

Islamic Da'wah Transformation in the Digital Era: Ustadz Husain Basyaiban's Strategy in the Mata Naqra Program

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Abstract

Preaching in the digital era has undergone significant transformation, with social media serving as the primary platform for disseminating religious messages. The Mata Naqra program, hosted by Ustadz Husain Basyaiban, offers a distinctive approach to digital preaching by emphasizing systematic and dialogical studies of classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning). This study employs a qualitative design using content analysis of 15 purposively selected video episodes based on their relevance to Islamic learning, dialogical interaction patterns, and preaching strategies. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis through data reduction, coding, categorization, and interpretation to identify patterns of virtual preaching strategies. The findings show that the preaching strategy in Mata Naqra is constructed through three main patterns: strengthening dialogical interaction between preacher and audience, implementing a gradual and systematic learning structure, and contextualizing Islamic messages within the attention economy of digital culture. These patterns form a model of da'wah that balances scientific rationality and spiritual depth, presenting Islam as a contextual and adaptive teaching aligned with contemporary developments. The findings also indicate that digital preaching functions not only as a medium for message dissemination but also as a space for knowledge production that reshapes religious authority and Islamic learning in virtual environments.

Keywords

Transformation of Da'wah; Digital Da'wah; Mata Naqra; Social Media

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1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic da'wah in the digital era is undergoing a significant transformation characterized by a shift from the cultivation of religious consciousness toward attention-based religious communication (Hotmian, 2024). Digital media operate through the logics of speed, visibility, and popularity competition, which often conflict with the deep and reflective process required for internalizing religious values (Lestari, 2024). This condition indicates that the challenges of digital da'wah are not merely quantitative in terms of dissemination, but also qualitative in relation to its epistemological depth (Husna & Muhid, 2021).



This transformation also affects how Islamic knowledge is produced and understood in digital spaces. Religious information tends to be consumed in an instant, fragmented, and decontextualized manner, resulting in partial understandings of Islam (Zaini & Rahmawati, 2021). In this context, digital da'wah functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a space for the production of religious knowledge itself (Efendi et al., 2023).

Alongside this shift, the authority of da'wah has also changed. The legitimacy of preachers is no longer determined solely by scholarly competence, but is increasingly influenced by performativity, emotional appeal, and the ability to construct narratives that align with audience preferences (Mastori & Islamy, 2021). This reflects a shift from pedagogical da'wah toward performative da'wah, where image often becomes more dominant than argumentation (Ahmad Rizal et al., 2024), while also indicating new power relations in digital religious authority (Hariyati, 2025). Within this context, certain digital da'wah practices attempt to balance media logic with the depth of Islamic teachings. One such example is the Mata Naqra program hosted by Ustadz Husain Basyaiban, which presents da'wah in a dialogical and reflective format rather than a one-way preaching model. This format is characterized by interactive question-and-answer sessions, contextual explanations, and discourse-based delivery of materials, thereby creating a more substantive learning space within the digital ecosystem (Samsudin & Putri, 2023; Yanti, 2022).

Previous studies have generally viewed digital da'wah as a communication instrument, focusing on media expansion, message effectiveness, and audience engagement (Chanra & Tasruddin, 2025). This approach has led to the underexploration of the strategic dimension of da'wah as a process of knowledge production and authority formation (Siregar & Rasyid, 2023). Moreover, studies examining how da'wah strategies are consciously designed to reconcile algorithmic logic and the attention economy with the depth of Islamic teachings remain limited (Husna & Muhid, 2021).

Accordingly, there is a clear research gap, namely the dominance of understanding digital da'wah as media adaptation rather than as a strategic transformation of Islamic da'wah practice. Existing literature has not specifically analyzed digital da'wah programs as structured strategic models for constructing meaning, authority, and religious consciousness in virtual spaces (Salma et al., 2022; Allisa & Triyono, 2023).

The novelty of this study lies in its analysis of the virtual da'wah strategy within the Mata Naqra program, which is not merely understood as a communication practice but as a model of strategic transformation in digital da'wah. Operationally, this strategy is examined through three key aspects: (1) the dialogical interaction patterns between preacher and audience, (2) the structural design of da'wah content in digital format, and (3) the contextualization of Islamic messages within the attention-based culture of social media. Thus, this study does not merely interpret digital da'wah as a

technological adaptation process, but as a space for meaning construction, the production of religious authority, and the formation of new religious consciousness within the digital ecosystem. This contribution extends digital da'wah studies from a descriptive-functional approach toward a more operational and analytical strategic-epistemological framework.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a qualitative content analysis design to examine the virtual da'wah strategy of Ustadz Husain Basyaiban in the Mata Naqra program published on YouTube (Yunita & Hasanah, 2024). This approach is selected because the study focuses on interpreting meanings, communicative patterns, and the construction of da'wah narratives within digital religious discourse. Qualitative content analysis is considered appropriate for systematically examining message structures, interaction patterns, and communicative strategies embedded in audiovisual da'wah content (Hasiholan, 2024).

