computers and networks' appearance and development. "Social relationships are going to start at the beginning of the web. People communicate, build relationships using social networks."<sup>1</sup> Today, social media is being adopted and used in a variety of areas of human existence. Muslims are no different from people from other societies, which has increased social media trends in the last few years. It has brought changes that can significantly impact the individual and group level of Muslim society. "Social media is easy to use, easy to learn and can communicate public universality of speed."<sup>2</sup>

Modern social media is an important element of our lives since it promotes our culturally varied world's connection and interdependence. People may communicate and participate with information that is easily accessible on the Internet using media for social interaction. In today's

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<sup>1</sup> Albert, Bandura. "Social foundations of thought and action", *Englewood Cliffs, NJ*, (1986): 66.

<sup>2</sup> N. I. Habib, The importance of social media and its side effects, *Daily Jugantor*. 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.jugantor.com/todays-paper/subeditorial/116774/> on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

society, there are a rising number of Internet users, so new Social Media has become more prevalent in daily patterns and routines. “Communication in these online contexts promotes interactive dialogues that build an understanding of different points of view. New social media means that everyone is a publisher and everyone is a critic. In Social Media, people have the opportunity to express their opinions to the public and participate in conversations and dialogue through a common virtual medium.”<sup>3</sup>

Social media is used for Islamic *Da'wah* and besides being a medium of interaction and a vehicle for communication among individuals social media users in Northern Nigeria social media is also used as a vehicle for delivering Islamic *Da'wah* in several forms, namely religious lectures, photos, drawings, cartoons, Islamic memes, religious appeals, inspirational Islamic stories, video clips of religious songs, wisdom words, religious slogans, studies on Qur'an and Hadith and its interpretation. The phenomenon of the delivery of Islamic *Da'wah* through the mediation of social media can also be referred to as *Da'wah* via cyberspace. Mild in this case does not relate to the material or message of wisdom that it conveys, but how the packaging is more concise and simpler. Because if in a conventional *Da'wah* that can be called a hard *Da'wah* whose implementation is very bound to the context, moments, and special themes and all involved in it cannot escape from the binding code of conduct, then this does not apply at all in the implementation of *Da'wah* through social media. Everything takes place in a relaxed manner and is not bound by the code of ethics enforced in conventional *Da'wah*. In social media, virtual spaces that continue to be active without time limits, that's where *Da'wah* messages spread that can continue to be accessed at any time by users of social media.

## **B. Methods**

The approach used in writing this paper is a literature study approach. Basically the study of literature is the same as research in general, but the data obtained by the researcher is secondary data using the literature study method. Some steps that the researcher will take in preparing this article include: first, the researcher searches for and collects reference sources that are relevant to the theme of this research. Second, several scientific papers that have been collected are then processed and elaborated, in order to comprehensively explain the intersections of this article. Third, will analyze the da'wah preacher and muslim scholars who use

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<sup>3</sup>. Rebecca, Sawyer. “Impact of New Social Media on Intercultural Adaptation”, *Senior Honors Projects*. (2011): 242.

Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter, YouTube, and Zoom to deliver their dawah and try to interview some of them.

## C. Result and Discussion

### 1. Islam and Social Media

Social media have changed the spread of Islam and Muslims' perception in the minds of many, said author and professor at DeVry University, Suzy Ismail in an Email interview. “The impact of Facebook and Twitter in changing entire nations is evident in the uprisings of the Arab Spring that were largely dependent on social media as a means of communicating and fueling the passions of the people who overthrew their countries' dictators. The same is Islam's relation to social media. Social media presents a massive opportunity for us to reach out to people who may not know about Islam or Muslims. Thousands of Americans have never met a Muslim, but they have access to us through social media.”<sup>4</sup>

“Social media is a medium that can allow students to engage in a discussion that clarifies, expands, and provides autonomy over content, without the added challenge and immediacy comprehension. The ever-expanding use of social media, especially mobile media devices, enables potential publics to be engaged with organisations and businesses almost continually, and decision-makers within these organisations must exercise soft behavioral skills that connect at the right level.”<sup>5</sup> In past, getting information about Islam used to be limited to educational institutions, Masjids, and learning from sheikhs and imams. These conventional learning options are still available but on the other hand, now Muslims, may use social media platforms to study, question, educate, and network. There are a variety of ways to learn about Islam. By offering access to a wide spectrum of information, the Internet has made Islamic literature more accessible to the general public. On YouTube, for example, one can listen to a lecture in any language of one's choice, whenever one prefers. “Blogging sites such as Muslim Matters.org and SuhaibWebb.com have become extremely popular with Muslims and non-Muslims to learn about Islam.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>. Javeria, Salman. “Impact of Media and Social Media on Islam and Muslims” [www.islamicstudies.islammessages.com/ResearchPapers.aspx](http://www.islamicstudies.islammessages.com/ResearchPapers.aspx), 2016 (accessed February 23, 2021).

<sup>5</sup>. Gill, Robert. “The use of Social Media for Constructive Discussion in an Academic Events Management Unit: An Australian Practice-Based Case Study”, *European Journal of Academic Research*, 1 (2013): 4 – 5.

