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Interactive Da'wah Communication of KH. Anwar Zahid on YouTube: Integrating Traditional and Contemporary Methods

Mubasit

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia; mubasit@radenintan.ac.id

Abstract	*Preachers need effective communication patterns for their religious messages to be conveyed properly. KH. As a preacher, Anwar Zahid has combined traditional and contemporary communication patterns and created interactive dialogue with his audience. This study aims to identify KH Anwar Zahid's communication patterns on his YouTube platform, focusing on his preaching methods. This research uses a qualitative approach with digital ethnography. Journals, books, electronic documents, and da'wah content analysis are used as research data. Data collection techniques include observation, content analysis, and documentation. Data analysis is done through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. This research was conducted from June to December 2024. The results of this study show that the integration of traditional preaching and the adaptation of contemporary preaching through the method of dialogue creates religious participation among audiences. He can implement interactive verbal and non-verbal communication in his preaching—the YouTube channel of KH. Anwar Zahid, as a representation of Islamic media, not only conveys religious messages but also facilitates value transformation through communicative-dialogic da'wah methods. This research has implications for da'wah communication patterns in the digital space, positively impacting audience engagement in religious activities.*
Keywords	Da'wah Communication, KH. Anwar Zahid, Digital Media

Corresponding Author
Mubasit
Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia; mubasit@radenintan.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of science and technology has positioned the internet as a new public space and a contestation of ideology among religious activists (Baidawi, 2025). As a fertile ground for spreading Islamic teachings in an interactive, communicative, and dialogical manner, the internet encourages the involvement of da'wah practitioners in religious activities (Hidayatullah, Syarif, and Dharmawan S, 2003). Several da'wah activists have used digital media as a space to promote Islamic values through a wide variety of methods, content, and variety of strategies. This is balanced by the increasing number of internet users over time. A report by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association in 2025 revealed that the number of internet users in Indonesia has reached 229 million or 80,66% of the total population (APJII, 2025). The high dependence of the community on the internet has become a strategic opportunity for da'wah practitioners to convey religious messages.

Previously, religious studies only focused on pulpits, mosques, or religious forums. However, with the openness of information and technological sophistication, digital media has played an

important role in shaping virtual religious authority and religious literacy spaces (Baidawi, 2025). Nowadays, Islamic information can be easily accessed and obtained through digital platforms as long as there is an internet connection (Khroul, 2021). Varied content, selection options and diverse methods are some conveniences of accessing religious content in digital media (Mohiuddin, 2023). The connection between the community and religious leaders on digital media channels encourages online religious activities. This has the potential to increase online religious expression among the faithful.

KH. Anwar Zahid is one of the popular preachers who enlivens the Indonesian preaching scene today. A wide range of Islamic content on his YouTube covers faith, sharia and morals. KH. Anwar Zahid's preaching style emphasises interactive dialogue with his audience. This study examines how the da'wah discourse constructed by KH. Anwar Zahid fosters two-way communication, creating a communicative religious atmosphere (Tan et al., 2022). Dakwah that only focuses on material without involving discussion with the audience tends to be rigid and boring. The dakwah communication created by Abah Anza also encourages religious enthusiasm among the audience, as shown by likes and expressions in the comments section (Nashrillah & Marzuki, 2021). In this context, the author's view of KH Anwar Zahid's da'wah communication creates religious enthusiasm that imparts religious knowledge and becomes an attraction in da'wah studies in the digital environment (Oparin, 2023). He preached to all groups without distinguishing between economic background, language, education, age, gender, and ethnicity. He used a contextual approach in observing the socio-cultural conditions and problems experienced by the community, which he then used as material for his preaching (Aprilyawati & Nurudin, 2022)—considering that the essence of da'wah is not merely descriptive and oriented towards the delivery of material, but rather an effort to achieve the goals of improving the quality of life, strengthening one's faith, and shaping a better society (Hilmi, 2021).

This study believes that using everyday language among preachers makes it easier for the community to digest the messages. KH. As a charismatic cleric, Anwar Zahid has played a vital role in educating the people through his interactive communication (Zafri et al., 2023). Dakwah embraces all groups without distinction, making it admired by many, so many congregations attend its dakwah studies. The presented themes raise societal or current issues (Ismiati et al., 2024). His skill in two-way communication with his congregation has made him very popular, especially among teenagers and mothers. Reflected in his preaching, he often communicates with children and teenagers. The interactive preaching builds rapport between the preacher and the audience, creating a soothing religious atmosphere without any distance (Akhwanudin et al., 2024).

