Leveraging social media as avenues for da'wah among Muslim youths in Nigeria

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Abstract

This article reviews the use and impact of social media in society and how social media can be utilized for da'wah by the youth in Nigeria. The study uses a literature review approach by focusing on scholars' thoughts on da'wah, social media, and the use of social media for da'wah and the propagation of Islam, and also uses some empirical data in the Nigerian context. The data reveal that social media has been used effectively for da'wah but can also be used to spread dissenting messages. However, the study argues that since the majority of Nigeria's population is Muslim and the youth are the primary users of social media, utilizing social media platforms for da'wah can be an effective way for Muslim youth to fulfill their religious obligations by sharing Islamic teachings and values with others; reaching a wider audience and assisting in correcting misconceptions about Islam and Muslims. Therefore, this study clarifies concepts, identifies best practices, and contributes to a deeper understanding of Islamic communication in the digital media era, particularly by providing insights and strategies in developing da'wah initiatives using various social media platforms.

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Abstrak

Artikel ini mengulas penggunaan dan dampak media sosial dalam masyarakat dan bagaimana media sosial dapat dimanfaatkan untuk da'wah oleh kaum muda di Nigeria. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan literatur dengan berfokus pada pemikiran para sarjana tentang dakwah, media sosial, dan penggunaan media sosial untuk dakwah dan penyebaran Islam, dan juga menggunakan beberapa data empiris dalam konteks Nigeria. Data mengungkapkan bahwa media sosial telah digunakan secara efektif untuk dakwah tetapi juga dapat digunakan untuk menyebarkan pesan perbedaan pendapat. Namun, makalah ini berpendapat bahwa karena sebagian besar penduduk Nigeria adalah Muslim dan kaum muda merupakan pengguna utama media sosial; memanfaatkan platform media sosial untuk dakwah dapat menjadi cara yang efektif bagi kaum

muda Muslim untuk memenuhi kewajiban agama mereka dengan berbagi ajaran dan nilai-nilai Islam dengan orang lain; menjangkau khalayak luas dan membantu dalam mengoreksi kesalahpahaman tentang Islam dan Muslim. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini mengklarifikasi konsep, mengidentifikasi praktik terbaik, dan berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang komunikasi Islam di era media digital, khususnya dengan memberikan wawasan dan strategi dalam mengembangkan inisiatif da'wah menggunakan berbagai platform media sosial.

INTRODUCTION

The advent and growth of digital technology and the internet, and the subsequent emergence and development of social media, revolutionized the information dissemination process and altered ways of doing things. Arguably, the importance and quest for information and knowledge have always been part of man in all societies, from time immemorial. Man has always invented means of seeking and sharing knowledge and information which is evident from the interpersonal and group communication methods used to the development of traditional means of communication such as town criers, the gong, drums and trumpets; to the development of old means of communication such as radio, television, tape recorders, newspapers, magazines, telephones, and the recent development of digital technology and the internet, otherwise known of the new media. Today, advances in digital information and communication technologies and the internet have given rise to social media as websites and channels that hold great potential for the acquisition and distribution of knowledge and information across frontiers.

The emergence of social media has impacted all sectors of human life and brought about new ways of doing things. Social media play important roles in the lives of people as they have become a routine and part of daily schedules for both the digital natives and the digital immigrants (Prensky, 2001). According to Statista (2025), as of January 2023, Nigeria had 31.6 million active social media users. *WhatsApp* is the most popular platform used in the country, with close to 95 percent of users. *Facebook*, *YouTube*, and *Instagram* followed as the most used social media platforms in Nigeria. Hence, social media channels and platforms like *Facebook, X, Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram, YouTube,* and *TikTok,* among others, have saturated people's lives and created opportunities and challenges like never before. They have changed people's tastes, orientations, and expectations. They have changed how people communicate and relate with family, friends, and colleagues.