<sup>6</sup>. Javeria, Salman. *Op. cit.*

Though, “Twitter and Facebook have undoubtedly been the two networking sites with the most active Muslim users. These sites have allowed us to connect with *Imams* and *Sheikhs*, political leaders, scholars, and journalists. Furthermore, they have enabled us to share news and information that matter to us at a moment's notice.”<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, Fozi points out that "unfortunately there is a flip side to being in the limelight. Those who want to cast a negative light on Islam are just as active online and easily perpetuate stereotypes about Muslims through their posts, tweets, and videos. It can be overwhelming to contend with, but we need to remember that social media has also empowered us and given us that same platform to express ourselves. Social media presents a huge opportunity for us to reach out to people who may not know about Islam or Muslims, we can increase the positive impact of media/social media on the portrayal of Islam by being more active and vocal about our faith.”<sup>8</sup>

The spread of Islam has been aided by the use of social media. Propagation is the process of disseminating a message via the use of appropriate and practical techniques. Throughout history, numerous approaches and instruments have been employed by various schools of thought and persons attempting to communicate their message to others. Various schools carry out today's world-extensive propagation to attract people to different thoughts and beliefs. Those schools' leaders try to familiarise people with their opinions and beliefs and recruit new followers using suitable propagation tools and techniques.

“Social media are tools for rejuvenating Islam's ethos regarding its political virtues, moral principle, and spiritual ethics. In recent times, social media have turned the most vital tool in projecting ideas to every nook and crannies of every society. It is important to note that if we are desirous of blending with this modern trend, we must develop our conceptual framework to guide Muslims in the proper and lawful use of social media facilities.”<sup>9</sup>

Accordingly, if we sit back and watch, then the rest of the world will move on while we remain static. “In earnest, we should use Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, WhatsApp, Blackberry messenger to promote and disseminate Islam's teachings among Muslim students and students of other faiths.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>. *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>. *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup>. Yusuf, Olaolu Ali, “Repositioning MSSN to face Modern Challenges in Islamic Propagation” Being a Lecture Delivered at the MSSN Stakeholders Conference National Mosque, Abuja, 2015, 23.

<sup>10</sup>. *Ibid.* p. 24.

We know that social media is altering how we interact, but there is very little evidence that it is altering people's religious beliefs. In a 2011 scholarly article titled “Religion and social media: Got Web?” author Pauline Cheong explains that “her research on religion and new media has revealed how blogging and microblogging – for example, tweeting – can function as religious practices. Cheong says that for some, social media is a platform to teach and inform about their faith, and to engage people in meaningful dialogue. She also views it as a form of social and prayer support.”<sup>11</sup>

There are plenty of social media accounts created to inform, remind and engage with various religions' followers. For example, @IslamicThinking has over one million followers on Twitter. The account tweets inspirational quotes, friendly reminders such as "speak kindly of others," verses from the Qur'an, and short prayers. Sabeen Quraan, a 24 - year - old speech pathology student at Cleveland State University, said that while these accounts are good reminders, social media does not make her a more religious person. "I would feel the same with or without social media," Quraan said. 21 - year - old Summer Matar, a biochemistry student at The University of Akron, feels she may be a little less religious without social media. “Seeing religious posts regularly will cause you to think more about your spirituality, therefore strengthening it when you are reminded of something you forgot or when you learn something new,” Matar said. “On social media, I am friends with family members all over the world, and each one will post something religious that I may have never seen before.”<sup>12</sup>

## 2. Social Media Da'wah

“The five means of propagating Islam First: the individual method; that is, to invite the person individually if it pertains to him specifically. Second: public or mass *Da'wah* such as in lectures or exhortations that benefit the generality of people. Third: private lessons to students each in his specialty. It is the task of the scholars who specialize in their disciplines. Fourth: *Da'wah* through writing, correspondence, and authorship with guidance and benefit for those called. Fifth: *Da'wah* uses modern means of communication to advance the cause of truth.”<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Islam's goal as the last and perfect religion is eternal and universal. The need of proselytising and informing people about divine rule and wisdom, as well as conveying good news and warning them, is paramount. Almighty Allah says;

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<sup>11</sup>. P. Cheong, “Religion and Social Media: Got Web?” *Communication and Mass Media Complete*, Ipswich, 58 (1), (2011), 23.

<sup>12</sup>. *Ibid*, 24-25.

<sup>13</sup> [www.islamquest.net/en/archive/question/fa4154](http://www.islamquest.net/en/archive/question/fa4154). (accessed February 26 2021).

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ۚ

“This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion.”