Research on da'wah communication has been widely studied among academics. Zulkefli Aini and Abdul Ghafar Don show that da'wah requires certain skills and methods to influence mad'u (da'wah's object). Communication skills are one of the important aspects that every da'i must possess and practise. Meaningful interaction between the da'i and the community can be established through communication, even in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. A meaningful relationship between the preacher and the congregation can be optimally formed by combining the principles of da'wah and communication elements. This is because communication skills are important for mastering other skills (DR. Aini, Zulkefli, DR. Ghafar, 2022). Yogi Muhammad Yusuf mentions that communicating religious teachings through migrant youth communities can bring social change. More religious lifestyles demonstrate this, using digital media to spread religious teachings, social behaviour, media consumption, and developing interpersonal relationships (Yusuf, 2025).

This study examines the communication aspects of KH. Anwar Zahid's preaching through his YouTube account @AnzaChannelKHAnwarZahid emphasizes his preaching methods. Previous

research has not discussed this topic, so it is considered necessary to explore it further. Abah Anza's YouTube channel creates two-way communication through preaching, which generates a discourse between the preacher and the audience. The communication of KH. Anwar Zahid's preaching is expected to bring new insights into efforts to build dialogue between preachers and their audience. Interactive da'wah dialogue can foster a religious spirit through a persuasive approach. Surah An-Nahl verse 125 implies: "Invite (people) to the way of your Lord with wisdom, good instruction, and argue with them in a better way". This research provides an important insight into how several religious leaders today are media literate and use it as a channel for preaching to reach a more global audience. Therefore, social media has become an important part of preaching activities among religious leaders (Baidawi, Daulay Hamdan, Khamis, 2024).

The active participation of the media team in designing, editing, content creation, website management, and publishing content on digital platforms also plays an important role behind the scenes of his preaching. This study aims to identify KH. Anwar Zahid's preaching communication on his YouTube platform. It is hoped that specific research on his developed preaching methods will be produced through preaching communication. Dakwah communication is the delivery of religious messages from da'i to mad'u through gentle language, hoping to change society (Qadaruddin, Muhammad, Bakri, 2022).

KH. Anwar Zahid's da'wah communication uses language that is easy to understand and adapts to the community's social conditions, so his da'wah message is more easily accepted. His expertise in communicating in public communication has made him an inspiration to many people. Da'i as a da'wah communicator is important in transmitting religious content using verbal and non-verbal language (Baidawi, Daulay Hamdan, Khamis, 2024). He acts as a preacher of goodness, a guide for the people's faith, and an agent of social change, thereby contributing to the intellectual development of society. Therefore, it is important to identify the qualifications of a preacher in terms of his Islamic educational background, depth of religious knowledge, religious references, morals, and behaviour (Fakhruroji, 2023). This study understands that digital media optimisation is not only understood as a mere instrument for content dissemination, but also as an emerging Islamic cyber environment. As described by Gary R Bunt in the title of his book, iMuslims: Rewiring the House of Islam.

For information, KH Anwar Zahid was born in Bojonegoro Regency on 11 March 1974. He studied at the At Tanwir Islamic boarding school. Not stopping there, his enthusiasm for studying religious knowledge continued to accompany him. He then studied religion at the Langitan Islamic Boarding School in Tuban. After that, he studied the Quran and focused on memorising it at the Talimul Quranil Adzim Islamic Boarding School (APTQ) in Bungah, Gresik. He also now has his own Islamic boarding school foundation called Sabilunnajah, which is also a place for studying at the MTs (Madrasah Tsanawiyah) and MA (Madrasah Aliyah) levels. He has the Sabilunnajah Islamic Boarding School in Bojonegoro Regency, East Java. The popularity of KH Anwar Zahid in the world of Islamic preaching has led him to be frequently invited to countries in Asia, such as Hong Kong, South Korea, and Malaysia. He also holds a regular *Maqoman Mahmudah zikir* gathering every Sunday *Kliwon*, which includes the recitation of *Rattibul Haddad* and *istighasah*.