The data consist of 12 video episodes of the Mata Naqra program published between 2023 and 2025, selected using purposive sampling. The selection criteria include (1) videos containing interactive dialogue between the preacher and participants, (2) videos with explicit discussion of Islamic textual references (*kitab kuning*), and (3) videos with substantial engagement duration (minimum 30 minutes). These criteria were applied to ensure that the selected data adequately represent the communicative and epistemic characteristics of virtual da'wah practices. The data were collected through digital documentation by downloading and archiving the selected videos, followed by verbatim transcription to facilitate systematic textual analysis (Kusuma, 2023).

The unit of analysis includes thematic segments of da'wah discourse, narrative structures, linguistic expressions, interactional patterns, and argumentation strategies (Ibad, 2025). Data analysis was conducted using a thematic coding procedure consisting of three stages. First, open coding was applied to identify meaningful units of communication related to da'wah strategies. Second, axial coding was used to categorize patterns into thematic clusters such as message construction, dialogical interaction, epistemic framing, and audience engagement. Third, selective coding was conducted to integrate core themes that represent the overall virtual da'wah strategy in the Mata Naqra program (Muliana et al., 2025). To ensure analytical rigor, this study applied theoretical triangulation by linking empirical findings with perspectives on Islamic da'wah and digital communication theory (Diyannah, 2023). In addition, credibility was strengthened through consistency checks of coding results and iterative comparison between video context and transcription data to maintain interpretative accuracy.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Systematic Study of Authoritative Kitab kuning

The analysis indicates that the Mata Naqra program consistently implements a kitab kuning-based study model delivered in a systematic and sequential manner. Each classical text is discussed comprehensively until completion before transitioning to another book, forming a structured learning pattern within the digital space.

Table 1 presents a comprehensive dataset regarding the types of classical Islamic texts studied, the number of episodes, and their completion status on the Mata Naqra YouTube channel during the 2024–2026 period.

Table 1. Data on Kitab kuning Studies on Mata Naqra YouTube Channel (2024–2026)

No	Academic Year	Book Title	Number of Episodes	Description
1	2024	Arba'in Nawawi	42 Episodes	Completed
2	2024	Safinah An-Najah	85 Episodes	Completed
3	2024	Mustolahat Al-'Ulum Al-Islamiyah	1 Episode	Completed
4	2024	Al-Qowaid Al-Asasiyah fi 'Ilm Al-Mustolah	58 Episodes	Completed
5	2024–2025	Al-Ibanah wa Al-Ifadah	26 Episodes	Completed
–	Special Edition	Tashih Al-Masar Playlist	4 Episodes	Ongoing/Revision

The data in Table 1 indicates that Mata Naqra does not merely present content-based da'wah, but also constructs a structured learning system grounded in a continuous classical curriculum. The dominance of episodes in specific texts such as Safinah An-Najah (85 episodes) and Al-Qawaid Al-Asasiyah fi 'Ilm Al-Mustolah (58 episodes) reflects intensive thematic elaboration rather than superficial coverage.

This pattern suggests that digital da'wah in this program adopts the epistemic structure of pesantren, where knowledge transmission is conducted in a gradual, systematic, and text-authority-based manner. Accordingly, the data demonstrate that Mata Naqra reconstructs the classical Islamic scholarly tradition into a digital format without losing its methodological depth.

To further illustrate the organizational structure of the learning system, Figure 1 presents the playlist arrangement of the Mata Naqra YouTube channel, which visually demonstrates how each classical text is categorized into distinct and continuous study series.

