Interactive Da’wah Medium During Crisis in Malaysia

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Abstract
The COVID-19 pandemic and floods have become a challenge to Malaysia's conventional Islamic da’wah efforts. Thus, this qualitative case study was conducted in a semi-structured interview with the selected Malaysian da’wah experts to identify the concept and usage of interactive da’wah medium and the suitability of infographics during the crisis. The findings demonstrated that interactive da’wah mediums are two-way (between the da’i/data and mad'u), with static information transformed into dynamic visuals through infographics and videography, making it suitable during a crisis. It is easily accessible through modern gadgets, easy to understand and remember, and attractive to the general public.

Keywords: Interactive Da’wah Medium; Crisis; COVID-19; Floods

1.0 Introduction
The country has suffered from COVID-19 and flooding for the past few years. The presence of new COVID-19 virus variants (such as Delta and Omicron), which are getting more accessible and easier to transmit to humans, raises concerns despite China having entered the epidemic stage on April 1, 2022. The changing climate has exacerbated the effects of flash floods, leaving property destroyed and lives lost, further affecting all parties, especially Malaysians and their government. Statistics show that the Malaysian government suffered RM 6.1 billion in flood-related losses in 2021 (DOSM, 2022) and RM 622.4 million in 2022, excluding the Federal Territory and Kedah (Bernama, 2023). Consequently, communities become worried, fearful, and frustrated, and their daily lives are affected negatively, including health, economic, and educational activities (Rohman & Faristiana, 2021). Furthermore, major Muslim missionary centers, mainly mosques and prayer rooms, have been forced to close. Religious activities, including face-to-face sermons and lectures, have been curtailed, hindered, interrupted, and halted, subject to strict Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) published by the Ministry of Health of Malaysia (MOH) and the National Disaster Management Authority (NADMA). This lack of religious education is seen as increasing the social symptoms of society, resulting in more criminal cases (Muhyiddin & Ridouan, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 adversely affected the Malaysian people’s well-being index (IKRM), which fell by 2.1% (DOSM, 2021). Moreover, the floods severely damaged mosques and musolla, which were used as transit centers for flood victims and where Islamic religious activities and programs could be conducted. The difficulty of missionary work requires creative diversification according to the concept of murunah (flexibility), which is the basis of Islamic tasawwur in implementing Islamic law. Communities need to be educated from multiple perspectives and be open to change following the latest operating procedures to ensure that Islam can continue to be preached, given the current conditions in the country. This study aims to identify the concept and usage of interactive da’wah medium and the suitability of infographics during the crisis.
2.0 Literature Review

Da‘wah taught people how to practice Islam’s actual teachings under the guidance of revelation. It involves transmitting knowledge and strengthening the connection between compatriots to spread Islam. With the advent of ICT, da‘wah communication is primarily used as the basis for utilizing various da‘wah methods. As shown by the widespread use of ICT by adults, teenagers, and children on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Halim et al., 2019), the new millennium da‘wah promotes efforts to spread religious laws, the requirements of Hajj, the Vice dynasty, and the current problems facing Islam. Due to its speed and efficiency, social media is an effective medium for da‘wah, which keeps up with the times. Missionaries should gain ICT-related knowledge and work to diversify Da‘wah’s media to meet the needs of this digital age (Fabriar et al., 2022). Table 1 illustrates how it fits into Model 10, the concept of using new media as one of the alternatives for academics to continue to execute the da‘wah agenda online (Anggrayni et al., 2020).

Table 1. Islamic Theoretical Da‘wah Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fardiyyah</td>
<td>A face-to-face presentation of Islamic teachings by daie and mad'u that needed to be designed and received a positive or negative response, accepted or rejected at the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fi‘ah/Hizbiyyah</td>
<td>This form of da‘wah is conducted in dialogue with a small or large group of people (budget of 3-20).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tarbawiyyah</td>
<td>The process of da‘wah takes place through the process of educational interaction or teaching through the role of the teacher as a daie when the student is being considered mad'u, which develops from the history of the Prophet’s da‘wah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bithiyyah</td>
<td>Da‘wah is carried out through messengers, and the preacher represents the messenger to convey the teachings of Islam to the mad'u.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>The da‘wah model uses correspondence in establishing communication or delivering da‘wah to mad'u.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Istahliyyah</td>
<td>Da‘wah of reconciliation to resolve disputes, contentions, and conflicts on a micro-scale (between individuals and families) and between groups of people, ethnicities, tribes, kabilah, and countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Depending on the organizational policies, da‘wah may become a program or activity of an organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>Da‘wah is carried out by a preacher alone in front of a packed crowd, not in person, and not in print or through electronic media, but in monologue alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>Da‘wah which is based on the principle of cooperation, combination or incorporation of various elements of da‘wah (preachers, mad'u, da‘wah goals, methods, and media of da‘wah) which are understood, prepared, and carried out simultaneously so that it becomes a model of da‘wah desired by the universal teachings of Islam.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Online or social media | Using new media is an alternative method for ulama to carry out their online da‘wah agenda.