“That is because Islam is the religion of guidance, and it has considered guidance to be of paramount importance. Therefore, it is impossible to guide people unless they are familiar with Islam's goals, knowledge, and teachings.”<sup>15</sup> According to Qari Muhammad Asim, “Muslims would tremendously benefit from social media as it conveys the positive and beautiful message of Islam. For instance, we can now learn about our faith and the language of the Qur’an as well as its recitation within the comfort of our homes. We can also share Islamic messages with billions of people worldwide through social media platforms and electronic devices. In terms of *Da’wah*, a five-minute video on the activities of a mosque, featuring a friendly-faced scholar giving a virtual tour of the place could work wonders.”<sup>16</sup>

Typical social media tools include Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, Bebo, Wechat, Badoo, and Google.<sup>17</sup> *Da’wah* activities can be done efficiently using internet sources, including, websites, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, email, and e-books, including, *Tafsīr*, Hadith, *Sirah*, History, *Fiqh*, and other books. E-*Da’wah* is a useful tool for the preachers for which the audiences can freely access without any limits of time and space. The preachers can empower their Islamic *Da’wah* through Internet, as its users are increasing day by day. It can help spread the Islamic message to more audiences geographically, showing the real face of Islam, improving Islam's image, and performing *Da’wah* efficiently. “Generally, the preachers use Facebook for *Da’wah* messages including, motivation about life, performing prayer, being grateful, and respecting others.”<sup>18</sup> Facebook is used in promoting the teachings of Islam in western society.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Twitter is a famous, stable, steady, and influential source to touch its followers' hearts. Using various Islamic apps and sending messages embodying prescribed Teachings of Islam, the mobile phone is adopted as a medium for *Da’wah*. “With the help of

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<sup>14</sup> Al-Quran, *Surah Al-Maaida* 5:3.

<sup>15</sup> [www.islamquest.net/en/archive/question/fa4154](http://www.islamquest.net/en/archive/question/fa4154). (accessed February 26 2021).

<sup>16</sup> Qari., Muhammad Asim, “How are you using Social Media this Ramadan?” 2016. [www.imamsonline.com/blog/how-are-you-using-social-media-this-ramadan/](http://www.imamsonline.com/blog/how-are-you-using-social-media-this-ramadan/), (accessed March 3 2021).

<sup>17</sup> Atiku, Garba Yahaya & Muhammad, Maga Sule, “Social Media and its Effects on Muslim Students: The Case of Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria”, *UMRAN: International Journal of Islamic Civilisational Studies*, 5(2), (2018), 30-44.

<sup>18</sup> Ali, Murthado. “The Empowerment of Social Media for *Da’wah* in Medan City”, *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*. 22(4), (2017), 91-92.

<sup>19</sup> Wafa, Abu Hatab. “Islam and Social Media: Attitudes and Views”, *Asian Social Science*, 12(5) (2014), 221.

emails, the preachers can deliver messages directly and efficiently to develop Islamic *Da'wah*.”<sup>20</sup> “Islamic websites have been playing important roles in bridging and connecting Muslim minorities and others.”<sup>21</sup>

According to Nassar, “the use of social media continues to grow every year in the Islamic world. Almost all Muslims use social media to help them take or get information about Islam and use the same to carry out Islamic *Da'wah* and serve Islam.”<sup>22</sup> Adam also states that social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have played an essential role in helping the world in spreading Islam.<sup>23</sup> With the emergence of numerous sorts of electronic media nowadays, the position grows more comprehensive and crucial. For many people, the media has also become a source of information. “The sign of success depends on how much effort people have given to take control or manage the Medium during their own time.”<sup>24</sup>

Today, social media is one medium that may be utilised to effectively spread *Da'wah*. Social media *Da'wah* is more readily accepted by the public because there are no elements of coercion<sup>25</sup>. The principal utilisation of social media nowadays is proselytisation which Islamic preachers admire. Ordinary Muslims who wish to contact with one another utilise social media, which is not exclusively used by preachers. It also contributes to the expansion of educational possibilities in the Muslim world. Preachers, for example, can use social media video calling or voice to teach the Glorious Qur'an and Sunnah to Muslims and non-Muslims, and this can assist expand *Da'wah* to both Muslims and non-Muslims.

### **3. Da'wah in Social Media**

#### **a. Nature of Da'wah in Social Media**

Currently, the nature of *Da'wah* is no longer in the form of discussion or to open a certain forum. However, *Da'wah* today is done in a modern fashion using modern technology through social media platforms such as Facebook WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Telegram,

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<sup>20</sup> Ali, Murthado. *Op. Cit.* pp.91-92.

<sup>21</sup> Wafa, Abu Hatab. *Op. Cit.* p. 222

<sup>22</sup> Islam, Nassar, Jamal, Hayajneh and Mahmoud, Khalid Almsafr. “The Influence of Using Social Network on Publishing and Serving Islam: A Case Study of Jordanian Students”, International Conference on Advanced Computer Science Applications and Technologies (ACSAT), (2013), 44-45.

<sup>23</sup> Fadzil, Adam. Marhana, Mohamed Anuar and Hamid, Ali. “The use of Blog as a Medium of Islamic *Da'wah* in Malaysia”, International Journal of Sustainable Human Development, 2(2), 2014, 74-80.

<sup>24</sup> Fadzil, Adam. Marhana, Mohamed Anuar and Hamid, Ali. *Op. Cit.* p. 82.

<sup>25</sup> Imam, Malik Ridwan. “Struggle for New Media of Peace and Tolerance: A Close Look to the Usage of the Internet in Defining and Building Young Muslim Community In Indonesia”, Al-Albab, 4(2), 2015, 125-126.