Social media has redefined the word "friendship" and introduced "cyber friendship". Today, people have social media "family", "relatives," and "cousins" on cyberspace. Social media have changed how information is processed and disseminated,

how knowledge is sought and shared, and how people conduct businesses, hold meetings, conferences, and lectures. Social media have afforded people opportunities to own personal channels and handles, and disseminate information without the 'gatekeeping' hindrance of the conventional media. Social media have become a means for people to vent their anger, emotions, and seek advice and counselling. People meet and form life-long connections, relationships, and commitments that lead to marriage on social media, and people rally around someone in need and provide support on social media. But on social media, many cybercrimes, cyberbullying, personality theft, and other social vices and crimes are also committed.

Therefore, social media has widened our horizons, created new interests, new expectations, new opportunities, and new challenges. Today, it is the "in thing" and "in-vogue" to be social media literate, to have social media handles (accounts), to talk the language of social media, to share stories and issues on social media, to copy people's lives on social media, to get updated on happenings on social media and to discuss events on social media. People basically use social media in almost all daily activities and are immersed in the private lives they created on social media (virtual worlds) so much so that they can be with someone physically, but are emotionally somewhere else. This, in essence, means social media have changed and impacted the world and brought about new ways of doing things, new ways to seek, share, and receive information and knowledge about issues, events, and trends. Hence, social media can provide avenues and means to learn about Islam, to seek and share knowledge on Islam, to propagate the teachings of Islam (da'wah), and to clear and correct doubts and misconceptions about Islam and Muslims.

Islam is a religion known for the belief in the oneness of Allah. The holy Qur'an stated that *"Say, (O Prophet), 'He is Allah-One and (Indivisible), Allah—the Sustainer (needed by all), He has never had offspring, nor was He born; And there is none comparable to Him"* (Qur'an 112:1-4). Allah created all humans to worship him alone as contained in Surah Al-Dzariyat, *"I created not the jinn and humans except that they should worship Me (Alone). I seek not any provision from them nor do I ask that they should feed Me."* (Qur'an 51: 56). Allah is his wisdom did not just create humans and leave them on their own but sent divine Books through His Messengers who lived amongst people in their respective communities to guide humanity and serve as role models for the people. These divine books were sent down to different prophets through the Angel Gabriel, and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the final messenger whose message is the final revelation, meant for all people, everywhere, and for all times. The first verse revealed to Prophet Muhammad SAW was *"IQRA",* meaning, READ! (Qur'an 96:1). This means that through reading, knowledge is acquired and humanity is guided.

Similarly, Muslims are enjoined to spread the knowledge of Islam as evidenced in several Hadiths of the Prophet SAW. He called upon Muslims to seek knowledge, as seeking knowledge is compulsory upon all Muslims (see, for example, Sunan ibn Majah, 224). Additionally, many Hadiths of the Prophet SAW also talk about propagating the words of Allah and spreading knowledge to the Ummah*; "convey from me even if it is an ayah"* (the last sermon of the Prophet SAW). Therefore, Muslim believers are duty-bound to convey the message of Islam, namely, da'wah. This is not only confined to certain groups of people (such as Ulamahs) but every adult Muslim at any phase of his or her life. Da'wah is not only for Muslims but also to non-Muslims, as it is an inseparable aspect of a Muslim's life. It is a responsibility and a duty upon all Muslims who have come of age to practice Da'wah. *"Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining al-ma'roof (whatever is good) and forbidding al-munkar (whatever is evil). And it is they who are successful"* (Qur'an 3:104).

From the above verse, da'wah can be understood from two perspectives. The first perspective is da'wah as an act of calling other people to see and acknowledge the beauty, harmony, and perfection of Islam. The second perspective is da'wah as an act of carrying out activities of preaching and teaching, whose objective is to create a harmonious and peaceful society. Da'wah entails a message that desires and seeks societal transformation through the worship of Allah alone. Therefore, da'wah is a call for humanity and carries the message of *tawheed* and *taqwa.* Da'wah is no different for the Muslim Brotherhood than that intended for the Ummah.

