

# Simulacra of Pity and The Death of Epistemic Authority: A Literature Review of The Philosophical Islamic Communication Regarding The Hyperreality of Preaching In The Post-Truth Era

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**Abstract:** This study examines how digital hyperreality and post-truth culture reshape Islamic communication and broadcasting in contemporary cyberspace. It argues that digital da'wah is no longer only a shift from physical pulpits to online platforms, but a structural transformation of religious meaning, authority, and public reasoning. Using a qualitative library-based design, the research analyzes recent scholarly works on digital da'wah, religious influencers, epistemic authority, Islamic communication ethics, platform governance, and communication regulation. The study applies qualitative content analysis and critical discourse interpretation to identify how algorithmic visibility, audience engagement, symbolic performance, and misinformation influence Islamic messages in digital public spaces. The findings show that digital da'wah may expand access to religious knowledge, yet it also risks commodifying piety, weakening scholarly authority, and reducing complex Islamic teachings into emotional and fragmented content. To address this crisis, Islamic communication philosophy offers ethical principles such as *qaulan sadida*, *qaulan baligha*, *tabayyun*, and *amanah* as foundations for truthful and responsible communication. The study proposes that future Islamic communication policy must combine digital literacy, epistemic accountability, algorithmic transparency, and ethical co-regulation to protect truth, dignity, public trust, and religious authority in the post-truth era. It strengthens Islamic broadcasting studies by linking ethics, regulation, and platform accountability.

**Keywords:** Hyperreality, Post-Truth, Epistemic Authority, Islamic Communication, Communication Policy,

## Introduction

The twenty-first century has marked a major transformation in Islamic communication and broadcasting, as religious messages now circulate through digital platforms that are shaped by speed, visibility, interactivity, and algorithmic selection. Da'wah is no longer confined to mosques, *pesantren*, television, or radio, but has entered mobile screens where religious meanings are produced, shared, debated, and consumed by fragmented audiences. This shift does not simply change the channel of communication; it also reconstructs the authority, style, and reception of Islamic messages. Studies on digital Islam show that social media influencers are increasingly able to reshape religious practices and negotiate traditional authority through storytelling, lifestyle narratives, and platform-

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based popularity ([Zaid et al., 2022](#)). In Indonesia, digital da'wah also creates new patterns of religious authority, where credibility is no longer determined only by scholarly lineage, institutional legitimacy, or mastery of Islamic sciences, but also by visibility, audience engagement, and digital performance ([Rachman et al., 2025](#); [A'lan Tabaika et al., 2025](#)).

This transformation becomes more problematic in the post-truth environment, where emotional attraction, repetition, and virality often become more influential than accuracy and scholarly depth. Religious misinformation can spread rapidly because users frequently respond to digital religious content through affective reactions, identity loyalty, and community pressure rather than careful verification ([Al-Zaman, 2024](#)). In the Indonesian Islamic context, the digitization of religious interpretation has also weakened the traditional role of ulama because many users now seek quick answers from online platforms, even when the information is superficial, biased, or disconnected from proper interpretive methodology ([Ichwan et al., 2024](#)). At the same time, the capitalist structure of social media transforms trust into a measurable commodity through likes, shares, subscribers, and algorithmic circulation, making religious symbols vulnerable to commodification and spectacle ([Fadilla & Isma Indriyani, 2025](#)). Therefore, the crisis of digital da'wah is not only a matter of hoaxes, but also a deeper epistemological crisis in which algorithmic authority can replace religious expertise.

Based on this gap, Islamic communication and broadcasting studies need to move beyond pragmatic discussions about the effectiveness of social media for *da'wah*. The core issue is not only how Islamic messages can reach wider audiences, but how digital platforms reshape truth, authority, public reasoning, and ethical responsibility. Research on digital Islamic propagation emphasizes the need for media literacy and communication strategies to counter religious disinformation in the post-truth era ([Mastori et al., 2025](#)). Meanwhile, studies on automation and social media algorithms show that responsibility in digital environments must involve many actors, including users, platform owners, experts, regulators, and civil society ([Saurwein et al., 2025](#)). Therefore, Islamic communication policy should not stop at content censorship or conventional broadcasting regulation. It must develop an ethical framework that demands algorithmic accountability, strengthens *tabayyun*, protects religious authority from commodification, and restores *da'wah* as a public communication practice oriented toward truth, wisdom, social harmony, and human dignity.