Zoom, Facebook Live-Stream, and many other similar platforms.<sup>26</sup> Seeing the condition of society that has been utilizing the modern means of communication tools, which also include many religious leaders who utilize social media as a tool to broadcast the teachings of the Islamic religion. And as such changes the nature of Islamic *Da'wah* in the modern world.

The nature of *Da'wah* in social media particularly in Nigeria is in different forms. The *Da'wah* activities via social media are conducted either through written messages, audio messages, and video or virtual. This takes place through Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, Telegram, Instagram, Facebook Live-Stream, Zoom Meeting, and other social media platforms.

It is observed that Muslim scholars willing to carry out *Da'wah* through social media need to be knowledgeable with the modern medium of communication to be able to deliver the message via these platforms. This is because the nature of *Da'wah* on social media requires the knowledge and understanding of the facilities of modern technology. The nature of *Da'wah* in social media has influenced many Muslim scholars and *Da'i* to adopt the modern medium to deliver *Da'wah* to their *Ummah*. It has been observed by the researcher that *Da'wah* in social media, for example, allows the *Da'i* to utilize his/her page or channel either on Facebook, YouTube, Telegram, WhatsApp, or Twitter to post a variety of Islamic teachings and encourage dialogue among his followers.

*Da'wah* in social media is unlike the conventional face-to-face contact between the *Du'at* and the audience. The social media *Da'wah* as observed by the researcher is in the digital form where the *Da'i* delivers the *Da'wah* message to his target audience via his social media handler be it Facebook, Facebook Live-Stream, YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp, Zoom, Telegram, etc.

According to Kassim in an in-Depth Interview observed that the nature of *Da'wah* in social media is that the message of the *Da'i* is targeted towards the connected generation not only among the Muslims. That the Islamic knowledge disseminated via social media is for both Muslims and non-Muslims to benefit from.<sup>27</sup> He further explains that the *Da'wah* in social media by *Du'at* are in different forms which comes in formats such as uploading of recorded videos/audios on the various pages and channels of individual *Da'i* in social media sites and or live broadcasts like the Live-Stream on Facebook and YouTube.

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<sup>26</sup> Avin, Wimar Budyastomo. "The Influence of Social Media for the Development of *Da'wah* and Nahdlatul Ulama Society Behavior", *JNUS: Journal of Nahdlatul Ulama Studies*, 1(1), (2020), pp. 106-130.

<sup>27</sup> Kassim, Sulaiman. (37 Years), Blogger, interviewed at Tudun Wada, Kaduna, on March 25 2021.

But to Inuwa Ahmad the nature of *Da'wah* in social media does not give room for the targeted audience to ask questions and get responses when watching or listening to the *Da'i* while delivering his *Da'wah* message. He stressed that only Zoom as a social media platform gives virtual contact between the *Da'i* and his audience to interact while delivering the *Da'wah*.<sup>28</sup> To him, Facebook and Twitter only provide options for comments where the audience can either ask questions or make an input to the already discussed topic.

#### **b. Importance of Social Media as a Medium for Islamic Da'wah**

According to the assertion Siddiqui and Singh, “it is a well-known fact that modern communication technology (social media) have a gigantic impact on our daily life especially youths' and students' life. So, it is important to know the importance of social media in our daily life. Social media plays a vital role in transforming people's lifestyle.”<sup>29</sup> There is much importance in using social media for people of all ages around the world. According to Khouli, “the contemporary communication tools the social media have an advanced capability that helps and provide the best opportunities and many types of services for users. It enables users to achieve all forms of communication with people around the world.”<sup>30</sup>

The development of modern communication technology is an inseparable part of the facility such as the social media, and the internet cannot be unglued from social media platforms such as Facebook, Zoom, Twitter, WhatsApp, Yahoo Messenger, Telegram, YouTube, Instagram, and other social media sites. Various facilities are an effective alternative to connect individuals with others to establish a harmonious relationship. Therefore, social media is very precise and important as a means of building Islamic *Da'wah*. This is done to face the thought wars (ghozwul fikr) created by the western world.

It has been observed that modern communication technology and its tools have aided the general populace throughout the world in various fields including Islamic *Da'wah*. The modern medium of communication has played an important role in assisting the *Da'i* in the advancement of Islamic *Da'wah* due to the facilities it's offered. According to Arifudin, social media has been a unique platform that is utilized by *Du'at* (Islamic preachers) in disseminating

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<sup>28</sup> Inuwa, Ahmad. (42 Years), Businessman, interviewed at Bauchi, on March 27 2021.

<sup>29</sup> S. Siddiqui, and T. Singh, “Social Media its Impact with Positive and Negative Aspects”, International Journal of Computer Applications Technology and Research, 5(2), (2016), pp. 71-75.

<sup>30</sup> Mohamed, El Khouli. “The Most Important Negative Aspects of Using Social Networking Affecting the Family Stability in Abu Dhabi-A Pilot Study”, International Journal of Engineering and Technology, 9, (2013), pp. 85-90.