(Source: Qudratullah et al., 2021; Anggrayni et al., 2020; Don et al., 2020; Hamdan, 2020; Jalal et al., 2020; Said & Pratama, 2020; Haramain (Ed.), 2019; Salih et al., 2019; Syahbuddin & Najmuddin, 2019; Tajuddin & Ismail, 2019; Isma et al., 2018; Don & Gade, 2015).

We are tested by disasters that bring fear, hunger, property loss, and lives. However, despite the disaster, we strive to improve our patience, obedience, and satisfaction with Allah SWT. To achieve this goal, believers can turn to Allah in faith worship, accept his provisions (Qada‘ and Qadar), be patient, occasionally work to improve their lives, and learn from crises (Jalal, 2021). The spiritual aspect (spirituality) needs to be strengthened by placing religious foundations at the heart of the spiritual aspect to provide peace to crisis survivors (Saidon et al., 2021; Share, 2020). The crisis we experienced today has a pearl of implicit wisdom. Among other things, COVID-19 and floods require us to maintain personal hygiene, consume halal food, maintain health and balance, and protect the environment, especially the protection of animals and plants (Tasri, 2020). The flood crisis that struck us was an act of condemnation by Allah SWT towards all our actions, which failed to become Allah’s caliphate as required by Islam, and humanity failed to learn the lessons contained in the Quran (Md Ramzan, 2021) as in the story of the Prophet Noah AS. To be forgiven for our acts and sins so far, we must become closer to Allah SWT and do our best to improve our lives and fulfill our trust as a caliphate of Allah SWT.
3.0 Methodology
This was a qualitative case study, with the leading research instrument being a semi-structured interview with Malaysian da’wah experts from Public Universities and Islamic Institutions (refer to Table 2). Hybrid semi-structured interview sessions were conducted (either through confrontation or online method) based on the participant’s preference and safety due to the COVID-19 endemic phase in Malaysia. The sampling technique used in this study included five participants (Darusalam & Hussin, 2016). Study sampling criteria included experts from Public Universities (UA) involved in Islamic da’wah and ICT. Representatives directly involved in Islamic da’wah in Malaysia from the Islamic Institutions were also included. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, which had two (2) primary themes: (i) The Concept and Usage of Interactive Da’wah Medium and (ii) The Suitability of Infographic-based Interactive Da’wah Medium During a Crisis. Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes in qualitative data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017) through six steps; (i) Become familiar with the data, (ii) Generate initial codes, (iii) Search for themes, (iv) Review themes, (v) Define themes and (vi) Write-up. These two themes were chosen by the research objectives that the researchers have set for this research. Both of these themes are based on the research objectives set by the researchers. This study only focuses on the expert's perception of the concept and usage of interactive da’wah medium and the suitability of infographics during the crisis.

### Table 2. Participant’s Coding of the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universiti Malaya (UM)</td>
<td>P1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)</td>
<td>P2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)</td>
<td>P3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia (IKIM)</td>
<td>P4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yayasan Dakwah Islamiah Malaysia (YADIM)</td>
<td>P5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Study Sampling)

4.0 Findings
This section presents the results of the semi-structured interview.

4.1 Concept and Usage of Interactive Da’wah Medium
Table 3 below summarizes the results of the study. Based on the study’s results, all participants (P1-P5) agreed that interactive da’wah media provides bidirectional interaction, either between da’i and mad’u or between digitally accessible data and modern gadgets used by mad’u. Regarding interactive da’wah mediums, TikTok has been ranked number one by Social Media Analysis, followed by YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. We face many seasonal and unpredictable challenges in our country, including crises such as COVID-19 and floods, which make it impossible for traditional face-to-face programs to function. The flexible approach taken by many Islamic organizations has led to an increase in online missionary work, even though there has been uncertainty about its effectiveness. There was also consensus among all participants that infographics are excellent interactive da’wah media because, unlike video, they have simple, compact, lightweight standards, spread quickly, can appeal to a wide range of mad’u, regardless of their age, time, or place, and are well suited to be used during a disaster. To pass da’wah on to mad’u, Da’i must combine old and new media of da’wah to spread the message instead of shuffling the importance of da’wah away by writing in static form.