## Methodology

This research uses a qualitative library-based design to examine hyperreality, post-truth discourse, and the crisis of Islamic epistemic authority as conceptual problems that require interpretive analysis rather than statistical measurement. The study draws on primary and secondary academic sources, including philosophical works, peer-reviewed journal articles, books, research reports, and digital publications published mainly between 2020 and 2026. These sources are selected based on relevance, credibility, recency, and their direct connection to Islamic communication, postmodern media theory, digital religious authority, and communication policy. The data collection process follows analytical

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documentation by tracing literature through Google Scholar, DOAJ, university repositories, and journal portals using keywords such as “hyperreality of da’wah,” “post-truth,” “Islamic epistemic authority,” and “communication policy.” The analysis is conducted through qualitative content analysis and critical discourse interpretation. Content analysis is used to classify major ideas, reduce irrelevant materials, and connect recurring themes across the literature, while discourse analysis helps reveal how power, ideology, authority, and legitimacy are constructed within digital religious communication ([Alejandro & Zhao, 2024](#); [Lyhne et al., 2025](#)). Through this procedure, the study compares secular postmodern concepts with Islamic epistemological principles and then synthesizes them into a critical framework for ethical communication and digital regulation in cyberspace ([Susanto et al., 2024](#)).

## Result and Discussion

### Anatomy of the Hyperreality of Da'wah: Commodification and Sign Fetishism in Cyberspace

Digital disruption has not simply shifted *da’wah* from physical pulpits to digital platforms; it has transformed the symbolic structure through which Islamic messages are produced, displayed, and received. In contemporary media culture, platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok encourage religious messages to appear in short, visual, emotional, and easily shareable formats. This condition creates a new pattern of digital *da’wah* in which images of piety, charismatic self-presentation, aesthetic editing, and platform visibility may become more dominant than the depth of Islamic meaning itself. Research on Indonesian religious influencers shows that authority on Instagram can be constructed through visual strategies, bodily presence, spatial setting, and digital intimacy with audiences, indicating that religious credibility is increasingly mediated by image and visibility rather than only by traditional scholarly hierarchy ([Febrian, 2024](#)). Therefore, the problem of digital *da’wah* is not merely technological adaptation, but the possibility that religious substance may be displaced by symbolic performance.

This transformation also shows that *da’wah* in digital space is increasingly shaped by platform recognition, audience engagement, and the construction of religious identity as a visible social sign. Recent studies on *da’i* influencers explain that digital media has produced new religious practices and hybrid forms of authority, where preaching activities move across online and offline spaces and are shaped by the logic of content creation ([Aida et al., 2024](#)). At the same time, digital platforms can reshape Islamic solidarity by turning religious identity into usernames, networks, symbolic capital, and performative piety that depend heavily on algorithmic visibility ([Zaman et al., 2025](#)). In this context, *da’wah* risks becoming a spectacle of religious signs when popularity, appearance, and emotional attraction are valued more than sincerity, knowledge, and ethical transformation. Thus, digital *da’wah* must not be evaluated only through reach, followers, or engagement, but through its ability to preserve truth, deepen spiritual awareness, strengthen Islamic literacy, and maintain moral responsibility in public communication.

## Deconstruction and the Death of Religious Epistemic Authority in the Post-Truth Era

The second major crisis produced by digital hyperreality is the weakening of epistemic authority in Islamic discourse. Classical Islamic knowledge is rooted in discipline, scholarly transmission, methodological competence, and moral responsibility, while digital platforms tend to reorganize authority through speed, visibility, and audience engagement. In online religious spaces, users increasingly encounter preachers, influencers, and content creators whose legitimacy is shaped not only by knowledge, but also by charisma, accessibility, digital performance, and algorithmic reach. Studies on online religion show that digital media transforms religious authority by creating new actors who can gain public trust through platform visibility and interactive communication ([Andok, 2024](#)). This condition does not automatically erase traditional scholars, but it forces them to compete with digital figures whose influence may be stronger in media performance than in epistemological depth.

This shift becomes more problematic in the post-truth era because religious truth is often judged through popularity, emotional attraction, and short-form clarity rather than careful interpretation. Digital tafsir and hadith content can expand public access to Islamic knowledge, yet they also risk simplifying complex religious issues into fragmented and decontextualized messages. Akib et al. (2025) show that contemporary hadith interpretation on social media is increasingly shaped by algorithmic control, creating tension between classical standards of interpretation and platform-based popularity. Similarly, Istiqomah et al. (2025) argue that digital Qur'anic interpretation reflects both adaptation and crisis because religious legitimacy may shift from scholarly lineage toward algorithmic authority. In the age of algorithms, short religious videos often gain stronger engagement than long-form explanations, encouraging instant answers over deep reasoning ([Alfi et al., 2025](#)). Therefore, the crisis of epistemic authority should be understood as a structural transformation in which platform logic reshapes how Muslims recognize truth, expertise, and religious legitimacy.