Therefore, the rapid growth of social media platforms, their popularity, and the usage among youths in Nigeria present both opportunities for da'wah and challenges of under-/misuse among others. While social media has been examined by scholars in other climes as effective platforms for da'wah, there appears to be limited contribution of scholars on the need to use them to practice da'wah by Muslim youths in Nigeria, as existing literature reveals gaps in our understanding of how social media can be leveraged for da'wah. Moreover, the dynamic nature of social media and their increasing popularity among youths in Nigeria offer opportunities to continue to explore how these platforms can be leveraged for da'wah efforts.

Based on the above submissions, this paper aims to explore how social media platforms can be leveraged as avenues for da'wah among Muslim youths in Nigeria. The paper focuses on the positive usage of the social media platforms available to youths for da'wah in particular and Islamic propagation in general.

METHODS

This paper used a secondary method of data analysis by reviewing existing literature on da'wah, roles/use of social media, and the use of social media for da'wah. The literature was searched from Qur'anic verses, hadiths, academic databases, journals, and other online resources such as Google Scholar, Academia, Jstor, Internet Archives, Researchgate, and others to identify studies, articles, and papers that are relevant to this topic. Search results revealed a huge body of academic papers, reports, empirical research, books, and articles which were systematically reviewed. Analysis of articles revealed the compulsion of da'wah for Muslims, the uses of social media, and the integration of social media into the fabrics of daily life of the people, which transformed various domains, including Islamic education and enlightenment.

Similarly, the literature review examines the evolving landscape of da'wah and other forms of Islamic propagation, particularly among youths, through the lens of contemporary media usage. This literature review provides contexts and insights on both the potential and the opportunities of the digital platforms and the critical challenges that must be navigated in this evolving landscape for effective usage of social media in da'wah and other religious outings. But, evidence from the literature agrees that social media can be leveraged effectively for da'wah by Muslim youths in Nigeria. Therefore, social media-based da'wah can be conceptualized as a strategic approach by Nigerian Muslim youths to use social media platforms to promote Islamic values and disseminate Islamic messages in order to fulfil their religious duty.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the literature examined, da'wah means spreading and conveying the true message of Islam to both Muslims and non-Muslims. It is about educating people on the true doctrines of Islam, reminding people about the reasons for their creation (to worship Allah alone), enlightening people about the rules governing the lives of practicing Muslims towards their creator and Allah's creations, and clarifying misconceptions about Allah and Islam. In addition, da'wah is also aimed at inviting non-Muslims to worship Allah alone, and not to associate partners with him. However, da'wah is not focused on forcing or coercing non-Muslims to revert to Islam, as there is no compulsion in religion; rather, it aims at inviting non-Muslims to Islam and also re-educating, enlightening, and motivating Muslims to become better practicing Muslims.

Islam is Allah's message to all mankind. And Islam puts a lot of emphasis on da'wah and considers it obligatory for everyone. Accordingly, da'wah is a duty of all Muslims (adult men and women) to advocate the message of Islam among themselves and elsewhere (see Qur'an 2:143 & 103:3). The concept of da'wah is derived from the Arabic

which means "to call towards." In the Islamic context, da'wah refers to inviting others to the true and right path of Islam. According to many interpretations, the fundamental objective of inviting others to the true faith and righteousness in Islam is to make Allah's right the highest. Da'wah is a pluralistic concept that has a framework to call Muslims and non-Muslims for a joint advocacy through organized activities such as lectures, messages, and visitations, among others. It is important to note that da'wah is not limited to calling non-Muslims only, but also to making continuous efforts to guide Muslim brothers and sisters on the right path and help them sustain and progress on the righteous journey of Islam.

Hence, da'wah is a duty of all Muslims as evidenced from the verses of the holy Qur'an and the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). For example, in Surah Fussilat, Allah (SWT) stated *"And who is better in speech than he who says: 'My Lord is Allah (believes in His Oneness),' and then stands firm (acts upon His Order), and invites (men) to Allah's (Islamic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds, and says: 'I am one of the Muslims"* (Qur'an 41:33). Another verse of the holy Quran, Allah (SWT) clearly stated in Surah Al-Asr that *"those who have faith, do good and urge each other to truth, and urge each other to perseverance"* (Al-Qur'an 103:3). In yet another verse of Surah Al-Baqarah, Allah (SWT) stated: *"Thus we have appointed you a model community (Ummah), that you may be witnesses against mankind, and that the Messenger may be a witness against you"* (Al-Qur'an 2:143).

