

# DAKWAH THROUGH INTERNET: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ISLAMIC PREACHERS IN INDONESIA

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**Abstract:** The development of information technology (IT), particularly the internet, has benefited people throughout the world in many fields. Considering the advantages offered by the internet, the da'i (Islamic preachers) may utilize such product of IT advancement for disseminating Islamic messages and knowledge (dakwah). This literature review explores the challenges and opportunities of the internet utilization for such religious purpose, by extracting views and research findings from a range of publications, including books and journal articles from several databases. It found that the internet can be utilized as contemporary media for dakwah endeavor as it has many advantages in terms of efficiency, accessibility, scoping, and openness. Some recent global issues including Islamophobia, extremist activities including Islam-related terrorism, and gender equity are seen as challenges to the contemporary Islam. On one hand, these concerns may challenge the use of the internet for dakwah practice, but on the other hand, such issues has opened opportunities for da'i to remedy the situation through valid views described in many forms of dakwah in the internet, educating mad'u for better understanding of Islam. It is further recommended that da'i in Indonesia can consider the internet as media for da'wah. Further research is essential whether to explore the da'i' interests and acceptance in the use of internet for dakwah as well as the social impacts of such approach.

**Keywords:** Internet, Dakwah, Islam, Challenges, Opportunities.

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## A. Introduction

The internet has recently emerged as a vital tool utilized worldwide for a range of purposes. It has provided its users with abundant information, allowing people to access information as needed.<sup>1</sup> The internet does not only become a source of information but it also

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<sup>1</sup> Ismail Abdullah & Nur Saadah bt Hamisan Khair, "The Implication of Excessive Internet Usage on the Study of Ḥadīth", *Journal of Islam in Asia* (Volume 10, Number 2, 2013), 118-129

enables the creation of networking among people.<sup>2</sup> In the context of Indonesia, a multicultural country in which diversity and complexity has shaped its civil society, the existence of the internet may be seen as essential media for strengthening social change and movement. This means that internet can be used as tool to achieve many goals and this may include religious purposes.

Meanwhile, Indonesia has been known as a Muslim-majority country that has succeeded to implement a variety of strategies to spread and to propagate the faith of Islam, known as *dakwah*.<sup>3</sup> Given the above benefits, the internet has the potential to facilitate such *dakwah* endeavors with many possible and promising advantages. As the internet has been rapidly utilized worldwide, it may become an alternative instrument for Muslims to engage and to interact in order to achieve the *ummah*, the global Muslim community.<sup>4</sup>

In this regards, scientific articles articulating the development of *dakwah* through internet are likely very important to provide supports and emphasizing evidence for further implementation of such goal. However, there has been scarcity of scientific publications related to this issue within the nation, which in turn lead to the obscure current state of knowledge regarding the internet use for *dakwah* and its accompanying benefits.

This paper was written through literature review, aiming at providing scientific information that can be used to support the development of *dakwah* endeavors through internet. The holy Koran, hadith, books, and several search engines including open access databases, the Google Scholars, and the Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia (PNRI) were employed to find articles related to the topic. The

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<sup>2</sup> Yanuar Nugroho, "Adopting Technology, Transforming Society: The Internet and The Reshaping of Civil Society Activism in Indonesia", *International Journal of Emerging Technologies & Society* (Volume 6, Number 2, 2008), 77-105

<sup>3</sup> Anna M. Gade, "Tradition and sentiment in Indonesian Environmental Islam. Worldviews: Global Religions", *Culture & Ecology* (Volume 16, Number 3, 2012), 263-285

<sup>4</sup> Merlyna Lim, "The Internet and Everyday Life in Indonesia: A New Moral Panic?", *Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia and Oceania* (Volume 169, Number 1, 2013), 133-147

information extracted from the articles was formulated to yield the best possible outcomes for the scientific use purposes of this article.

## B. Theoretical Ground of Dakwah

The holy Koran of Islam has explained that the prophets are the messengers of God, whose existences were to deliver faith and proper ways of life to all humankind and to avoid moral decadence among humans.<sup>5</sup> Such messages have been delivered through *dakwah* for years. *Dakwah* is the Indonesian/ Malaysian term of an Arabic word, *da'wah*<sup>6,7</sup>, which is derived from letter ( , , ). It literally defines as something that encourages and attracts everybody else's attention to certain messages due to the fascinating ways with which such messages are sounded or delivered. *Dakwah* itself has been mentioned in the holy Koran for 212 times.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, the word *da'i*, the Indonesian term of Islamic preachers, derives from the word *da'a* which genuinely means somebody who encourage others to conduct certain deeds.<sup>9</sup> According to Abu Ubaidat, the existence of the word "*dakwah*" was originally analogized to a meal invitation, as historically, the habit of Arab people to invite other people for a meal is appealing. Based on this analogy, it can be understood that *da'wah* manifests as an effort to spread the messages of God to an individual or to a group of people, aiming at attracting *mad'u* (*da'wah* targets), encouraging and giving positives views, values and beliefs, to achieve happiness and wealthy in both lives, this world life and the hereafter life. This definition of *dakwah* was developed into broader scopes, such as *al-da'wah ila al-ta'lim* (teaching), *da'a labu* (praying), and *fi*

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<sup>5</sup> Ali Mustafa Yaqub, *Sejarah dan Metode Dakwah Nabi* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2008)

<sup>6</sup> Johan Meuleman, "'Dakwah', Competition for Authority, and Development", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* (Volume 167, Number (2/3), 2011), 236-269

<sup>7</sup> Suhaimi, "Dakwah and Communication Programmes in Tertiary Higher Education in Indonesia: A Brief Survey", *Islamiyyat: International Journal of Islamic Studies*, (Volume 34, Number (2012), 2012), 145-149

<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Fu'ad Abdul al-Baqiy, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufaharas li al-Fas al-Qur'an al-Karim* (3 ed.,) (Kairo: Dar al-Hadi, 1991), 257-260

<sup>9</sup> Ma'luf, *al-Munjid fi al-Lugat* (Beirut: Dar al-Masyriq, 1977), 216

*al-islam al-din* (proselytization to embrace Islam).<sup>10,11</sup> Terminologically, Islamic scholars have also defined *dakwah* in various meanings and contexts. Example, Bahy al-Huly asserts that *dakwah* moves human's situation to a better circumstance or life.<sup>12</sup>

This particular definition believes that every endeavour taken by a muslim as individual or as part of community to encourage others to always conduct good deeds in order to gain God's bless. Sayid Qutub also articulates the term of da'wah as an effort for improvement of people's lives and to provide assistance and guidance for those non-believers to embrace Islam as their religion.<sup>13</sup> All definitions above draw a principle concept of *dakwah* that it invites *mad'u* (the object of *dakwah*) to two directions. It helps Muslims stabilize and improve lives through empowerment of faith and ways of life, and it guides the non-believers of Islam through persuasive and communicative preach to follow Islam.