Islamic messages and knowledge. He further stressed that social media is an important platform that can be utilized as contemporary media for the *Da'wah* endeavor as it has many advantages in terms of efficiency, accessibility, scoping, and openness.<sup>31</sup>

According to Abdul-Majid who states that nowadays, the method of *Da'wah* is no longer in the form of discussion or open a particular forum. However, *Da'wah* is also done in a more modern way in terms of not only through conversations in discussion forums but also using technology through social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Telegram, Instagram, Facebook Live-Stream, WhatsApp, and so on.<sup>32</sup> The emergence of social media is important especially for the *Du'at* (preachers) to carry out *Da'wah* activities with no difficulty. One of the factors that encourage the *Da'wah* through social media is easy to access and flexibility. The spread of Islamic teachings is fast, broad, interesting, and effective.

Another important factor of *Da'wah* through social media as revealed by Ja'afar is the number of social media users in urban centres of Northern Nigeria. The existence of social media has now become a necessity of life for its users in Nigeria. The presence of the internet makes people more secular than spiritual.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, *Da'wah* becomes important to the community through media that is now widely consumed by the public (the social media).

#### **4. The level of usage of Social Media by Muslim *Du'at***

This provides a holistic approach at the extent to which Muslim scholars are using social media platforms to spread their *Da'wah*. Twenty-one (21) prominent scholars were sampled and among these scholars, seven (7) were selected from each of the three geopolitical zones of Northern Nigeria. This is to ascertain their level of utilization of the social media platforms for *Da'wah*. The table below displays the proportion of followers/subscribers and viewers on their different social media channels:

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<sup>31</sup> Arifuddin, "Da'wah through Internet: Challenges and Opportunities for Islamic Preachers in Indonesia", *Ar-Raniry: International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 3(1), (2016), pp. 161-188.

<sup>32</sup> Abdul-Majid, Isah Bala. (40 Years), Muslim Scholar, interviewed at Malali, Kaduna State, on February 16 2021.

<sup>33</sup> Ja'afar, Yunus. (46 Years), Muslim Cleric/Civil Servant, interviewed at Jos, Plateau State, on March 2 2021.

**Table 4.1. Level of Utilization of Social Media Platforms**

S/N	Social Media	No. of Scholars
1	Facebook	21
2	YouTube	20
3	Telegram	16
4	WhatsApp	21
5	Zoom	2
6	Twitter	6

**Source:** Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, January (2021).

The number of scholars and their use of various social media platforms are shown in Table 4.1. Twenty-one (21) of the scholars sampled have Facebook pages for *Da'wah* lectures, commentary of the Quran, and Taleem. Similarly, Twenty (20) (of the scholars) use YouTube for their virtual *Da'wah*, commentary of the Quran, and Taleem. While sixteen (16) of the scholars utilize Telegram to share their audio and video on their various channels in Telegram. The audio and video of all twenty-one (21) scholars has been posted on WhatsApp or other WhatsApp groups such as Mimbarin Malamai and Darul Fikr, Peace Channel 1, and JIBWIS NHQ Jos NG. Similarly, three (3) of the Twenty-one (21) scholars studied utilize Zoom for virtual *Da'wah* lectures and commentary of the Glorious Qur'an or *Ta'leem*. As for Twitter, six (6) of the scholars exploit it to disseminate their *Da'wah* activities. Zoom as a social media platform is has a lesser number of scholars because it is still new to people in Northern Nigeria at the time of the study. The results indicated that Facebook and YouTube were the most utilized social media platforms by the majority of the "Muslim scholars in Northern Nigeria in interacting with their audience to spread the message of Islam as contained the Glorious Qur'an teachings of Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)".

**Table 4.2: Level of Followership/Subscribers of Islamic Scholars on Social Media**

Scholars	Social Media Platforms				
	Facebook	YouTube	Telegram	WhatsApp	Zoom
Prof. Muhammad Mansur I. Sokoto	277,055	1,706	1,009	-	-
Dr. Bashir Aliyu Umar	164,281	1,422	7,667	-	-
Shaykh Muhammad Bin Uthman	219,050	2,903	3,434	-	-
Dr. Isa Ali Ibrahim (Pantami)	794,104	5,004	10,855	-	-
Shaykh Umar Dada Paiko	10,107	979	-	-	-
Assoc. Prof. Muhammad Tanko Aliyu	9,624	211	106	-	-
Dr. Mansur Isa Yelwa	59,378	1,022	3,019	-	-
Shaykh Dr. Ibrahim Jalo Jalingo	89,271	813	167	-	-
Sheikh Dr. Muhammad A. Abubakar	14,248	709	-	-	-
Shaykh Muhammad Sani R/Lemo	13,087	1,504	-	-	-
Sheikh Nasir Abdulmuhyi	7,738	813	-	-	-
Shaykh Abdur-Razaq Yahya Haifang	5,853	909	180	-	266
Sheikh Yusuf Musa Asadus-Sunnah	187,526	907	1,143	-	-
Dr. Faadhil Bin Nurudeen	4,759	627	793	-	194
Sheikh Muhammad M. Albarnawi	114,084	741	-	-	-
Sheikh Adam Muhammad Albaniy Gombe.	74,078	832	-	-	-
Ustaz Bashir Ahmad Sani (Sokoto)	69,391	1,034	8,349	-	-
Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Yusuf Guruntum	64,008	905	4,927	-	-
Prof. Ibrahim Ahmad Maqari	184,003	704	2,514	-	-
Sheikh Ibrahim Saleh (Maiduguri)	153,567	476	-	-	-
Imam Jibril Yusuf (Nassarawa Eggon)	4,143	-	265	-	-