The importance of da'wah to Muslims can also be seen in numerous Hadiths of the Prophet. In a Hadith narration, the Prophet (SAW) said, *"Convey from me even if it is one ayah"* (Sahih al-Bukhari, 3461). Similarly, the messenger of Allah (SAW) when he delivered the *khutbah* (sermon) of his farewell *hajj* (final sermon), passed on the responsibility of da'wah to every Muslim when he stated *"All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and it may be that the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O God, that I have conveyed your message to your people"* (Abdullah, 2024: The Final Sermon).

The above evidence from the Qur'an and Hadith means that it is a duty upon all Muslims who have reached the age of puberty to practice da'wah through their words, actions, and mannerisms. All Muslims should make deliberate efforts to fulfil this duty enjoined by Allah SWT and his beloved messenger Muhammad SAW. Moreover, da'wah has great rewards as a Sahih Muslim Hadith of the prophet Muhammad (SAW) stated that The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, *"He who calls others to follow the right guidance will have a reward equal to the reward of those who follow him, without their reward being diminished in any respect on that account".* This means whoever guides someone towards good will receive the reward of the one who acts upon it. However, it is impossible to

practice da'wah without adequate and proper knowledge of Islam. And as Muslims, seeking proper knowledge of Islam is compulsory as Allah says in the holy Quran in surah Al-Alaq *"Read...!"* (Qur'an 96:1). Moreover, practicing da'wah is a form of worshiping Allah (SWT), and when knowledge of Allah is not sought, it is impossible to worship him.

Hence, the importance of da'wah in Islam comes with high prominence and is ranked as one of the crucial practices that carry great weight in Islam, evidenced by the fact that da'wah is ordered by Allah SWT in the dual form of addressing both the Prophet and the Muslims. It is the heartfelt desire of every true Muslim to carry out the noble mission of da'wah with great dedication and success, as well as to have a sense of achieving his or her share in this great endeavor. Muslims are ambassadors of Islam and thus have a duty to engage in dialogue and actively propagate the peaceful message of Islam to Muslims and also non-Muslims, and undermine the misconceptions built around Islam, especially by the media. Da'wah is the life and spirit of the ummah as it is linked with the call of humanity and the establishment of a functional society.

Therefore, looking at the popularity of social media among people as platforms for the acquisition and distribution of knowledge and information, Muslim youths in Nigeria can leverage the many uses of these platforms for seeking, sharing, and receiving information and knowledge on Islam, hence practicing da'wah. Simply put, social media are internet-based applications and tools that facilitate communication among and between individuals and networks. According to Hanna & Lutkevich (2025), social media refers to websites and applications that focus on communication, community-based input, interaction, content-sharing, and collaboration. Ashikuzzaman (2024) elaborates and defines social media as digital platforms and technologies that enable users to create, share, and engage with content in real time. He further stated that social media has transformed how individuals, communities, and businesses interact, fostering global connectivity and collaboration. Social media platforms like *Facebook*, *X, Instagram, LinkedIn*, and *TikTok* allow users to communicate, share ideas, express creativity, and stay informed on various topics. They are a collection of online communication channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content creation, and collaborations with websites and applications for different purposes and different uses. This means they can be used to practice da'wah.

This freedom brought with it many advantages, which are enjoyed by many people, but also many disadvantages, which are also abused by many with attendant consequences and negative effects on people and societies (Tynes, 2007). Some of the positive impacts of social media include: sharing and accessing knowledge and information instantly, connecting with friends and family irrespective of geographical barriers, creating and linking with professional communities by finding people with

common interest, promotional and advocacy tools, tools for teaching and learning, avenues for reaching large number of audiences, means of tracking and exposing criminals/false identities and fulfilment of the information need of the people through sharing of messages without hindrance, interactivity and direct connection with followers/friends. On the other hand, some of the disadvantages of social media include: spreading of rumours, false information and fake news, sharing messages of disunity and disintegration and hate speech, Illegal use of people's profiles/privacy issues, information overload, cyberbullying and cybercrimes, among others.