Technically, *dakwah* is defined as endeavor to deliver the Islamic faith including 1) believe in Allah, 2) believe in all the faith carried by all the God's messengers, 3) declaration of intent of *syahadatain*, 4) conducting *solat*, 5) habituate alms and giving, 6) conducting fasting and hajj, and 7) believe in the hereafter life.<sup>14</sup> In order to achieve the goals of Islamic da'wah, the Islamic preachers (*da'i*) should consider the methods that will be used, the media, and also the message.

These should be concomitant with the condition of *mad'u*, who are targeted to comprehensively understand the message that will be sounded. *Dakwah* may apply to any callings to avoid sinful conducts, which would otherwise be done by evils or *iblis*. According the definitions, Islam's concept of *dakwah* can be summed in these points:<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Abd Aziz al-Huly, *Ilah al-Wa'z al-Din* (Egypt: al-Tijariyah, 1964), 5

<sup>11</sup> Abu al-Husain Faris bin Zakariya, *Mu'jam Maqayis al-Lugat* (Egypt: Mustafa al-Baby al-Halaby wa Auladuh, 1969), 279-281

<sup>12</sup> Bahy al-Huly, *Tazkirah al-Du'ah* (Egypt: Dar al-Kitab al-Ārabiyy, 1952), 27

<sup>13</sup> Sayid Qutub, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an* (n.p: Dar al-Syuruq, nd), 2201

<sup>14</sup> Ali Mustafa Yaqub, *Sejarah dan Metode Dakwah Nabi* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2008)

<sup>15</sup> Arifuddin, *Metode Dakwah Dalam Masyarakat Plural di Kota Makassar* (The Methods od Dakwah In The Pluralistic Societies In The City of Makassar), Disertasion,

1. *Dakwah* as a call to mankind in order to accept and establish Islam as the religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), in which his religion would guarantee mankind's spiritual and physical enlightenment and prosperity through thorough instructions to deal with an individual's life and all things associated with it.
2. *Dakwah* as a media decreed by Allah as an attempt to realize Islam in all aspects of life; an integrated basis of pluralism in order to create a dynamic and harmonic life.
3. According to its forms and its emphasis according to the definitions, *dakwah* may be categorized in four forms:
  - a. *Tabligh* Islam, the attempt to spread and enlighten the mass through the message of Islam
  - b. *Irsbad* Islam, the attempt to explain and guide the mass regarding the message of Islam itself
  - c. *Tadbir* Islam, the attempt to develop the *Ummah* (nation) according to the message of Islam through proselytizing institutions.
  - d. *Tatwir* Islam, as the nation's economic empowerment
4. *Dakwah* as the call for mankind to accept the path of Allah, in which the path is defined as the system designed by Allah Himself. Amongst the system is the concept of *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar* (Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil) in all prosperous aspects or all guided and maintained goodness, both physical and spiritual, in an individual's religious life.
5. The interest of *dakwah* as a media to uphold the divine system as a guarantee in order to nurture Islamic values in all aspects of life.

The concept of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* is not limited to the attempts to eradicate immorality itself, and can be attained through religious lecture in mosques, designated places, streets, markets, gatherings and workplaces. The concept is virtually accessible and can be done by everyone. As the concept is practically applicable to everyone, *da'wah*, especially its *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* concept, is indeed an

obligation for every individual that should be maintained and preserved in generations to come. Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent to the entirety of mankind, thus, Allah would had had decreed him to call upon the good and warn against the evil, and with it all kind of conducts that would bring harm to self and others.<sup>16</sup>

Muhammad (peace be upon him), as he conducted *dakwah*, was inspired by the divine in order to bring good; physical and spiritual welfare. He proselytized according to reality sculpted by the intelligent conscience and faith in order to prove his message as the call of the true God. In order to do so, da'wah should be something that is easy to digest to the mind, something based on the ratio of the undeniable divine decree. The natural state of *dakwah*, hence, should be based on Allah's divine will. It should be something acceptable to men, something easy to comprehend and applied.

Therefore, the attempt of *dakwah* is not only limited to individuals, it can also be done under a group of an organization. *Dakwah* can be any activities attempted to shift and sculpt an individual's behaviour to bring an individual closer to the straight path. The aim of a *dakwah* attempt can be an individual, a group of people, or all mankind itself. To summarize, *dakwah* in Islam is the attempt to call upon mankind to follow the path decreed by Allah, which is the Islamic system, thoroughly, through writing, speech, or conduct.

This system is meant to be applied in an individual life, domestic life, society and the entirety of the ummah itself in order to reach the state of *khair al-ummah*. Societal life is governed by the rules of Quran and Hadith as a sign of endeavour (*ikhtiar*) of realizing Islam, the concept of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. Organizational and managerial aspects in *dakwah* would be in the utmost essence in this case. As mentioned above, the final destination of *dakwah* is the state of *khair al-ummah* (good of the nation). This state can only be reached if it is supported by *khair al-bariyah*, or quality Muslims. Quality Muslims would require the collective

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<sup>16</sup> Arifuddin, Metode Dakwah Dalam Masyarakat Plural di Kota Makassar (The methods of dakwah in the pluralistic societies in the city of Makassar), Disertation, Faculty of Dakwah and Communication, Alauddin Islamic State University, Makassar, 2010

thoughts and unity of the deen, with *khair al-bariyah* being the concept of quality *shakhsiyah* (individual identity) resources.<sup>17</sup> Integrity of *khair al-bariyah* is determinative to the *khair al-jama'ah* (good of the people), which would later influence the state of *khair al-ummah*.