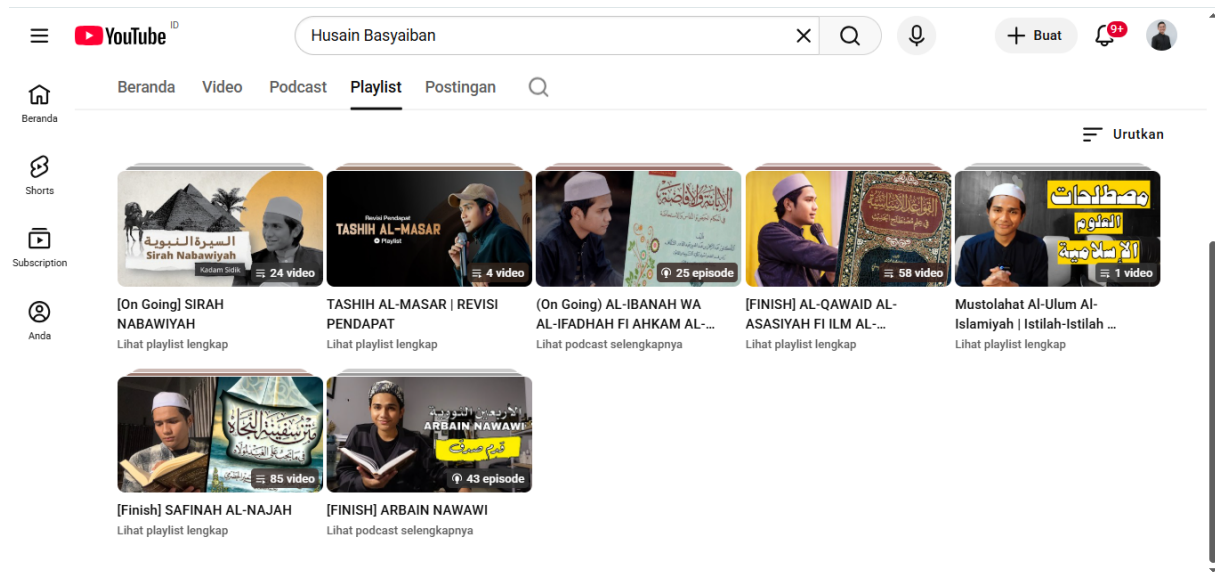


Figure 1. Systematic Kitab kuning Study on Mata Naqra YouTube Channel

Figure 1 shows that the Mata Naqra YouTube channel organizes its content into thematic playlists that correspond to specific classical texts, such as Arba'in Nawawi, Safinah Al-Najah, Al-Qawaid Al-Asasiyah, Al-Ibanah wa Al-Ifadah, and Sirah Nabawiyah. Each playlist is designed as a structured learning unit that allows the audience to follow the progression of a single text from beginning to completion.

This visualization confirms that the program does not operate as fragmented digital preaching content, but rather as a systematic knowledge architecture. The playlist-based structure reflects a digital adaptation of traditional Islamic learning systems, particularly the pesantren model, where knowledge is delivered sequentially, hierarchically, and based on authoritative texts.

Construction of Progressive Da'wah Narratives

The analysis of lecture transcripts and digital da'wah content in Mata Naqra indicates that the da'wah narratives are constructed with a progressive orientation emphasizing contextual interpretation of Islamic texts. Islam is consistently framed as an open, reflective, and rational epistemic system rather than a rigid doctrinal structure.

This orientation is reflected in the way classical texts are explained, where the interpretation is not limited to literal exposition but extended to contemporary social and digital contexts. In several recorded sessions, explanations of classical kitab are linked to present-day issues, demonstrating a shift from purely normative exposition toward meaning-oriented construction.

Furthermore, the narratives reveal an integration between classical Islamic intellectual traditions and the communicative logic of digital media, where authority of texts is maintained while interpretive delivery adapts to online audiences.

The principle of *المحافظة على القديم الصالح والأخذ بالجديد الأصلاح* is operationalized in this pattern, maintaining textual authority while adjusting pedagogical and communicative strategies to digital environments.

The Resonance of Digital Da'wah Among Young Generations

The observational findings indicate that Mata Naqra content receives active responses from young audiences, as reflected in interactions such as comments, follow-up discussions, and content redistribution across various digital platforms. This pattern of engagement suggests that da'wah based on a rational and systematic approach has strong acceptability among younger generations.

Table 2 presents the factors contributing to the attractiveness of digital da'wah among young audiences based on content observation and audience interaction patterns.

Table 2. Factors Contributing to the Popularity of Da'wah Among Young Generations

No	Indicator	Observational Data	Analysis
1	Rational language patterns	Explanation includes context and reasoning	Enhances cognitive acceptance among youth
2	Progressive narrative	Islam framed as relevant and dynamic	Reduces perception of religious rigidity
3	Non-threatening delivery	Emphasis on understanding rather than fear	Builds psychological engagement
4	YouTube-based dissemination	Content accessed via digital platforms	Aligns with youth media consumption habits
5	Use of authoritative texts	Based on classical kitab kuning	Strengthens epistemic legitimacy

Table 2 shows that the attractiveness of digital da'wah is not solely determined by the media used, but primarily by message construction that aligns with the cognitive characteristics of young audiences. The combination of rational language, progressive narratives, and a non-confrontational approach creates both psychological and intellectual proximity with the audience.