Despite these disadvantages, social media as channels that have liberalized and revolutionized the information dissemination process, which has afforded people opportunities to become owners of media channels and distributors/disseminators of knowledge and information without restrictions. However, despite these shortcomings of social media, their positive impacts which when utilized with caution and care, are many. This, therefore, means that social media can be used effectively by youths as channels for da'wah and Islamic propagation.

From empirical evidence on the use of social media for da'wah, Esma (2015) explores how female da'wah groups in Pakistan leverage modern media technologies to address women's issues within an Islamic framework. This research emphasizes a proactive approach to women's empowerment through religious scholarship and the necessity of adopting new communication strategies amidst a digital divide. This provides an understanding of the role of social media and gender dynamics in the propagation of Islam. Similarly, Ridwan (2015) focuses on Indonesian youth, revealing that a significant majority actively engage with online da'wah. The findings indicate that social media provides a non-coercive platform for religious learning, allowing youth to interact with content critically.

In the same light, Habibi (2018) discusses the necessity for da'wah to adapt to the millennial generation's reliance on social media. His paper argues for optimizing outreach through viral communication techniques and interactive content. This perspective aligns with the broader trend of utilizing social media as a strategic tool for religious messaging, reaffirming the importance of adapting to technological advancements. Another study by Sule and Suleiman (2021) explored the newest means of tapping the treasures of social media towards augmenting da'wah activities and spreading the knowledge of Islam by identifying various individual Muslim scholars and groups that created pages/channels on *Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter*, and other social media platforms to enhance Islamic da'wah and knowledge. Hence, this study found out that social media is a workable and genuine tool for the propagation

ideals of Islam. This study adds depth to the understanding of how social media serves as a multifaceted tool for religious engagement and da'wah.

Though this paper is on youths leveraging social media for da'wah, data from the literature also revealed that religious leaders can also leverage social media. According to a submission by Suherdiana & Muhaemin, (2018) which highlight the role of religious leaders in navigating the complexities of social media for da'wah, the duo argued that while the virtual world presents unique challenges, it is also a vital space for religious discourse, especially given the widespread use of mobile technology. Their perspective emphasizes the need for religious scholars to adapt their strategies for effective engagement in the digital realm. In a similar view, Abdulsalam and Badmus (2024) in their research reiterated that social media has provided innovative platforms for religious leaders to spread their messages and engage with various Muslims conveniently. Accordingly, their research also revealed the effectiveness of religious scholars' messages in influencing attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions among their followers, which helped foster unity, promote values, and counter misconceptions about Islam. These findings show the potential of social media platforms in fostering communication and understanding of religious principles, which reinforces the notion that social media can serve as an effective medium for da'wah.

Another empirical evidence is from Sule and Abdulkareem (2022), who looked at how 21 Muslim scholars from the 3 geo-political zones used social media platforms like *Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter, YouTube,* and *Zoom* to conduct da'wah in Northern Nigeria. By conducting surveys of the pages/channels on social media platforms of the selected scholars, and supplementing with observation and in-depth interviews to get data on the level of social media technology use for da'wah, their research findings indicate that the sampled Muslim scholars found it convenient to electronically offer their teachings and to upload videos and audios of their da'wah lectures on various social media platforms and hence recommended that Muslim scholars should continue to use social media platforms to assist in presenting the true image of Islam and Muslims.

Wardani & Muntazori (2019) examine the concept of Islamic memes as a novel form of da'wah targeted at millennials. Their analysis of visual language in Islamic memes illustrates the adaptability of religious messaging in contemporary digital media, highlighting the interactive nature of social media that allows for rapid information dissemination. On this, Ekmekcioglu et al. (2022) explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young Muslims' social media use during Ramadan. Their findings reveal how the pandemic has reshaped religious practices and social media engagement, highlighting the evolving nature of religious observance in the digital age.