*Khair al-bariyah* can only be attained when an individual faith is expressed through to pious deeds, or when the values of Islam is realised into a form of reality of Islam, or when the concepts of Islam are transformed into the establishment of such concepts. According to epistemology of Islam, faith and virtuous deeds are not separable; faith can only be affirmed only when virtuous deeds are present. As on the contrary, there are no true virtuous deeds without the faith that based them. To affirm these, it is observable that the *wawu athaf nasaq* that connects the sentences "*aman-wa 'amilu al-salihat*" in the relevant ayah serves as *sabiq* (the beginning), *lahiq* (the end) and *muttafiq* (as informed).

The purpose of *dakwah* is to affect one's thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and conducts both in individual and sociocultural scape in order to establish Islam to all aspects of life. In principle, da'wah should be dedicated for Allah (the *sabili rabbik* concept). The object of *dakwah* itself, however, can vary (it can be unbelievers, people of the book or even the faithful), to which each should be subjected to scrutiny in order to design an approach that would fulfil its unique needs.

These approaches should carry conditional and situational messages that would solve the problems of each classification. In this matter, the purpose of spreading Islam is to make the society of Islam truly devote itself to Allah. Devotion in this case is a state of pure soul, followed by conducts appropriate to an individual's spoken words, glorifying Allah while enjoining in the good for mankind. Da'wah should transform mad'u (the object of da'wah) in the sense that they would accept and realize the concepts of Islam in their daily lives as decreed according to his divine will. General purpose of da'wah is the purpose designated as its main drive, in which all force should be concentrated.

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<sup>17</sup> Arifuddin, Metode Dakwah Dalam Masyarakat Plural di Kota Makassar (The methods of dakwah in the pluralistic societies in the city of Makassar), Disertation, Faculty of Dakwah and Communication, Alauddin Islamic State University, Makassar, 2010

The universality of the message should again be emphasized, as da'wah believes that the faithful, the unbelievers and the idolaters should otherwise be invited in the same one universal cause; the universal cause to acknowledge Allah and his divine will as his pious servants. The purposes of da'wah as the following:<sup>18</sup> Call upon the nation into shari'a in order to solve the problems of life, individual, domestic, societal or national-wise; Unite upon nations and tribes; Call upon an individual as a servant of Allah in his designated dunya with different kinds of people, characters, wills and faiths as a shuhada, as pioneers and overseers of mankind. Call upon the nation into the true purpose of life, to worship Allah alone.

These purposes would be the utmost essence when establishing da'wah individually or coordinated mass da'wah ordained by an institution, as predetermined purpose would make the process of proselytization easier as these would guide those individuals to effectively build their case and organize the appropriate message to their target *mad'u*.

### 1. Wasila (Media of Dakwah)

One of the elements of *dakwah* is *wasila*, the tool used in order to convey the contents of *dakwah* to the *mad'u*. Media itself came from the Latin word *medius* (intermediate, middle, preface), which would later be adapted in English as medium. In the sense of *wasila* (or plural *wasail*), media is the key tool to communicate the message communicated by the communicator to the communicant. Some experts define the definitions of *wasila* in the following (Arifuddin, 2010):

1. *Wasila* is the instrument which the message between the *da'i* and the (*mad'u*) would pass through from.
2. *Wasila* is the infrastructure used to proselytize in order to ease the process of conveying the relevant messages to the proselytized.
3. *Wasila* as the objective tool as a channel between an idea and the *ummah*.

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<sup>18</sup> Arifuddin, Metode Dakwah Dalam Masyarakat Plural di Kota Makassar (The methods of dakwah in the pluralistic societies in the city of Makassar), Disertation, Faculty of Dakwah and Communication, Alauddin Islamic State University, Makassar, 2010



From the definitions above, it can be well extracted that *wasila* is the tool that serves as a medium in order to deliver the message of *dakwah* to *mad'u*. These messages can be conveyed through various media. The *wasila* of *dakwah* may be divided into five main categories: spoken, written, drawn, recorded (visually or auditory), or through conducts itself (Arifuddin, 2010).

1. Spoken; in this sense, the most primeval yet prime media of da'wah using direct words of mouth. These can be done through speeches, lectures, counselling, mentoring, etc.
2. Written; books, magazines, newspapers, correspondence, banners, flash card, etc.
3. Drawn; pictures, caricatures, etc.
4. Recorded; any *dakwah* tools that would stimulate audio and/or visual organs, it can be through television, films, slides, OHP, internet, etc.
5. Through conducts; by the nature that people would "learn by observing", *dakwah* can be done by giving example through good deeds that would illustrate the true values of Islam for the *mad'u*.

In its basic sense, any media that would rouse the six senses of men would do for a *dakwah*, as long as the message can be delivered. However, the more appropriate the chosen media is, the more effective the message is. There are also people who would divide the *wasila* into two main categories. First being the traditional media (which is done without the interference of modern technology or any technology whatsoever), and the latter being the modern media (anything that involves communication technology). These classifications do not fall short from the media designated in the Qur'an. The ayahs of Al-Nahl: 78, Al Mu'minin:78, As-Sajdah: 9, Al-Ashaf: 26 and Al-Mulk: 23 classified them through "sensations" and "perceptions".<sup>19</sup>

## 2. Dakwah vs Communication

As social creatures (*homo homini socius*), humans have tendencies to interact with others. Thus, such interaction is genuinely

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<sup>19</sup> Al Qur'an Al Karim

one of the fundamental necessities as human being. This need to socialize has resulted in curiosity (Cangara, 2012; Mundakir, 2006; Nasir, 2011). In the holly Koran, Allah SWT has also signified the importance of socializing with other people. Q.S. Al-Hujurat (49):13 reveals:

*“O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that you might get to know one another. Surely the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous. Allah is All-Knowledgeable, All-Aware.”*

Theoretically, interaction among individuals is conducted through communication. Communication is a vital tool for every individual who lives in a social life as it forms the society. Communication exists due to the obligation to live and survive, and the necessity to adjust with surrounding circumstances. Through communication, somebody can seek for help or provide aid to everybody else, thus creating dependency among people that initiates the creation of societies.<sup>20</sup>

Communication, additionally, consists of several major components, which are context, sender/ decoder, receiver/ decoder, and message. Besides that, medium in communication is also vital since it acts as the channel through which a message will be communicated by the sender or encoder. People' ways to communicate have changed over time. For a long distance contact, for example, the ancient Egyptians employed doves to send messages. Recently, people have used mobile phones with many sophisticated features that allow them to communicate in the most desirable methods.