2. METHODS

This study uses qualitative research with a digital ethnographic approach (Hine, 2000). Digital ethnography is the ongoing online communication activities of virtual entities or communities. The researcher's involvement in ethnographic studies plays an important role in recording digital traces of

KH. Anwar Zahid's preaching content, noting what is happening and how preaching communication patterns occur, listening to his preaching conversations, collecting data, and summarising documents obtained through the YouTube account @AnzaChannelKHAnwarZahid. This research was conducted from June to December 2024 and focused on identifying KH. Anwar Zahid's communication on the YouTube platform produced specific research on his preaching methods.

The digital ethnography approach was chosen to identify the da'wah communication created by KH. Anwar Zahid can encourage religious enthusiasm among his audience through his YouTube channel. Journals, books, electronic documents, and da'wah communication analysis were used as research data, providing a complete picture of how da'wah communication takes place and generates enthusiasm among the audience (L. J. Moleong, 2000). Purposive sampling was used in determining the content about morals displayed, and selected as many as two videos about preaching related to morals (Sugiyono, 2012). The content was selected because it shows how the communication pattern in preaching occurs between KH. Anwar Zahid and his audience. The interactive dialogue needed to observe the process of his preaching method is expected to stimulate religious enthusiasm among the audience. Data collection techniques include observation, content analysis and documentation (J. L. Moleong, 2015). Observation involves digitally observing the patterns of KH. Anwar Zahid's preaching communication on his YouTube channel. Content analysis involves analysing the meaning of the content and ongoing preaching communication. Documentation refers to the collection of data through digital documents depicted through KH. Anwar Zahid's preaching content on his YouTube channel. Triangulation with theory is carried out by verifying findings through comparison with relevant sources, methods, and theories.

The methods used include asking various questions, checking them through various data sources, and using various methods to ensure the data's validity (Suharsimi, 2006). Data analysis through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is intended to summarise research data related to KH. Anwar Zahid's da'wah communication provides an important overview of how the da'wah material delivery process occurs. Data presentation is intended to narrate KH. Anwar Zahid's da'wah communication through his YouTube channel. Concluding means presenting conclusions to answer the research focus on identifying KH. Anwar Zahid's da'wah communication on his YouTube platform (Ahyar et al., 2020). The way researchers ensure the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation is by checking it repeatedly.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 KH Anwar Zahid's Da'wah Communication on YouTube

This study of da'wah communication is based on Max Weber's theoretical framework, which refers to charismatic authority, a type of leadership whose legitimacy derives from personal charm, extraordinary qualities, or supernatural powers. According to the Weberian perspective, charisma is understood as a distinctive trait inherent in a person's personality, so that they are considered to have extraordinary qualities and are treated as if they have been endowed with magical, supernatural powers, superhuman strength, or at least special qualities that ordinary people do not possess. This is seen as something unattainable by ordinary people, but rather is considered to originate from a divine source, as a special gift or example, thus treating the individual as a leader (Weber, 1978).

Charisma was not originally a concept introduced by Weber, but was taken from its theological meaning in the New Testament, which refers to the communal gift of grace given to the early Church. In Weber's view, charisma was transferred from the religious sphere to the non-religious sphere,

including politics, and was understood primarily as something that originated from individuals, not communities. Charismatic leadership is determined by qualities inherent in the individual. This concept is seen as an alternative form of leadership to the models Weber referred to as "traditional" and "rational-legal", which are essentially bureaucratic. In contrast, outside the usual patterns of hierarchical accountability, charisma is non-bureaucratic and opposes rationality (Weber, 1978).

In the context of religious communication, KH. Anwar Zahid's digital charisma has successfully created religious appeal among audiences. A critical analysis of KH. Anwar Zahid's da'wah communication lies in the combination of traditional and modern da'wah communication styles, personal strength in spreading religious teachings, and profound advice that often touches the hearts of all levels of society. Fluid da'wah communication generates appeal and enthusiasm among audiences (Choirin et al., 2024). He demonstrated this in various preaching opportunities on the pulpit facilitated by his YouTube channel. KH Anwar Zahid's charm slowly built emotional bonds and personal closeness with all his followers. The uniqueness he possessed through his communication style seemed to be recognised by his followers. At the same time, the community needed a moral figure amid the social problems that were occurring.