On the other hand, Agarwal & Sureka (2015) focus attention on the negative impact of social media by examining how extremist groups exploit these platforms to spread radical ideologies. Their empirical analysis of existing literature on countering online radicalization highlights the need for vigilance in the digital space, as well as the importance of employing social media intelligence to mitigate threats. However, Hariri et al. (2019) sought to defer and looked at the dynamics of religious discussions within the Arab Twittersphere, categorizing users based on their content and interactions. This study points to the diverse landscape of religious discourse online, illustrating how social media can serve as a platform for both affirming and challenging religious beliefs. They believe that social media has both a positive and a negative impact and usage. On this, Purington et al., (2022) address the importance of social media literacy among youths, emphasizing the need for comprehensive assessment tools to equip adolescents with skills to navigate the complexities of online interactions due to the dual nature of social media as both a platform for religious engagement and a space fraught with potential risks.

The popularity of social media in Nigeria provided the basis for its usage in diverse subjects and areas, and opportunities to be used in da'wah and other forms of Islamic propagation among Muslim youths. According to Habibi (2018), "social media is becoming a trend among millennials and da'wah must make the most of it. Otherwise, the flow of da'wah will slow down and be left behind…". Habibi, in his article, argued on the impact of information globalization and the need to utilize it in delivering da'wah through viral communication techniques and packaging interesting content on interactive social media platforms. Social media platforms such as *Facebook*, *WhatsApp*, *Instagram*, *X,* and *YouTube,* among others, are popular platforms with large followership among youths in Nigeria. Though regulating such a pastime may be difficult, learning how to effectively and positively utilize them for the good of society is the best. One such usage of social media is to practice da'wah.

The conventional media, whose access is restricted, for instance, have to a certain extent framed Islam as synonymous with terrorism and Muslims as terrorists. Social media platforms, on the other hand, give every Muslim with an internet connection an opportunity to make personal broadcasts and clear such misconceptions about Islam and Muslims and share with their circle of family, friends, and colleagues across different platforms and networks. As social media gives individuals opportunities to own channels, create and disseminate knowledge and information without hindrance, they can be used as avenues for da'wah for Muslims and by Muslim youths in Nigeria.

Let's now examine the different types of social media available and how they can be effectively used for da'wah.

Discussion boards

These are online forums offered by various websites that share information on different subjects and allow users to discuss and share opinions on the different topics posted. Users of such forums share their opinions, discuss issues, exchange knowledge and information, and generally make comments on posts on such platforms. A user can leave a message and expects to see responses to the message left by other users. These forums are also known as discussion groups, discussion forums, message boards, online bulletin boards, or online forums.

In such discussion groups, Muslim youths can effectively use them to spread the message of Islam through da'wah, especially when these sites post controversial issues that misrepresent Islam or Muslims. Or make posts that frame Islam and Muslims in a bad light. A user can start a conversation and give information on the true teachings of Islam or the true state of affairs concerning an issue posted, and/or clarify misconceptions relating to such posts. Similarly, a user can start a discussion on a topical societal issue or subjects that can educate and enlighten people on the true teachings of Islam. *Quora* is a popular discussion forum that shares and discusses a wide variety of issues. And from time to time, people make queries about Islam. Youths can make deliberate use of such platforms for da'wah. Similarly, *Ummah.com* forum, *IslamicBoard*, and *TurnToIslam* are some of the examples of Islamic discussion boards where Muslims can practice da'wah and share proper knowledge on Islam.

Micro blogging

This type of social media platform is networks that allow users to register profiles and practice mini-blogging, where broadcasts with automatic links can be shared on users' pages and can be accessed by followers of the blogger. *X, Tumblr, Posterous, FriendFeed, Dailybooth,* and *Seconds* are examples of microblogging sites available to users.