## A Philosophical Review of Islamic Communication on the Digital Ethics Crisis

Facing the crisis of hyperreality and post-truth communication, Islamic communication philosophy offers an ethical framework that connects truth, method, and moral responsibility. In this framework, *qaulan sadidan* requires accurate and honest speech, *qaulan baligha* encourages meaningful communication that enlightens the audience, while *amanah* demands responsibility in producing and circulating messages. Studies on Islamic communication in the digital era emphasize that Islamic values remain relevant for guiding media engagement, preventing manipulation, and preserving responsible communication in contemporary society ([E-sor et al., 2025](#)). Therefore, manipulative *da'wah*, visual exaggeration, and emotionally provocative religious content contradict the ethical purpose of Islamic communication because they replace guidance with spectacle.

The principle of *tabayyun* becomes central when digital communication is shaped by speed, virality, and post-truth tendencies. *Tabayyun* is not merely a recommendation to check information, but an epistemological discipline that trains users to evaluate sources,

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examine motives, and avoid spreading harm. Islamic communication ethics in the post-truth era positions *qaulan sadidan*, *tabayyun*, and *amanah* as moral responses to hoaxes, propaganda, and disinformation ([Fauzi et al., 2025](#)). In line with this, information literacy and journalistic verification are essential for maintaining accuracy, credibility, and public trust in digital communication ([Riza, 2021](#); [Tanjung et al., 2023](#)).

### **Implications for Contemporary Communication Policy and Regulation**

The crisis of hyperreality, religious disinformation, and the weakening of epistemic authority shows the urgency of reforming communication policy and regulation in the digital public sphere. Conventional broadcasting regulation is no longer sufficient because digital religious communication now operates through social media platforms, algorithmic recommendation systems, content creators, and transnational platform corporations. In Indonesia, studies on digital broadcasting regulation show that the authority of the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission remains legally limited in supervising digital media, requiring institutional strengthening and a convergence-based regulatory approach ([Muhtar et al., 2022](#)). This challenge becomes more complex in Islamic digital communication because online *da'wah* has transformed audience behavior through interactivity, hypermedia, and virtual communities, while existing regulation still struggles to address new media practices ([Kholili et al., 2024](#)). Therefore, future communication policy should not rely only on reactive punishment, defamation articles, or conventional content censorship; it must develop platform governance that demands algorithmic transparency, accountable moderation, and public-interest safeguards. Studies on AI governance emphasize that transparency and accountability are essential to prevent opaque automated systems from harming public well-being ([Cheong, 2024](#)), while research on algorithm-based moderation shows that digital communities require governance mechanisms capable of responding to large-scale content circulation ([He et al., 2024](#)). In the Islamic communication context, this reform should be supported by ethical co-regulation involving the state, platform companies, civil society, and religious authorities so that digital *da'wah* remains accountable, truthful, and socially responsible. Thus, Islamic communication policy should combine regulatory reform, algorithmic accountability, digital literacy, and epistemic standards to ensure that cyberspace supports truth, dignity, public trust, and moral responsibility rather than merely serving virality and algorithmic profit ([Amril & Sazali, 2025](#)).

### **Conclusion**

This study concludes that digital *da'wah* in the post-truth era has moved beyond a simple change of communication medium. It has become a deeper transformation of religious meaning, authority, and ethical responsibility. Social media platforms allow Islamic messages to reach wider audiences, but they also create serious risks when religious discourse is shaped by algorithmic visibility, emotional attraction, symbolic performance, and audience engagement. In this condition, *da'wah* may lose its spiritual depth when piety is displayed mainly as an image, religious authority is measured by popularity, and

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complex Islamic teachings are reduced into short, fragmented, and decontextualized content.

The study also affirms that Islamic communication philosophy provides an important ethical response to this crisis. Principles such as *qaulan sadidan*, *qaulan baligha*, *tabayyun*, and *amanah* can guide digital da'wah toward truthfulness, clarity, verification, and moral responsibility. Therefore, the future of Islamic communication and broadcasting requires more than technical adaptation to digital platforms. It needs a comprehensive framework that combines digital literacy, epistemic accountability, algorithmic transparency, and ethical co-regulation involving the state, platform companies, civil society, and religious authorities. Through this approach, cyberspace can become a field for truthful da'wah, public benefit, social harmony, and the protection of religious authority from the domination of virality and platform capitalism.

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