### Table 3. Participant’s Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TP</th>
<th>P1</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>P3</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>P5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>- New da’wah communication for two-way transmission of information through modern gadgets.</td>
<td>- Old media such as radio and television.</td>
<td>- The use of TikTok is more popular and short advice/practice content than YouTube.</td>
<td>- The two (2) main elements are interactive and graphical.</td>
<td>- The transmission of information, and there is a feedback space (two-way) and it is open.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The main component involves the participation of mad’u in da’wah.</td>
<td>- Audiovisual technology makes today’s presentation more interactive.</td>
<td>- Easy-to-access YouTube channels, pages, and own followers.</td>
<td>- Although classified as a negative platform, the most popular TikTok app at present is close behind, followed by Facebook and Instagram.</td>
<td>- The interaction between da’i and mad’u is online and digital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Believed it can attract crazy people’s interest, promote affairs, and immediate feedback.</td>
<td>- Graphic video elements are more interesting than static graphics that need to be applied in modern da’wah.</td>
<td>- Interactive media are supported as conventional media, complementary according to the age range of mad’u.</td>
<td>- Da’wah material is easily communicated through social media and understood by the community.</td>
<td>- Media that can act in both directions (sender-receiver).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Its applicability depends on mad’u.</td>
<td>- Applied elements in visual, compact &amp; compact form with appropriate sound background.</td>
<td>- Two-way interaction can improve the effectiveness of da’wah itself.</td>
<td>- Interactive da’wah media based on today’s popular videos and infographics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The content should be simple, concise, and precise.</td>
<td>- The nature of interactive da’wah media is easily extracted by mad’u.</td>
<td>- The main components of interactive da’wah media are ICT expertise, da’wah content, marketing/promotion, and funding.</td>
<td>- Using video in legal issues is more interesting than writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The main components depend on the target group.</td>
<td>- The main components of interactive da’wah media are ICT expertise, da’wah content, marketing/promotion, and funding.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(161)
The COVID-19 pandemic and the country's major catastrophe floods. - Negative effects: Close the mosque as a center of Muslim knowledge. - Positive impact: Spreading da'wah through social media is intensifying--All suitable media (old and new media) during the disaster.- Easily accessible through various modern gadgets.

- Health, economic and environmental crises
- Da'wah has become more dynamic/resilient than before, it is static
- Provide da'wah and good space for the community during the crisis
- The application of an information chart in crisis management is more appropriate & social symptoms in the crisis period.
- Its use is easily accepted by all social strata.

- Three (3) major disasters, namely floods, COVID-19 and morality.
- Negative effects: Da'wah's continuity is stuck, and income is cut off in disaster.
- Positive impact: Interactive education has increased the high ratings.
- Interactive da'wah media is easy to operate during disasters
- Posters are lighter in size than videos and can be accessed and distributed quickly.
- Can better manage emotions when disasters happen.
- Interactive da'wah media infographic suitable for use during a disaster.

- Seasonal COVID-19 disasters, uncertain floods, and ideological disasters.
- Disasters can affect both the body and the mind.
- Provide space for interactive media to replace the limitations of traditional da'wah.
- Da'wah is conducted online, without any time and place obstacles, and it is easy.
- YouTube, TikTok, and infographics are suitable for use during disasters.
- Elements of interactive da'wah media that promote understanding, interaction, digital, and speed.

- Interactive da'wah media are needed during disasters.
- All platforms can be used during a disaster, whether interactive or non-interactive.
- Missionaries need to creatively combine old and new media.

### 4.2 The Suitability of Infographic-based Interactive Da'wah Medium during Crisis

There was a consensus among all participants in the study (P1-P5) that interactive da'wah media based on infographics could be used during disasters like COVID-19 and floods to provide information to the people. Simplifying complex information in the form of charts, pictures, and maps can considerably simplify the transfer of that information to the user, and they can view it as well-organized, concise, and eye-catching information that users can easily understand. Due to the effective management of disasters by this organization, it is believed that it has positively impacted the psychological and emotional well-being of the victims.

* "During a disaster situation, information diagrams can be extremely effective, easily understandable, easy to remember, and can convey information quickly and efficiently" (P1)

* "Combining information graphics with video graphics accompanied by simple animations allows the information graphics to change from a static to a dynamic presentation" (P2)

* "Information graphic designers need to be more creative in their designs to develop media that is more effective based on their suitability for the intended audience" (P3)

* "An interesting and well-loved infographic, especially with a QR code, rather than making the reliance on mad'u's writing solely" (P4)

* "Simple infographic writing standards help attract public interest during disasters" (P5)

### 5.0 Discussions

In the modern day, Dawah has become more dynamic and flexible according to the changes in the times and the needs of its followers. With today's mad'u or digital da'wah goals, the da'i's role as a preacher is increasingly seen as more challenging in light of today's digital da'wah goals. Despite the complexity of everyday ICT, the possibilities for da'wah have never been greater since da'wah is no longer confined to an institution such as mosques, suraus, and other institutions that focus solely on da'wah. Several missionary-related institutions, such as the Ministry of Islamic Development of Malaysia (JAKIM), the Islamic Da'wah Foundation of Malaysia (YADIM), the Malaysian Institute for Islamic Understanding (IKIM), and the National Islamic Religious Council (MAIN) and the National Ministry of Islamic Religious Affairs (MAIN), play an essential part in ensuring the continuity of missionary work in Malaysia. There have been significant contributions to the empowerment of da'wah in Malaysia made by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as the private sector, such as the Islamic Youth Force of Malaysia (ABIM), the Islamic Welfare Organization of Malaysia (PERKIM), and others.