**Source:** Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, January, (2021).

The finding in Table 4.2 “shows the level of followers/subscribers of the Islamic scholars on their social media pages and applications. Islamic scholar with the highest followers is Prof. Muhammad Mansur Ibrahim Sokoto has 277,055 followers on his Facebook page, 1,706 subscribers to his YouTube, and 1009 subscribers on his Telegram channel. This signifies that

the location, level of education of the scholar influences the level or number of his social media followers/subscribers and listeners.” Similarly, the majority of the Islamic scholars who work with Universities in Nigeria tend to be more popular among young Muslims who are either University students or graduates. Therefore, these scholars are popular among youth who constitute the largest age cohort of internet and social media users in Nigeria. However, Telegram and WhatsApp are encrypted social interactive applications that do not give access to someone other than the registered one to view the details of the follower hence the researcher is unable to ascertain the number of people in the WhatsApp a Telegram Groups of the sampled Islamic scholars. However, because of its late arrival and limitation in the number of participants, not more than 100 (except Zoom Premium which is not free) only two (2) of the sampled scholars use Zoom for their *Da’wah* lectures and *Ta’leem*.

**Table 4.3: Level of Viewers of Islamic Scholars on Social Media**

Scholars	Social Media Platforms				
	Facebook	YouTube	Telegram	WhatsApp	Zoom
“Prof. Muhammad Mansur I. Sokoto”	201,061	1,896	-	-	-
“Dr. Bashir Aliyu Umar”	259,011	1,409	-	-	-
“Shaykh Muhammad Bin Uthman”	140,959	2,706	-	-	-
“Dr. Isa Ali Ibrahim (Pantami)”	687,794	6,473	-	-	-
“Shaykh Umar Dada Paiko”	6,639	553	-	-	-
“Assoc. Prof. Muhammad T. Aliyu”	5,874	-	-	-	-
“Dr. Mansur Isa Yelwa”	59,378	851	-	-	-
“Shaykh Dr. Ibrahim Jalo Jalingo”	101,006	492	-	-	-
“Sheikh Dr. Muhammad A. Abubakar”	11,034	548	-	-	-
Shaykh Muhammad Sani R/Lemo	2,109	2,033	-	-	-
Sheikh Nasir Abdulmuhyi	7,738	813	-	-	-
Shaykh Abdul-Razaq Yahya Haifang	2,804	409	-	-	266
Sheikh Yusuf Musa Asadus-Sunnah	114,973	1,301	-	-	-
Dr. Faadhil Bin Nurudeen	3,804	627	-	-	194
Sheikh Muhammad M. Albarnawi	85,307	822	-	-	-
Sheikh Adam M. Albaniy Gombe.	78,903	702	-	-	-
Ustaz Bashir Ahmad Sani (Sokoto)	52,337	1,066	-	-	-
Sheikh A. Tijani Yusuf Guruntum	54,967	1,002	-	-	-
Prof. Ibrahim Ahmad Maqari	141,815	342	-	-	-
Sheikh Ibrahim Saleh (Maiduguri)	46,069	842	-	-	-
Imam Jibril Yusuf Danladi	3,726	-	-	-	-

**Source:** Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, January, (2021).

Table 4.3 revealed that Dr. Isa Ali Ibrahim Pantami has the highest level of the viewer on both Facebook and YouTube channels among the sampled Islamic Scholars in Northern Nigeria. This finding shows that 687,794 people follow him on his Facebook Page while 6,473 subscribed to his YouTube channel. This signifies how emergent media platforms enable Muslims to follow or to access the activities of Islamic scholars remotely, without being

physically present at the congregation. The social media platforms where the viewers or followers have the option of watching live streaming of Islamic events or watching or listening to a recorded video or video of their preferred Islamic scholar. The utility of various social media platforms plays a significant role in increasing the population of viewers. The finding revealed that Facebook and YouTube are easier to use for *Da'wah* lectures and *Ta'leem* in Northern Nigeria by the Islamic scholars and user friendly for the viewers because of their facilities that enable live streaming or watching recorded views or audio.



## 5. Social Media Sites (Islamic Sites/Pages) used for *Da'wah* by Muslim *Du'at*

This section discusses social media pages/channels utilized for *Da'wah* by Muslim *Du'at*. These Islamic sites/pages and channels are either in Facebook, YouTube, Telegram, WhatsApp, or Zoom.