The existence of the internet, which will be further discussed, has also shown the benefits for modern people in many purposes of life. Therefore, the development of technology has impacted the communication among people positively. In terms of the religious education of Islam, the advancement of such

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<sup>20</sup> Hermawan, Menyimak: Keterampilan Komunikasi Yang Terabaikan (Scrutinizing: The Ignored Communication Skill) (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2012)

technology (internet) has opened opportunities to facilitate the *da'i* to disseminate Islamic values and faith in a more efficient and accessible way.

### 3. The Brief History of Internet

The internet has emerged as an essential tool of human life in this modern era, and has been contributing to the success in many fields. Internet enables the creation of fast communication among users, charging them relatively cheaper cost than other types of communication tools. The other benefits of the internet may include enabling interactive communication and expertise consultation. In this sense, internet has enabled individuals seeking for enlightenment in certain fields or topics with access from everywhere.

Internet has also played an important role in education aspect and the development of research. In this instance, the internet has been positively contributing to the successfulness in all spheres of education fields.<sup>21,22</sup> In addition, internet has facilitated a range of collaborations among many experts throughout the world beyond the limit of time and distance.<sup>23,24,25</sup>

Therefore, the internet has fundamentally benefited humans in many aspects of life. Historically, the internet was established by the United States Department of Defense in 1969 through a program called ARPA (Advanced Research Project Agency). This program's

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<sup>21</sup> Darejan Geladze, "Using the Internet and Computer Technologies in Learning/Teaching Process", *Journal of Education and Practice* (Volume 6, Number 2, 2015), 67-69

<sup>22</sup> Najwa Mohd Alwi, Normazla Ahmad Mahir, & Shaharuddin Ismail, "Infusing Social Media in Teaching and Learning (InL) at Tertiary Institutions: A Case of Effective Communication in Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)", *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, (Volume 155, Number "November 2014"), 2014, 265-270

<sup>23</sup> Anis Ahmad, "Da'wah: The contemporary Challenges", *Insights* (Volume 3, Number 2/3, 2010), 5-54

<sup>24</sup> Philip M. Davis & William H. Walters, "The Impact of Free Access to the Scientific Literature: A Review of Recent Research", *Journal of the Medical Library Association* (Volume 99, Number 3, 2011), 208-217

<sup>25</sup> Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, "Application and Practice of the Principles of Dakwah in the Age of Globalisation", *Insights* (Volume 3, Number 2/3, 2010), 55-84

goals were to fulfill the need of supporting research, and developing scientific and military programs within the country.<sup>26</sup> In the first time of its invention by the western scientists, majority of Islamic scholars believed and concerned that the internet was created for particular negative purpose against Islam, bringing more harm than good.

However, an Islamic scholar from Syria, Dr. Muhammad Sa'id Ramadhan al-Buthi asserted that internet connection that has nearly been utilized by majority of people in this globe has indeed opened lots of opportunities for the interest of Islam, including in promoting Islam through *dakwah* and proposing many alternatives to remedy some concerning global issues.

#### 4. The Viability of The Internet Use for Dakwah

In terms of *dakwah* in Islam, the emerge of the internet as media of *dakwah* ought to be seen as opportunity or a facilitating tool. A study from Pakistan showed that many Islamic scholars shared a common thought that the internet as a part of the development of information technology should be applied in conducting dakwah in this globalization era.<sup>27</sup> There many social concerns and issues that have arisen recently as the globalization began, and many of those relate to the religious aspect.<sup>28</sup>

A wide range of these issues may include *Islamophobia*<sup>29,30</sup>, Islamic-related terrorism<sup>31,32,33</sup>, religious-related pragmatic acts<sup>34</sup>, and

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<sup>26</sup> Ismail Abdullah & Nur Saadah bt Hamisan Khair, "The Implication of Excessive Internet Usage on the Study of Ḥadīth", *Journal of Islam in Asia* (Volume 10, Number 2, 2013), 118-129

<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Sajid Mirza, "A Report on Information Dissemination Strategies: The Case of Da'wah Academy, Pakistan", *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* (Volume 13, Number 3/4, 2014), 111-118

<sup>28</sup> Mohd Aliff Mohd Nawī, & Mohd Isa Hamzah, "MOBILE FATWA (M-FATWA): The Integration of Islamic Fatwa Through Mobile Technology", *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education (TOJDE)*, (Volume 15, Number 2, 2014), 108-116

<sup>29</sup> Mattias Ekman, "Online Islamophobia and the Politics of Fear: Manufacturing the Green Scare", *Ethnic & Racial Studies* (Volume 38, Number 11, 2015), 1986-2002

<sup>30</sup> Krista McQueeney, "Disrupting Islamophobia: Teaching the Social Construction of Terrorism in the Mass media", *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (Volume 26, Number 2, 2014), 297-309

even may relate to a personal and private matter, such as the growth of romantic-related applications that may be not conform the core values of Islam. The example of the latter is the development of *Al-Hubb Thaqafa* in Saudi Arabia that facilitates the discussion of sexual relationship between individuals.<sup>35</sup> All of such issues may require the existence of easily accessible, fast and efficient media to provide clarification, correction, and justification, and the internet may function as of that enabling instrument.

In such regards, the use of the internet is likely considered very effective and has the potential to be further developed for several reasons. First of all and the foremost is that it is timely efficient.<sup>36,37</sup> With the advancement of technology, mainly the internet, people can easily access many sources of knowledge and search for information created and (or) posted by Islamic scholars or *da'i*. This is relatively use shorter time compared to conventional ways that requires face-to-face meeting. Mohd Nawi and Hamzah (2014) have pointed out the benefit of an example of such advancement applied in Malaysia, called M-Fatwa (disseminating fatwa through mobile technologies).