There has been a massive decline in traditional missionary work due to disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic and floods, which led to the closure of mosques and suraus, vital centers of Muslim knowledge in the Muslim world. Da'wah media, which is interactive, is one of the alternative supports or media that can be accessed digitally through various modern gadgets or electronic devices. A variety
of popular social media apps, including TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, are well suited to serve as interactive da'wah media for increasing users' knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings by interacting with them (Halim et al., 2019). There has been a shift from the perception of the TikTok app to an app that is being used by Islamic missionaries as a good and positive tool for spreading the word about Islam. Compared to static media, interactive da'wah media can be bi-directional or asynchronous. They can display minimal text or information, simple animations or visual effects, and appropriate color schemes to make it more appealing to the community. A few of its main components include ICT expertise, the content of da'wah, marketing or promotion, as well as tools for developing the media (Meerangani, 2019). Therefore, to meet the current challenges of digital da'wah, da'i needs to be creative and ready for ICT knowledge that is related to ICT. According to Najamuddin (2020), the use of da'wah media depends on the condition of mad'u, which is affected by four (4) main factors, namely economy, politics, government, and technology, and is influenced by four (4) main factors.

Infographics are graphical depictions of detailed information or data that merge various elements like symbols, graphics, shapes, pictures, texts, and illustrations to convey information uncomplicated, brief, and comprehensible, arousing the curiosity of readers or viewers. Given these factors, infographics are viewed as a highly suitable medium for contemporary da'wah in a time of media consolidation, particularly among the youth. QR codes also make it easier for the public to access infographics through their respective gadgets, especially smartphones. An infographic in the form of a static or interactive poster is lighter and easier to store than videos that require more extensive storage. The following information was discovered by Fauzi et al. (2022): (i) Infographics can help readers remember facts faster, (ii) Colour combinations play an essential role in infographics, (iii) The use of infographics to display complex information related to Islamic missionary work, and (iv) Infographics can serve as a medium for missionary outreach that is interactive and accessible to a wide range of people. The infographic was evaluated based on its simplicity, conciseness, and user-friendly characteristics, and based on these characteristics and criteria, it was concluded that Islamic-based da'wah organizations should use it during a disaster as a means of supporting victims who experienced emotional and psychological stress as a result of the disaster as part of their support.

6.0 Conclusion & Recommendations
Due to the COVID-19 disaster and floods in the region, social media has played an important role in the faster and broader dissemination of da'wah. It is now common in Muslim communities not only to rely on traditional institution-centric dissemination of Islam in mosques and suraus but also on interactive da'wah media, which allow da'wah to be spread easily through modern gadgets without being restricted to a specific time or space. As a result of this favorable situation, it can be concluded that the preaching of Islam can continue no matter what, despite the catastrophes that Muslims have suffered worldwide hampering believers' efforts to spread Islam. The use of social media apps such as TikTok, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter by Da'is can attract the interest of mad'u to better understand Islamic principles, laws, and current issues by using these apps. Also, interactive da'wah media based on infographics have become very popular recently, especially during the last COVID-19 pandemic when QR codes were used to communicate with the community. Rather than being static, it now includes interactive elements, such as moving vision and background sound, which are suitable for attracting the attention of a wide range of audiences, since it is not static anymore. As we know, the complexity of ICT has prompted da'wah media to become interactive; however, the traditional forms of da'wah must be addressed due to the complexity of ICT. It is also essential to continue lecturing on Islamic religious studies in mosques, parishes, and certain institutions and publish academic works on Islamic studies in books, magazines, and newspapers. This gives the mad'u the opportunity and space to choose the da'wah media based on their ages and different classes within Malaysian society, depending on their interests.

A certain amount of money is required to develop interactive da'wah media because it involves technology that is advancing rapidly every year, which requires a specific investment. To strengthen this interactive missionary medium from time to time, the local authorities responsible for Islam in Malaysia need to allocate sufficient funds from time to time to strengthen it. Due to the inventive elements, it is seen as consistent with Malaysia's Madani policy and our missionary reforms, inventions, and new designs to meet our contemporary missions. Due to the impact of this Islamic missionary effort in the last 18 centuries, the Industrial Revolution 5.0 created a human capital characterized by loyalty, kindness, cleanliness, integrity, knowledge, security, and stability.

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Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study
Communications / Social Media Environment
References