According to Statista (2025), *X* is the most popular microblogging site in Nigeria, and the majority of its users are youths. *X* allows its users to create and share broadcasts in the form of short messages that do not exceed 280 characters, and additional messages will be shared as a thread. It also allows users to follow other handlers and share their feeds across multiple platforms and devices. On *X*, there are several Islamic microblogging sites such as *Muslim Voices*, *Islamic Reminders*, *The Noble Quran*, *Islamic Thought, Daily Hadith*, *Hadith and More,* and *Islamic Reflections,* among others, that users can follow and seek Islamic knowledge, share additional knowledge, and re-share their messages. Users can also create posts and share them with followers. It is, however,

important to note that there are several handles created in the name of Islam that share fake messages of Islam, and users should be careful about them.

Social networking sites

Social networks are sites designed to allow users to create profiles to connect and keep in touch with family, friends, colleagues, and make new ones; and share news and information about self and things happening in society. They enable users to create groups and add family and friends to share information on a variety of subjects and topics. For instance, *Facebook* is a free, popular social networking site that enables its users to create profiles, upload photos, videos, and generally keep in touch with family, friends, and colleagues through broadcasts and posts. Another example of a social networking site is *LinkedIn,* created to socially connect people with business associates and the professional community.

People can effectively use any of the available social networking sites to practice da'wah and propagate messages of true Islam through creating and sharing fatwas, short videos, posts from other Islamic websites and channels; and make comments on posts by others by providing additional information, answering questions raised, correcting false information and clarifying misconceptions. For instance, on *Facebook*, which is rated the most popular social networking site (see Statista, 2025) with large number of users, Muslim youths can create profiles, groups and pages to effectively spread the messages of Islam, and use them as a means to invite people to the worship of Allah alone and generally share any beneficial information/knowledge on Islam.

Here, depending on the level of privacy settings activated, friends and friends of friends can access and share information/knowledge posted by a user. In addition, groups can be created where friends and family members can be invited to join. Others can be added, and existing members can invite and add their connections too. Moreover, several other authentic da'wah and Islamic channels also have their *Facebook* pages, which users can follow, like, or join to get information and/ or share additional knowledge on Islamic topics and subjects, hence practice da'wah.

Blogging

These are sites for written or video content that allow others to view, read, comment, or share content with others. *WordPress* and *Blogger* are typical examples of full-blown blogging websites that allow users to own a website and create and share long broadcasts, essays, and disseminate news or even advertise products and services on different subjects of interest with an easily customizable interface and navigation.

Muslims who are interested in spreading the true messages of Islam through da'wah can find blogging websites as effective tools for spreading such messages. For instance, a blogging website can be created by a user just for sharing information/knowledge about the importance of peace in Islam. Posts on how peaceful Islam is, how Islam preaches peace, and posts Qur'anic verses and hadiths that enjoin peace can be the focus of the site. Links of such write-ups can be broadcasted to users/friends and other social media sites, which can be accessed by all who have the link, thus practicing da'wah.

Social curation

These are sites for categorizing, sharing, and promoting information on different subjects online. Photos, videos, and texts are socially curated and promoted. For example, *Pinterest* is a social curation site that categorizes and shares images, where clicking on an image takes you to its original source. *Reddit* is another example of a social curation site that is composed of hundreds of sub-communities called sub-reddits. Each subreddit, called redditor covers a particular subject such as religion, music, economy, politics, or technology. Contents submitted by redditors are voted upon, and those with high ratings are posted on the site's main thread page.

People can effectively use such sites and write on Islamic issues that can be voted for and shared with others.

Video sharing sites

These are other important social media websites that are popular and engaging, especially among the youth. Websites such as *YouTube, TikTok, Likee, Twitch,* and *IGTV* belong to this category. *YouTube,* however, is believed to be the most popular video-sharing website (Statista, 2025). There are almost all types of videos on different subjects from different websites on *YouTube*. Just key in the search term, and multiple search results are available to the user. A user doesn't have to register with the website to access *YouTube* videos, but creating a user profile is a requirement to upload videos.

For example, on the issue of terrorism, a Muslim user can create a video clip and explain with Qur'anic and Hadith evidences and quotations that Islam is peace and abhors terrorism, Islam preaches only peace, and that violence has no religion, and upload it on *YouTube*. Users can also give examples of instances where Muslims are tagged terrorists when they commit certain crimes and instances where Christians and others who commit the same crime are framed differently using different words, such as "gunmen," "bandits," etc., to describe them without any linkage to the religion they practice.