**Table 4.4: Facebook *Da'wah* Pages**

<b>Da'wah pages on Facebook</b>	<b>Followers</b>	<b>Subscribers</b>	<b>Numbers of <i>Du'at</i></b>
Mimbarin Malamai	118,894	94,622	Approximately 146
Darul Fikr	131,112	122,474	162
Majalisin Ahalus-Sunnah	11,233	11,764	57
Zauren Fiqhu	27,021	13,904	Approximately 106
Zauren Mallamai (JIBWIS NHQ Jos)	109,076	109,174	Over 100
JIBWIS Nigeria	113,116	113,321	Over 100
Dandalin Majlisin Al-Qur'ani	1,934	1,865	64
Taskar Malam	6,309	5,913	17
Da'wah Link	104	70,352	39
Daaru' Naim	45,159	18,470	41
Tashihul Aqeedah	11,705	58,337	50
Zauren Malamai	1,674	4,096	18
Wa'azozin Malaman Sunnah	3,074	6,331	Over 100
Zauren Ahlus-Sunnah	2,543	1,836	72
Zauren Daliban Ilimi	33,808	33,664	Over 50
Dausayin Sunnah	2,704	2,704	13
Sautu Rijaalis Sunnah	98,384	55,822	19
Takaitacciyar Nasiha	13,004	19,302	Over 100
The Sunnah Show	64,021	69,111	Over 100
Tambari	28,597	23,087	Over 50
Darul Ahkam	7,884	4,496	82
Karatuttukan Maluman Sunnah	166,007	118,970	Over 100
Rafeeqee	18,308	17,120	22
Sautul Ulama	133,002	64,527	Over 100

**Source:** Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, January 2021.

Table 4.4 shows that Mimbarin Malamai has 28,894 followers, 24,622 subscribers with approximately 146 scholars with their *Da'wah* disseminated on the page on Facebook which is the highest among sampled pages. This indicates that Karatuttukan Malamai is the most exploited *Da'wah* page by Muslim *Du'at* for their Islamic *Da'wah* activities. This is because of the number of followers, subscribers as well as the number of *Du'at* on each of the pages.

**Table 4.5: YouTube Social Media Channels**

Da'wah Channels in YouTube	Subscribers	Viewers	Numbers of Videos
Asakir	22,216	1,948,833	1,016
DarulFikr	2,679	115,201	2,671
Tambari	82	5,747	1,236
The Sunnah Show	942	23,099	2,752
Tashihul Aqeedah	1,023	26,498	1,063
Darul Ahkam	3,418	112,973	1,407
Mu Karu da Juna	72	43,457	710
Hasken Sunnah	76	1,110	691
Daaru' Naim	13,209	2,361,624	462
Arrisalah	107	1,004	108
Taskar Malaman Sunnah	13,852	1,520,023	1,707
Karatuttukan Maluman Sunnah	985	11,972	1,095
Wa'azozin Maluman Sunnah	122	14,027	616
Mimbarin Malamai	76,528	3,305,717	2,647
Asadul Islam	253,095	4,975,706	2,732

**Source:** Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, January, (2021).

Table 4.5 shows that Asadul Islam has the highest number of subscribers of the YouTube channel to watch Islamic activities (253,095). This indicates that the Islamic activities that are found in the YouTube channel of Asadul Islam are widely acceptable and educative which motivates Muslims in Northern Nigeria to follow or subscribe to it.

**Table 4.6: Telegram Social Media Platform**

Da'wah Channel in Telegram	Subscribers	Number of Du'at	Nature of Da'wah
Darul Fikr	2,657	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Darul Muhadditheen	3,344	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
JIBWIS Nigeria Social Media	2,271	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Taskar Malam	4,536	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Al-Umdah	4,089	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Assahabatul Kiram	529	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Takaitacciyar Nasiha	321	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Da'wah Link	1,095	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Karatun Malaman Sunnah	5,254	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Mimbarin Malamai	3,712	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Darus-Sunnah	1,388	Over 100	“Audio/Video”

**Source:** Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, January, (2021).

Table 4.6 demonstrate Karatun Malamn Sunnah has the highest number of Muslim subscribers (5,254) in Northern Nigeria. This implies that because of the audio clips and video of preaching and teachings of popular Islamic scholars in Northern Nigeria, the majority of the followers of *Da'wah* enthusiasts in Northern Nigeria downloaded Telegram on their Smartphones and join the group.

**Table 4.7: Zoom Da'wah Meeting Channels**

Da'wah Meeting Channels on Zoom	Number Scholars	Nature of Da'wah
Darul Ahkam	3	Virtual Presentation
Taskar Malam	2	Virtual Presentation
Da'wah Link	5	Virtual Presentation

**Source:** Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, January, (2021).

Table 4.7 portrays that Darul Ahkam has the highest number of uses of Zoom Meeting application initiated by some Islamic scholars in Northern Nigeria. This indicated that only three (3) Islamic *Da'wah* on Zoom handler were organized virtually to present *Da'wah* activities. This demonstrates the novelty of the application in Nigeria because it requires the Islamic scholar to register the meeting and share it with the interested participants to log in

using a computer-generated Meeting ID and Password this decreases its popularity among Islamic scholars and their followers.