According to Weber, charismatic routines can disappear if they are not institutionalised. Weber continued, traditionalisation was passed down from his father, KH. Ahmad Mufid. Meanwhile, digital media is used as a tool for preaching to reach a wider audience. According to Weber, charisma is closely related to a personality that captivates and attracts followers. It is reinforced by good speaking skills, so that a leader can convey their mission effectively. Elements such as voice, storytelling, material, and intonation are important because charisma cannot be conveyed through writing but must be experienced directly through hearing. According to Lasswell, communication is conveying messages from the communicator to the recipient through channels that produce certain effects (Lasswell, 1960). In the context of KH Anwar Zahid's da'wah communication, he delivers da'wah content through the YouTube platform to an audience expecting a positive impact on attitudes and behaviour. Meanwhile, the goal of communication is to change attitudes, change perspectives, change behaviour, and change society.

In this study, the author chose KH. Anwar Zahid is the object of study for da'wah. This well-known preacher in Indonesia, active in da'wah both in the real world and on social media, has given a new direction to traditional da'wah discourse and the development of contemporary da'wah. The built da'wah communication is communicative and interactive with the audience (Hudah & Suparno, 2023). In order to realise inclusive da'wah, creative and innovative da'wah methods are needed that are capable of responding to the challenges of the times (Ibrahim, 2024). One of the successes of da'wah lies in the communication of da'wah delivered by da'i to the people, thereby bringing about social change. Da'wah communication is not merely understood as the process of spreading religious messages, but there are effective methods that impact the audience (Maharani & Nurfadilah, 2023).

In practice, religious content is not merely analysed as a phenomenon of religious message transmission, but within certain limits can be viewed as a phenomenon of religious representation. The YouTube channel @AnzaChannelKHAnwarZahid serves as an intermediary for religious messages through a form of religious communication created by preachers. This is a correlation between media and religion in a classic form that has developed rapidly. In this context, da'wah websites, as media representatives, not only transmit religious messages but also have the opportunity to become providers and distributors of religious messages. This phenomenon, referred to by Hjarvard as the mediatisation of religion, has implications for the dominance of media logic over religious institutions or figures,

taking over the role of the media as a means of spreading Islam (Hjarvard, Stig & Lovheim, 2012)..

The YouTube account @AnzaChannelKHAnwarZahid has 3.3 million subscribers, produced 2,564 thousand videos, and was viewed 600,041,693 times (Zahid, 2018). Of course, the YouTube channel is managed by a behind-the-scenes media team that designs, edits, and publishes the content. The involvement of the media team plays an important role in religious publications on social media. Netizens visit YouTube accounts through highly interactive comment sections (Astor et al., 2024).

Figure 1: KH Anwar Zahid's Da'wah Communication
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haBpl0WN-X4

Video published on 9 October 2024. The @AnzaChannelKHAnwarZahid channel, as a representation of religion in the digital space, is not limited to transmitting religious messages. However, religious content can be discussed, criticised, and even debated by the public (netizens). There are at least three types of changes as implications of the mediatisation of religion. Namely, the process aspect, the interaction aspect, and the relationship aspect. The process aspect refers to the pattern of communication of KH. Anwar Zahid's preaching, which has migrated to the digital environment, is given the simulational nature of the media. The delivery of religious sermons through the media has changed how people interpret and understand the religious and spiritual meanings presented in the form of content (Fakhruroji, 2021). Such is the content of the preaching presented through the YouTube account @AnzaChannelKHAnwarZahid

Regarding interaction, the media can potentially place audiences in a passive position. In addition, tausiyah delivered through the media shows a more symbolic interaction, where the audience acts as recipients of messages and technology users. In other words, to receive tausiyah as religious messages, the audience must interact through technological devices. This shows that mechanical nature occurs not only in the process of creating meaning, but also in the process of receiving it. The YouTube comment section of KH illustrates this. Anwar Zahid, where symbolic interactions occur that give rise to verbal and non-verbal meaning exchanges. From a relational perspective, the media can potentially transform interactions between religious figures and congregations into something more mechanistic. The virtualisation of religious sermons through the media can reshape the identities, positions, and roles of religious figures and congregations as a consequence of adapting to the logic of the media (Fakhruroji, 2021).