They asserted that by simply utilizing a mobile device M-Fatwa is accessible at all times, enabling users to learn Islamic faith, and to

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<sup>31</sup> Sean Childs, "Pure Manipulation: ISIL and the Exploitation of Social Media", Australian Army Journal (Volume 12, Number 1, 2015), 20

<sup>32</sup> Mohamad Hamas Elmasry, "Islam in the West: A Discourse Analysis of American and British Muslim Web Content", Journal of Arab & Muslim Media Research (Volume 6, Number 2/3, 2013), 233-249

<sup>33</sup> Sheema D. Keene, S. D, "Terrorism and the Internet: A Double-edged Sword", Journal of Money Laundering Control (Volume 14, Number 4, 2011), 359-370

<sup>34</sup> Innocent Chiluwa & Adetunji Adegoke, "Twittering the Boko Haram Uprising in Nigeria: Investigating Pragmatic Acts in the Social Media", Africa Today (Volume 59, Number 3, 2013), 83-102

<sup>35</sup> Shereen El Feki, Elise Aghazarian, & Abir Sarras, "Love is Culture: Al-Hubb Thaqafa and the New Frontiers of Sexual Expression in Arabic Social Media", Anthropology of the Middle East (Volume 9, Number 2, 2014), 1-18

<sup>36</sup> Anis Ahmad, "Da'wah: The contemporary Challenges", Insights (Volume 3, Number 2/3, 2010), 5-54

<sup>37</sup> Mohd Aliff Mohd Nawi, & Mohd Isa Hamzah, "MOBILE FATWA (M-FATWA): The Integration of Islamic Fatwa Through Mobile Technology", Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education (TOJDE), (Volume 15, Number 2, 2014), 108-116

justify related emerging issues. Abdullah and Khair (2013) also reveal that the internet can be used to study Hadith, a source of knowledge in Islam along with the Qur'an, irrespective of the geographical locations of the users. These examples indicate that the internet is beneficial in terms of time saving and efficiency.

Secondly, internet users increase notably over times, which is potentially advantageous in terms of *dakwah* targets. The number of internet users around the globe is increasing which in turn may lead to the increase of the use of social media for any purposes.<sup>38</sup> Facebook, for example, has been regularly used by 1.5 billion people, accounting for around 20% of this world population. Other social media, such as Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram have also attracted enormous number of cyberspace users. Other sources of information, including videos on You Tube, and blogging facilities have also been accessed by numbers of people.

The Islamic scholars and (or) Islamic preachers (*da'i*) may see these facts as an opportunity that internet can be utilized to spread the Islamic values and belief. They can use the internet as contemporary media on responding religious-related issues and put forwards views which can be accessed and seen globally, engaging with the *mad'u*. Thirdly, *dakwah* via internet has become an alternative for people who prefer to receive Islamic teachings through contemporary methods, adjusting to their modern lives. This may answer the suggestion outlined by Suhaimi (2012) that *dakwah* should incorporate modern ways of delivery or communication without losing its core values in spreading the messages of Islam.

In relation to this, it can't be denied that the modern world, urbanization and globalization have forced most of people to work and do things effectively and efficiently, and this in turn leads to the limited time of gaining Islamic knowledge through conventional ways. Thus, the utilization of mobile technology to access religious content or Islamic knowledge in such particular circumstances can help fill the gaps

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<sup>38</sup> Dar Meshi, Diana I. Tamir, & Hauke R. Heekeren, "Review: The Emerging Neuroscience of Social Media", Trends in Cognitive Sciences (Volume 19, Number 12, 2015), 771-782

and meet the preferences intended.<sup>39</sup> Through this way, the *mad'u* (the objects of *dakwah*) may not depend on *majlis dakwah*, a formal meeting of Islamic teachings, to gain particular knowledge of Islam as the internet may have enabled them to get the information just in a matter of clicking buttons when the connection is available. These effectiveness and efficiency may support their personal careers and interests.

Fourthly, *dakwah* through internet allows *mad'u* to select certain Islamic topics in their particular preferred times. Thus, *dakwah* through the internet may avoid the force of intention to follow specific deeds or to profess certain beliefs. According to Suhaimi (2012)<sup>40</sup> *dakwah* is the Islamic way of communication, in which coercion should be avoid, influencing individuals (the *mad'u*) to follow particular calls through persuasive ways. Such possibility may be enabled by the fact that the internet is just a place where information is provided, and the visitors may visit, search, learn, and comprehend particular things from it without any obligation for the users to follow certain commands.

The users are also unrestricted to directly confirm the content of the Islamic teachings from one source, comparing the information to other views by visiting other credible websites. In this sense, it may be clear that the internet enables the prevention from coercion of thoughts and views to the *mad'u*. Fifthly, in comparison to the other types of media of *dakwah*, the use of internet may provide opportunities that are rarely observed.

The open-access websites in the internet are accessible over times, which therefore can be reached by users at all times. In the scientific context, for example, the availability of the open-accessed websites has been seen potential to the development of scientific

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<sup>39</sup> Mohd Aliff Mohd Nawi, & Mohd Isa Hamzah, “MOBILE FATWA (M-FATWA): The Integration of Islamic Fatwa Through Mobile Technology”, Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education (TOJDE), (Volume 15, Number 2, 2014), 108-116

<sup>40</sup> Suhaimi, “Dakwah and Communication Programmes in Tertiary Higher Education in Indonesia: A Brief Survey”, *Islamiyyat: International Journal of Islamic Studies*, (Volume 34, Number (2012), 2012), 145-149

literature usage, indicated by the large number of article downloads.<sup>41</sup> Though the factual impact on scientific development has yet not been explored, such fact indicates the vibrant sphere of readerships facilitated by the internet. In the academic domain, the existence of such free resources have benefited students in acquiring learning materials, educators in modifying teaching deliveries, and also the researchers and the librarians.<sup>42</sup>

Therefore, it can be projected that *dakwah* through internet may result in similar benefits. In terms of non-scientific/ non-academic context, the internet also provides the *mad'u* with opportunities to discuss unusual (taboo) issues that are uncommonly spoken and are rarely solved in conventional religious forum. The issues may include sexual activities, intimate relationships, and may be gender issues. In this regards, providing information regarding sexual matter for example combined with Islamic teachings related to it may help visitors, in this case the *dakwah* targets, to obtaining answers and to determining their future conducts.