**Table (8) WhatsApp Groups**

<b>WhatsApp Groups</b>	<b>Subscribers</b>	<b>Number of Scholars</b>	<b>Nature of Da'wah</b>
Mimbarin Malamai	12,219	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Peace Channel 1	266	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Zauren Fiqhu	5,023	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Darul Ahkam	3,222	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Daawatul Haq	4,105	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
JIBWIS NHQ Jos NG	551	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Hasken Sunnah	7,211	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Karatuttukan Maluman Sunnah	11,007	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Sautul Ulama	2,832	Over 100	“Audio/Video”
Zauren Malamai	10,009	Over 100	“Audio/Video”

**Source:** Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, January (2021).

Table 4.8 shows that Mimbarin Malamai has the highest number of group members among the WhatsApp group created purposely for *Da'wah* in Northern Nigeria. This revealed that having Islamic Scholars from different areas in Northern Nigeria helped the group to add members from different locations provided the video or audio clips of their favorite Islamic scholar is found in the groups.

## **6. Discussion of Major Findings**

The results of the data obtained from the survey are discussed in this section. The research looked at how Muslim academics in Northern Nigeria used social media platforms to spread Islamic Da'wah. It was discovered that Muslim academics' right and suitable use of social media has aided tremendously in the spread of Islam and its teachings to the Muslim Ummah in Nigeria. It has created a way to engage a big virtual audience without having to worry about money, time, or location. Because of its open conversational style, connection, textual and audio-visual appeal, social media has the potential to increase involvement, according to the study.

The survey found that Muslim academics use the majority of social media platforms in the formation of Da'wah groups, posting and sharing of Islamic texts, and specifically the usage of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube for virtual Da'wah. In light of the findings, Yahaya and Sule believe that learning about Islam used to be limited to Masjids, educational institutions, and learning from Imams and Sheikhs. These conventional learning options are still available. However, Muslims may now use social media platforms to study, question, educate, and network. There are a variety of ways for Muslim academics to educate about Islam. By offering access to a variety of content, the Internet has made Islamic literature far more accessible to the general public. On YouTube, Facebook, and Zoom, for example, you may listen to a lecture in any language and at any time.

“Findings from the study revealed that among the social media platforms that have a large proportion of the Muslim scholars sampled are Facebook and YouTube. This correlates with the findings of Sule and Shettima.”<sup>34</sup> Many social media sites, such as Facebook and YouTube, allow Muslim students to share appropriate info with their Muslim friends and relatives, according to the research.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The most important aspects of Islamic *Da'wah* via social media are significantly more complex. Competence of preachers, geographical location, shifts in thinking, attitudes, and social behaviors, as well as heretic theology (deviation from core Islamic teaching) are all key hurdles in the country. As a result, Islamic *Da'wah* practices via social media will require collaboration and synergy with a variety of stakeholders, including Islamic organizations, governments, universities, and civil society, in order to address problems of Islamic proselytization in the social media and achieve the desired results.

As a result, Muslims should take full advantage of social media's use and development. As a result, Muslims must embrace and filter the *Halaal* (Lawful or permitted in Islam) from the *Haram* (un-Lawful in Islam) aspects of modern means of communication and platforms, particularly social media, because it provides greater opportunities for spreading and globalizing Islam and its values in a more cost-effective, faster, and conducive environment.

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<sup>34</sup> Muhammad, Maga Sule, and Abubakar, Shettima “An Investigation of Social Media Platforms Utilization among Muslim Students”, *Journal of University Scholars in Religion (JUSREL)*, 7, (2017), 96-108.

All of the negative implications of utilizing social media can be avoided if Muslims in general and Muslims *Du'at* use it to preach Islamic teachings.

Finally, as the world shifts away from tightly regulated traditional media and toward new media, particularly social media, the nature of these platforms allows for easier propagation of Islam's true message. It is immensely encouraging for Muslim academics to establish such an educational organization in order to convey true Islam's teachings and practices while avoiding using the media to promote their beliefs.

### **Recommendation**

1. Muslim Organisations should take advantage of the interactive capabilities of social media to broaden the scope of Islamic *Da'wah* and the transmission of true Islamic teachings, particularly to complement the traditional method of *Da'wah* in the country.
2. Muslim leaders should as a matter of fact collaborate with the NITDA to develop an Islamic social media platform that can be adopted by all Muslim groups for *Da'wah* purpose in Nigeria in order to checkmate the proliferation of unlearned scholars.
3. Wealthy individuals among Muslims should come to the aid of Muslims by putting their resources in order to develop a social media platform for effective *Da'wah* activities in Northern Nigeria and the country as a whole.
4. Islamic centres, Institutes and Organizations should also develop and sustain ways of using social media to propagate Islam and Islamic teachings.
5. There is the need for Muslim scholars to acquire the knowledge of the modern means of communication in order to effectively utilize it for the dissemination of the true Islamic teachings.

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**List of Informants**

1. Abdul-Majid Isah Bala, (40 Years), Muslim Scholar, interviewed at Malali, Kaduna State, on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021.
2. Inuwa Ahmad, (42 Years), Businessman, interviewed at Bauchi, on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2021.
3. Ja'afar Yunus, (46 Years), Muslim Cleric/Civil Servant, interviewed at Jos, Plateau State, on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.
4. Kassim Sulaiman, (37 Years), Blogger, interviewed at Tudun Wada, Kaduna, on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021.