In addition, the use of classical kitab kuning as an epistemic foundation provides scholarly legitimacy that strengthens the credibility of the da'wah message. Thus, the data confirm that the success of digital da'wah depends on the integration of classical scholarly authority and adaptive digital communication strategies.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study can be situated within the broader scholarly debate on the transformation of religious authority in digital environments. Contemporary studies on digital religion emphasize that religious meaning is no longer exclusively produced within traditional institutional settings, but is increasingly negotiated through media infrastructures that shape how religious knowledge is accessed, interpreted, and circulated (Campbell, 2013; Hjarvard, 2008). In this

context, the Mata Naqra program illustrates how digital da'wah is not merely a technological extension of preaching practices, but a reconfiguration of epistemic production in Islamic knowledge transmission (Hotmian, 2024; Lestari, 2024).

The systematic use of kitab kuning within the Mata Naqra program demonstrates what can be conceptualized as epistemic continuity within mediatized religion. While digital media are often associated with fragmentation and surface-level religious consumption, the findings show that structured textual engagement can function as a counter-model that preserves scholarly depth in online religious communication. This aligns with the idea that mediatization does not necessarily erase tradition but transforms how tradition is mediated and legitimized in digital space (Mastori & Islamy, 2021; Zaini & Rahmawati, 2021; Hadi et al., 2025). In this sense, Mata Naqra reflects a hybrid model in which pesantren epistemology is recontextualized without losing its authoritative grounding foundations (Soni, 2026; Alzahrani et al., 2026).

From the perspective of digital religious authority, this phenomenon also reflects a shift from institutional authority to textual and performative credibility. As argued in studies of online religious communication, authority is increasingly constructed through accessibility, interpretive clarity, and perceived intellectual authenticity rather than formal institutional positioning alone (Bunt, 2009; Campbell, 2021). The Mata Naqra program demonstrates this shift by reconstructing authority through consistent engagement with classical Islamic texts delivered in a systematic and pedagogically structured format (Afifah et al., 2022; Afidah, 2024).

In terms of narrative construction, the findings indicate a movement from normative religiosity toward what may be described as reflective-contextual religiosity. This shift is significant in the context of digital media environments characterized by rapid information flows and fragmented attention structures (Rachmadin, 2021; Efendi et al., 2023). However, rather than reinforcing fragmentation, Mata Naqra reorients digital consumption toward deeper interpretive engagement by contextualizing kitab kuning within contemporary social realities (Lestari, 2023; Ridwan & Tasruddin, 2025). This suggests that digital da'wah can function not only as dissemination but also as epistemic consolidation.

The responsiveness of younger audiences further strengthens this interpretation. Digital-native audiences tend to engage more effectively with religious messages that are rational, dialogical, and non-dogmatic, reflecting broader shifts in communicative expectations within networked societies (Pangestu, 2021; Rizal et al., 2024; Hariyati, 2025). In this regard, Mata Naqra demonstrates how narrative accessibility and cognitive alignment contribute to the reinforcement of religious meaning-making processes among youth audiences (Najihah et al., 2025; Ratna, 2025; Romadlany, 2026).

More critically, the findings highlight a tension inherent in digital da'wah: the contestation between media logic—characterized by speed, virality, and visibility—and epistemic logic, which prioritizes depth, continuity, and scholarly rigor. This tension is widely discussed in studies of mediatized religion, where religious content is often reshaped by platform-driven attention economies (Hjarvard, 2008; Campbell, 2013). However, Mata Naqra demonstrates that these two logics are not mutually exclusive. Instead, they can be negotiated through structured pedagogical strategies grounded in classical textual authority (Siregar & Rasyid, 2023; Chanra & Tasruddin, 2025).

Overall, the study contributes to the understanding that digital da'wah transformation occurs not only at the technological level but also at the epistemological and authority levels. Mata Naqra exemplifies a model of digitally mediated Islamic knowledge production that integrates traditional scholarly legitimacy with contemporary communicative strategies. This produces a form of da'wah that is simultaneously reflective, systematic, and contextually adaptive, while still grounded in classical Islamic epistemology (Mlambo, 2026; Mlambo, 2026).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The transformation of Islamic da'wah in the digital era, as reflected in the Mata Naqra program, shows that virtual da'wah strategies do not only function as a medium for disseminating religious messages but also as a space for constructing Islamic knowledge grounded in scholarly tradition. Through systematic kitab kuning studies, rational and progressive narratives, and dialogical communication patterns, the program is able to maintain the epistemological depth of Islam amid a digital culture characterized by instant and fragmented consumption. These findings confirm that the transformation of da'wah is not limited to changes in media, but also involves communication strategies that integrate Islamic intellectual traditions with the needs of the digital generation. In addition, this form of da'wah is effective in building both intellectual and psychological closeness with young audiences by presenting Islam as relevant and contextually meaningful. In terms of implications, this study contributes to the digital religion discourse by affirming that scholarly authority can still be preserved within digital environments; however, the study is limited to a qualitative content analysis without longitudinal audience tracking, and therefore future research is recommended to employ mixed methods and cross-platform comparative studies to deepen the understanding of how digital Islamic authority is constructed and sustained.

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