The other concern is that such taboo subjects are mostly rarely discussed. A website in Saudi Arabia, named *Al-Hubb Thaqafa* for example, has allowed its visitors to clarify or to express queries regarding sexual content and this can be done via chatting applications.<sup>43</sup> Many people particularly youngsters tend to use internet and online sites to seek information related to sex behaviors.<sup>44</sup> Such internet utilities may enable users to obtain enjoyably mutual

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<sup>41</sup> Philip M. Davis & William H. Walters, "The Impact of Free Access to the Scientific Literature: A Review of Recent Research", *Journal of the Medical Library Association* (Volume 99, Number 3, 2011), 208-217

<sup>42</sup> Rebecca A. Martin, "Finding Free and Open Access Resources: A Value-added Service for Patrons", *Journal of Interlibrary Loan, Document Delivery & Electronic Reserves* (Volume 20, Number 3, 2010), 189-200

<sup>43</sup> Shereen El Feki, Elise Aghazarian, & Abir Sarras, "Love is Culture: Al-Hubb Thaqafa and the New Frontiers of Sexual Expression in Arabic Social Media", *Anthropology of the Middle East* (Volume 9, Number 2, 2014), 1-18

<sup>44</sup> Kyung Sun Kim & Sei-Ching Joanna Sin, "Use of Social Media in Different Contexts of Information Seeking: Effects of Sex and Problem Solving Style", *Information Research: An International Electronic Journal* (Volume 20, Number 1, 2015) 10



communication without having personal meeting or contact with the information providers in the same time, promoting confidentiality. Thus, *dakwah* through internet can indeed meet the needs of *mad'u*.

Given that the internet has the potential to be very effective in spreading the spirit of Islam, complementing the conventional methods, it may be clear that the internet offers a shifting in the way religious messages are delivered from conventional ways to the more contemporary methods. Thus, the types of *dakwah* through internet should be well understood by the Islamic preachers. If in the past *dakwah* was characterized by Arabic formal dresses and appearance, and occasionally included door-to-door efforts, nowadays a variety of forms have been available in the internet. The forms include:

1. Websites, authorized spaces in which wide range of information can be obtained. Elmasry (2013) states that in a book entitled *Islam Dot Com: Contemporary Islamic Discourses in Cyberspace*, several websites such as [www.islamonline.net](http://www.islamonline.net), [www.amrkhaled.com](http://www.amrkhaled.com), and [www.islamway.com](http://www.islamway.com) have allowed visitors to engage and sharing ideas of Islam. Though those websites have not covered the principles of *shura* (consultation), *ijtihad* (personal assumption and interpretation), and *ijma* (general agreement) in one time,<sup>45</sup> such examples still indicate that websites may become source of knowledge for Islamic teachings.
2. Social networking sites and chatting applications (mostly social media) often powered by mobile data internet, enabling interactive communication between preachers and individuals as *dakwah* objects. They also provide opportunities for the preachers (*da'i*) to send the religious and moral messages to the members of certain communities/ groups. In general contexts, individuals who have strong capabilities in problem solving have used social media frequently to evaluate strategies in engaging with others.<sup>46</sup> Given

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<sup>45</sup> Mohamad Hamas Elmasry, "Islam in the West: A Discourse Analysis of American and British Muslim Web Content", *Journal of Arab & Muslim Media Research* (Volume 6, Number 2/3, 2013), 233-249

<sup>46</sup> Kyung Sun Kim & Sei-Ching Joanna Sin, "Use of Social Media in Different Contexts of Information Seeking: Effects of Sex and Problem Solving Style",

these findings, the *da'i* who are respected as the source of information of Islamic teachings may employ social media or social networking sites as tools for *dakwah*. Technically, *da'i* can create group in Facebook, Line, Whatsapp, or other types of applications that are openly accessible for individuals. In such groups, religious messages or reminders can be posted or be sent individually to the members of the groups, completed by valid citations of Al Qur'an and Hadith.

3. Narrative writings written and posted in blogs that are open and accessible for many people. In the Arab-Muslim world, blogs have been involved in many aspects of lives such as political and social issues, including religious-related agenda.<sup>47</sup> According to Lim (2012)<sup>48</sup> the existence of blogs in Indonesia has been prominent recently and has contributed to the promotion of interconnection and interactions within society. The blogosphere in Indonesia has the potential to be a vital tool to help Indonesian Muslims engage one another in order to bring the idea of the *ummah*, the dreamed Muslim community, into reality.<sup>49</sup>

## 5. Encountering Challenges of The Internet Use for Dakwah Purposes

The need to use the internet as media for *dakwah* can't be alienated from the fact that the globalization has brought either positive or negative impact on society, including on the existence of Islam and its core values. As already mentioned in the earlier section, some recent issues have challenged Islam world and consequently have urged the

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<sup>47</sup> Bruce Etling, John Kelly, Robert Faris, & John Palfrey, "Mapping the Arabic Blogosphere: Politics and Dissent online", *New Media & Society* (Volume 12, Number 8, 2010), 1225-1243

<sup>48</sup> Merlyna Lim, "Life is Local in the Imagined Global Community: Islam and Politics in the Indonesian Blogosphere", *Journal of Media & Religion* (Volume 11, Number 3, 2012), 127-140

<sup>49</sup> Merlyna Lim, "The Internet and Everyday Life in Indonesia: A New Moral Panic?", *Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia and Oceania* (Volume 169, Number 1, 2013), 133-147

actions taken by Islamic scholars and thinkers. One of the issues faced by Islam is *Islamophobia*.<sup>50</sup> It is known as a specific term developed in the western countries that reflects the negative attitude towards Muslims throughout the world, indicating explicit racism against the Islam believers. This issue has been prominent since the incident of 9/11 in 2001, when the World Trade Center (WTC) was attacked by terrorists.<sup>51</sup>

The forms of this Islamophobia include anti-Muslim demonstrations, airport screenings for passengers with Arabian names or appearance, deportations, and hate crimes.<sup>52</sup> Ritchey & Muchtar (2014) state that in Indonesia PESANTREN (Indonesian Islamic Schools) has been judged by particular international media and organizations as places to breed terrorists and jihadists. The *islamophobia* has also been caused by misinterpretation of particular verses in the holy Quran without a comprehensive understanding of the whole context in which the verses present<sup>53</sup>. For example, some anti-Islam thinkers often justify that Islam promotes violence using verse 9:29 of Surah At Tawbah<sup>54</sup>:

*“Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture - [fight] until they give the jizyah willingly while they are humbled.”*

or verse 2:191-193 of Surah Al Baqarah<sup>55</sup>:

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<sup>50</sup> Mattias Ekman, “Online Islamophobia and the Politics of Fear: Manufacturing the Green Scare”, *Ethnic & Racial Studies* (Volume 38, Number 11, 2015), 1986-2002

<sup>51</sup> Jeff Ritchey, & Nurhaya Muchtar, “Indonesian Pesantren and Community Social Change: Moderate Islam's Use of Media and Technology as Tools for Community Engagement”, *Journal of Religion & Popular Culture* (Volume 26, Number 3, 2014), 323-337

<sup>52</sup> Krista McQueeney, “Disrupting Islamophobia: Teaching the Social Construction of Terrorism in the Mass media”, *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (Volume 26, Number 2, 2014), 297-309

<sup>53</sup> Donald Holbrook, “Using the Qur'an to Justify Terrorist Violence: Analysing Selective Application of the Qur'an in English-Language Militant Islamist Discourse”, *Perspectives on Terrorism* (Volume 4, Number 13, 2010), 15-28

<sup>54</sup> Al Qur'an Al Karim (<http://quran.com/9/29>)

<sup>55</sup> Al Qur'an Al Karim (<http://quran.com/2/191>)

*“And kill them wherever you overtake them and expel them from wherever they have expelled you, and fitnah is worse than killing. And do not fight them at al-Masjid al-Haram until they fight you there. But if they fight you, then kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers. And if they cease, then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. Fight them until there is no [more] fitnah and [until] worship is [acknowledged to be] for Allah. But if they cease, then there is to be no aggression except against the oppressors.”*

Facing this challenge, Islamic scholars and preachers may utilize internet to help educate people about the genuine Islam, eradicating the negative perceptions about Islam itself. Given the range of formats in conducting *dakwah* through internet, *da'i* may post writings in their websites, blogs and any kind of social media to clarify and provide justification of any matters that anti-Muslim communities are afraid of and misunderstood about. Excellent examples of the endeavors are personal blogs to educate public about the misinterpretations<sup>56,57</sup>.

In these blogs, the administrators explain the related contexts containing the full verses and defend the true value of Islam in such contexts. In addition, employing video-based websites, such as Youtube, may also be beneficial. It is worth mentioning that the role of government is crucial at this stage. Lim (2013) points out that in 2012 the Indonesian government played important role in fighting against the anti-Muslim sites through legal filtering and blocking. This might have prevented the internet users from visiting such websites that promoted hatred against Islam. Meanwhile, the Islamic teachings in the internet may help educate users the peaceful and the harmony living that are primarily promoted, taught and protruded in Islam.

The internet can also be used by certain group of people, such as the group of extremists, to disseminate the way of thinking that does not reflect the authentic values of Islam. A range of social media applications have been used by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) to spread certain propaganda which is considered threatening the world's

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<sup>56</sup> <https://prophetrejectors.wordpress.com/929-at-tauba-of-quran-doesnt-encourage-muslims-to-terrorism/>

<sup>57</sup> <https://mizanuladyan.wordpress.com/2014/01/03/salah-penafsiran-surat-at-taubah-ayat-29perangi-lah-mereka-sampai-membayar-jizyah/>

peace.<sup>58</sup> Through social media, namely twitter, such extremists have persuaded the Muslims, particularly the Muslim youth, with methodically and structurally fascinating strategies that aim at recruiting potential army or future jihadists.

Some media have related such example of recruitment to the occurrence of a range of terrors happening throughout the world, including the incidents of Paris attack, and the most recent the Jakarta bombing terror. In addition, the internet is not only utilized for recruitment, but also for fund raising by searching donors from all over the world to support the activities of such terrorist organizations, and further expanding their community through chatting applications.<sup>59</sup> The latter means that the internet can be used to unite all the Islamic militant or the like-minded individuals throughout the globe.

Keene (2011)<sup>60</sup> points out that Al-Qaeda is another example of extremist groups that exploits the advancement of technology in the globalization era to spread propaganda, exhibiting the modern type of terrorism. Relating such examples to the spirit of *dakwah*, the utilization of the internet as media for disseminating the message of Islam may have exhibited double-edged sword impacts. On one hand, the internet with various social media applications may be seen by particular groups as useful tool to encourage young Muslim to take part in various radical activities. On the other hand, the internet can indeed become a valuable media for *dakwah* and facilitate the spreading of the fundamental values of Islam. For instance, the internet has the potential to be employed by the 'real' Islamic preachers to counter the argument against radicalism that deviates from the genuine faith of Islam.

The responsibility for fighting against the continuous waves of propaganda delivered by the extremist groups, can't not solely rely on the active role of *da'i* in educating young Muslims. In respect of the ultimate

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<sup>58</sup> Sean Childs, "Pure Manipulation: ISIL and the Exploitation of Social Media", Australian Army Journal (Volume 12, Number 1, 2015), 20

<sup>59</sup> Sheema D. Keene, S. D, "Terrorism and the Internet: A Double-edged Sword", Journal of Money Laundering Control (Volume 14, Number 4, 2011), 359-370

<sup>60</sup> Sheema D. Keene, S. D, "Terrorism and the Internet: A Double-edged Sword", Journal of Money Laundering Control (Volume 14, Number 4, 2011), 359-370

power owned by a country, the support from government is essentially necessary. The action taken by the Indonesian government (the Ministry of Communication and Informatics, abbreviated KEMKOMINFO) by blocking websites that have been seen containing radical views and content,<sup>61,62</sup> may be considered vital by example.

According to the Minister of Communication and Informatics of Indonesia, Rudiantara, the government has actively monitored websites that contain radicalism yet still needs proactive participation by publics.<sup>63</sup> The minister states that people can report any suspicious websites to the panel team established by KEMKOMINFO, and any submitted reports will be reviewed for further consideration and actions. The combination of the active role of *da'i*, and the support from the government and also the public are likely promising to minimize the negative effect of radical *dakwah* through internet and to help exhibit the genuine benefits of the internet for *dakwah* purposes.