The da'wah website through the @AnzaChannelKHAnwarZahid channel has transformed into an emerging digital religious authority. Research by Rahmat Hidayatullah shows that, as it develops, religious authority in the digital realm no longer depends on legitimacy derived from a person's

connection to tradition or prophetic history, but is more influenced by skills in utilising digital technology, visibility in the virtual world, and the quality of content produced within a reputation and ranking system governed by algorithms (Hidayatullah, 2024). According to the classical concept of authority, according to Max Weber. One of them is charismatic authority. Charismatic authority is a form of authority based on respect for special sanctity, heroic courage, or exemplary qualities possessed by an individual (Weber, 1978). KH. Anwar Zahid possesses charismatic authority through his exemplary nature as a cleric who delivers sermons, provides moral guidance, and shapes character. Digital media serves as an instrument for his preaching, supporting his digital charisma through the dissemination of religious messages.

This study also examines the role of the Sabilun Najah Islamic Boarding School media team behind the editing and publication of content on Abah Anza's (Anwar Zahid) social media accounts as an effort to reach a global audience. Editing, designing, distributing, and publishing content are part of the duties of the Sabilun Najah Islamic Boarding School media team, including young people. Virtual da'wah has become an important part of the da'wah community in reaching a global audience (Zaid et al., 2022). The YouTube platform has become one of the digital channels used as a medium for preaching due to the interaction between preachers and followers, its sharing features, the ability to watch videos in full, and the variety of preachers available. As done by the Anza Channel media team on YouTube, they consistently present polite and interesting preaching content. The preaching message on the Anza Channel YouTube platform by KH. Anwar Zahid serves as a religious literacy expert among the Muslim community (Polizzi, 2025). Residents unable to attend offline religious studies can access Islamic content on YouTube channels.

Figure 2: KH. Anwar Zahid's Interactive Dialogue
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=repflbXsA1w

This religious video was posted on 13 November 2024. The content of this video is not limited to the transmission of religious messages, but also the transformation of values, religious revival, and participation in religious activities among the audience. This is relevant as stated by Hjarvard regarding the YouTube account @AnzaChannelKHAnwarZahid as a representation of today's Islamic sites that provide and distribute religious information, which has created the mediatisation of religion. This mediatisation of religion has given rise to a transformation of values, changing the direction or character of actual socio-cultural activities (Hjarvard, Stig & Lovheim, 2012). At least two factors can explain how this religious transformation works. Islamic media, as depicted through KH Anwar Zahid's YouTube channel, has generated religious appeal and audience participation. The da'wah website also creates

emotional engagement among the audience (netizens) because they can freely express themselves in the comments section.

The diversity of religious sites on digital platforms has effectively taken over the function of the media as a provider and distributor of information. As Hjarvard argues, the process of the mediatisation of religion does not change religion uniformly or produce a single form, but rather encompasses a variety of changes that interact with pre-existing religious dynamics, such as the trends towards individualisation and secularisation (Hjarvard, Stig & Lovheim, 2012). Religious media and channels are naturally integrated due to technological advances and the openness of information. For example, KH Anwar Zahid's YouTube account, as a representative of Islamic websites, has created a new online religious authority.

As a general overview, this section will briefly describe important developments related to the three media metaphors proposed by Meyrowitz, each of which represents a set of media functions: media as a conduit, media as a language, and media as an environment (Meyrowitz, 1986). Media as a channel. The media acts as a provider of information and experiences related to religious issues. However, the media only distribute religious texts that are institutionalised within a limited scope. As represented by the @AnzaChannelKHAnwarZahid channel, Islamic media has become a source of religious information that has generated enthusiasm among audiences. The audio-visual-based da'wah channel, through traditional da'wah communication patterns and contemporary da'wah developments, has slowly given rise to the digital charisma of KH. Anwar Zahid.

Media as language. Media does not merely produce and transmit religious teachings, but also shapes them in various formats, especially through popular cultural genres such as adventure stories, consumer guides, reality shows, and science fiction. This is because the media's main purpose is not to preach, but to attract the audience's attention. In this context, framing religion in the format of prophetic stories and issues of community life through interactive communication. Media as an environment. The media contribute to production and change in social interaction and cultural communities. In other words, at a certain point, the media has replaced several social functions previously carried out by religious forums, which are now transferred through various religious channels. Thus, this da'wah site gives rise to socio-religious relationships between audiences in the digital religious space (Meyrowitz, 1986).