Interestingly, in addition to practicing da'wah, a user can get paid for the number of views on videos uploaded. Similarly, *TikTok* is increasingly becoming a popular video site with user-generated content. Users create videos and share them on their profiles for followers to access and share. Da'wah can be practiced through these means, which can go viral and have a wide reach.

Photo sharing sites

These are sites created for sharing images and photos. They enable users to create profiles and share photos and images of family, friends, and other subjects and activities of interest with their followers. They also allow users to make comments on photos and images posted by others (followers). *Instagram, Snapchat,* and *Flickr* are examples of such websites. For instance, *Instagram,* which is owned by *Facebook,* is rated the most popular photo sharing website, and the third most used social media platform in Nigeria as of the 3rd quarter of 2023 (Statista, 2025).

Muslim users can effectively use *Instagram* to share Islamic pictures and images with short lines explaining their contents. They can also engage people in the comment section.

Messenger

This is another popular social media that works with registered phone numbers to create user profiles. They enable instant information sharing and communication between and among users, and make it possible to create and share multimedia messages to individual contacts and groups. Platforms such as *WhatsApp*, *WeChat, Telegram,* and *Imo* belong to this category. There are about 2 billion users of *WhatsApp* in 180 countries around the globe (Iqbal, 2025), and *WhatsApp* is the most popular social messenger in Nigeria, used by 95.1% of Nigeria's 36.1 million social media users, a report by Statista.com (2025) revealed.

Muslims can use these types of social media, for instance, *WhatsApp* or *Telegram,* to share messages of Islam with individual contacts and can create da'wah groups easily. Users can also initiate conversations with contacts to propagate Islam, invite Christian friends and families to Islam, correct an observed ill in the society, clarify a misconception, or pass on a true Islamic message.

These few examples of the different types of social media platforms that can be utilized positively by youths in Nigeria to practice da'wah. This is because Nigerian is a country with an estimated population of over 236 million, where majority of the population (53.5%) are Muslims (The World Factbook, 2025) and having the largest population of youths in the world (Salawu, 2022), similarly, the population comprised of

more than 54 percent of all males and more than 51 percent of all females younger than 20 years of age (Bureau of Statistics, 2020). Data from Statista (2025) also revealed that as of January 2023, Nigeria had 31.6 million active social media users and that youths in Nigeria are the highest users of social media. As of December 2024, there were over 51.2 million *Facebook* and 12.6 million *Instagram* users in Nigeria; those between the ages of 18 and 34 accounted for 67.2 percent of the users of *Facebook* and 72.2 percent users of Instagram. The least represented age group of *Facebook* users was those between the ages of 55 and 64, with a mere share of 3.9 percent and 3.2 percent for *Instagram*. From this analysis, we can see that the majority of users of social media are youths who also use the most popular social media platforms, hence the justification for targeting Muslim youths to practice da'wah on social media.

CONCLUSION

From the above, we can see that social media can be leveraged as avenues for da'wah by Muslim youths in Nigeria. However, it is important to state here that da'wah is only possible when one has sufficient knowledge of Islam and its rulings. Muslim youths should seek credible Islamic knowledge and its applications on issues before embarking on any form of da'wah. Similarly, they should also seek clarification from respected Ulamas (learned scholars) on issues they have limited or no knowledge of.

It is also important to state here that da'wah may pose many challenges to people who intend to do it, as those who struggle in the path/way of Allah are always faced with a lot of hardships and challenges. While embarking on da'wah, know that you can be insulted, humiliated, cursed, and abused. But patience, which is a good quality of Muslims, can conquer all. Perseverance, dedication, steadfastness, focus, and commitment to pass on the right message should be the guiding principles of Muslims when using social media for da'wah. Moreover, people should draw lessons from our Prophet's moral character, who endured so much hardship in passing the true message of Allah to Muslim nations.

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