*Dakwah* through internet may also open the opportunities to facilitate the resolving of sensitive issues such as gender equity and sexual discussion. Piela (2010)<sup>64</sup> points out that internet has facilitated the discussion of gender-related issues among Muslim women, promoting the empowerment of women. The existence of online discussion for women, has enabled women to discuss gender roles, marriage, and careers,<sup>65</sup> and also personal preference of clothes, particularly in wearing

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<sup>61</sup><http://tekno.kompas.com/read/2016/01/26/15345707/Kemenkominfo.Kembali.Blokir.24.Situs.Radikal>, accessed 26 January 2016

<sup>62</sup> KEMKOMINFO, "BNPT Minta Kominfo Blokir 22 Situs Radikal (BNPT Requests the Blockage of 22 Radical Websites)", [http://kominfo.go.id/index.php/content/detail/4627/BNPT-Minta-Kominfo-Blokir-22-Situs-Radikal/0/berita\\_satker-.Vq9LCM5pufQ](http://kominfo.go.id/index.php/content/detail/4627/BNPT-Minta-Kominfo-Blokir-22-Situs-Radikal/0/berita_satker-.Vq9LCM5pufQ), accessed 27 January 2016

<sup>63</sup> MetroTV News, "Menkominfo Akui Kesulitan Blokir Situs Berbau Radikal (Menkominfo Admits the Difficulty of Blocking Radical Websites)", MetroTV News (online), <http://news.metrotvnews.com/read/2016/01/25/474547/menkominfo-akui-kesulitan-blokir-situs-berbau-radikal>, accessed 30 January 2016

<sup>64</sup> Anna Piela, "Muslim women's online discussions of gender relations in Islam", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* (Volume 30, Number 3, 2010), 425-435

<sup>65</sup> Anna Piela, "Piety as A Concept Underpinning Muslim Women's Online Discussions of Marriage and Professional Career", *Contemporary Islam*(Volume 5, Number 3, 2011), 249-266

*niqab* in order to actualize their understanding about Islam.<sup>66</sup> This online discussion for women may open forum for women to express their thought and views regarding surrounding issues.

In terms of *dakwah* implementation, such online discussion can be completed with the presence of Islamic preachers (woman) to provide the women (the users of the online discussion forum) with valid source of Islamic knowledge, mainly Al Qur'an and Hadith. Sexual discussion or the talking regarding sexual activities has also become sensitive issue that is rarely conveyed on conventional *dakwah*. The presence of *Al-Hubb Thaqafa* in Saudi Arabia that enables individuals to connect with others to have healthy and mature sexual conversation may confirm and become an example of the other benefits of internet.<sup>67</sup>

The main challenge of this type of facilitating forum in relation to Islamic *dakwah* is that religious discourse is sometimes separated from the goal of the websites. Although this may become particular concern in applying such kind of websites for *dakwah* purpose, Islamic preachers in Indonesia can develop similar websites with modification by incorporating Islamic teachings regarding sexual activities and intimate relationships. By doing this, *dakwah* through internet to solve such concerning sensitive issues may indeed cover a wide range of topics and facilitate most people.

Lastly, the major challenge of *dakwah* through internet is the accessibility of *mad'u* to the internet connection. Indonesia has been experiencing spatial inequality, which is one of the characteristic of developing countries.<sup>68</sup> This is caused by the unequal regional development, and the spatial inequality is significantly distinct between the urban and the remote areas. Besides that, not all people in Indonesia

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<sup>66</sup> Anna Piela, "Online Islamic Spaces as Communities of Practice for Female Muslim Converts Who Wear the Niqab", *Hawwa*, (Volume 13, Number 3, 2015), 363-382

<sup>67</sup> Shereen El Feki, Elise Aghazarian, & Abir Sarras, "Love is Culture: Al-Hubb Thaqafa and the New Frontiers of Sexual Expression in Arabic Social Media", *Anthropology of the Middle East* (Volume 9, Number 2, 2014), 1-18

<sup>68</sup> Sujarwoto & Gindo Tampubolon, "Spatial Inequality and the Internet Divide in Indonesia 2010–2012", *Telecommunications Policy* (article in press, corrected proof, 2015).

have access to internet using their smartphones since less educated and older people tend to use feature phones compared to the youngsters and the more-educated people who use smartphone with connection to mobile internet.<sup>69</sup> Although the inequality in accessing internet among Indonesian people is a factual problem, conducting *dakwah* through internet is still promising and worth implementing.

Sujarwoto and Tampubolon (2015) state that even though spatial inequality still exists in Indonesia, there is evidence that the access to internet within the country has significantly increased over time. Furthermore, *dakwah* principally can be conducted through various methods, and the internet is just one of a range of alternatives. This particular method is simply targeted to those who have access to internet connection.

### C. Conclusion

*Dakwah* in Islam is the attempt to call upon mankind to follow the path decreed by Allah, which is the Islamic system, thoroughly, through writing, speech, or conduct. The rapid development of information technology, particularly the internet, has offered a shifting in the delivery of *dakwah* (Islamic teaching or disseminating the values of Islam), from conventional into a contemporary method. The possibility of internet to be utilized for *dakwah* is based on several consideration. *Dakwah* through internet is likely efficient in terms of time consumption compared to face-to face *majlis dakwah*, and also accessible at all times.

The numbers of internet users also increase over time which is beneficial in regards to *dakwah* target. Besides that, *dakwah* through internet can also adjust with the rhythm of people' modern lives. It also promotes individuals's independency of conducts based on their comprehension of certain Islamic knowledge, avoiding coercion of intention. Internet also can facilitate the discussion of particular scopes

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<sup>69</sup> Lia Puspitasari & Kenichi Ishii, "Digital Divides and Mobile Internet in Indonesia: Impact of Smartphones", *Telematics and Informatics* (Volume 33, Number 2, 2016), 472-483



that are rarely observed and solved in conventional *dakwah*. Any views, thoughts and perspectives are possible to be expressed in various forms including websites, the use of social media and networking websites and also narrative writings.

*Dakwah* through internet may also encounter challenges and opportunities in the same time. Some concerning global issues such as Islamophobia, Islamic-related terrorism, gender equity, and sexual relationships issues can be addressed by the help of internet to disseminating clarification, correction, and justification of Islam core values. The spatial equity should also be taken into account though recent reports indicated that internet access within the nation will keep improving.

Therefore, *dakwah* through internet is viable to be implemented in Indonesia to help spread the Islamic messages. The implication of this literature review may include further field research to explore the implementation of internet use for the above purpose of *dakwah* or to evaluate to effectiveness of the existing practice of *dakwah* through internet.

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