Table 1.1: Harold Laswell's Communication Model
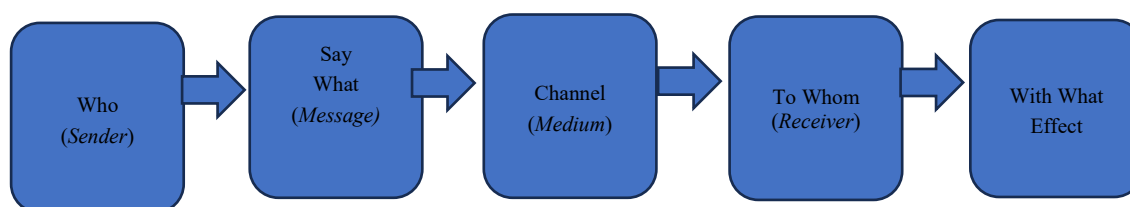
The implementation of Laswell's communication model in KH. Anwar Zahid's da'wah communication practice relies on delivering religious messages in a communicative-interactive manner through his YouTube channel. The da'wah messages conveyed are relevant to the social life of today's society and offer concrete solutions. The audience's response to his da'wah is very enthusiastic, as shown by their expressions in the comments section. The interactivity of KH. Anwar Zahid's da'wah can be understood as a distinctive feature of his communication style in spreading religious messages by actively involving the audience (Qadaruddin, Muhammad, Bakri, 2022). First, he emphasises dialogue and participation, where he does not simply give a one-way lecture, but often engages the

audience with questions, jokes, or spontaneous responses.

The audience feels like they are playing a role in delivering the sermon, rather than just being passive listeners. Second, he uses communicative and popular language, employing everyday language easily understood by all groups, from rural to urban communities. Humour makes the congregation more relaxed, so religious messages are well received. Thirdly, verbal and non-verbal interaction, where he often comments on the congregation's responses (e.g., laughter, applause, or remarks). His body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice add to the power of the interaction. Dakwah communication on YouTube illustrates the central role that religious websites play in providing credible sources of religious information. Islamic digital platforms, particularly YouTube, have become producers and distributors of information and interactive media that give rise to the expression and circulation of personal beliefs (Fakhruroji, 2021).

Table 2.1 : Communication Models in the Da'wah Context

No	Elements of Da'wah Communication	Description
1	Who	Dakwah Practitioners
2	Say What	Dakwah Material Delivered
3	Channel	Using Any Dakwah Media
4	To Whom	Every Muslim Community
5	With What Effect	Acquires religious knowledge, undergoes behavioural change, and forms a pious Muslim personality

As reflected in the table above, the pattern of communication in preaching must be applied by preachers in ensuring the delivery of religious messages, which are expected to bring about social change in society (Ilaihi Wahyu, 2010). Komunikasi dakwah yang dilakukan KH. Anwar Zahid adalah komunikasi interaktif antara da'i dan mad'u (audien). This two-way communication flows smoothly and creates a peaceful religious climate (Syukur & Saputra, 2024). Furthermore, he conveyed his messages clearly, kindly, and gently. He sometimes delivered his messages standing on a pulpit or sitting on a chair, depending on the situation and conditions.

4. CONCLUSION

KH. Anwar Zahid's da'wah communication creates religious appeal and enthusiasm through a fluid and flexible approach using easy-to-understand language. His inherent personal strength reinforces his digital charisma through da'wah language that often touches the hearts of all social strata. Da'wah dialogue creates interactive communication through a combination of traditional da'wah and contemporary da'wah developments. Digital media has played an important role in religious preaching and moral appeals to the people. The digital charisma seen in the figure of KH. Anwar Zahid can strengthen the pattern of da'wah communication, which appears flexible and evokes emotion. The

aspect of humour in creating a more fluid atmosphere for da'wah can build intimacy with his congregation. This research has implications for da'wah communication, which has given rise to the digital charisma of KH. Anwar Zahid created religious excitement among his audience. To complement this research, further studies are needed to examine the role of media teams in shaping digital religious content.

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