

Dakwah Management for Generation Z: Digital Media Integration, Institutional Branding, and Non-Formal Approaches in the Digital Revolution Era

Nandipah Roa'zah¹, Muslimatun Diana Muazaroh², Diana Elfiyatul Afifah³, Sukirno⁴, Moh. Agil Nuruzzaman⁵, Supeno⁶, Munahar⁷, Muhammad Arif Hidayat⁸
12345678 Universitas Pangeran Diponegoro Nganjuk

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the components of da'wah management relevant to Generation Z (Gen Z) through a literature review of various recent studies on digital da'wah, communication strategies, and media behavior of the younger generation. Gen Z is a group that is very familiar with technology, has a preference for visual, interactive content, and informal communication, thus requiring an updated da'wah strategy that differs from conventional approaches. The results of the study indicate that the effectiveness of da'wah for Gen Z is largely determined by the integration of digital media such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and podcasts, which serve as their primary information consumption spaces. In addition, branding of da'wah institutions plays a significant role in building the image, credibility, and emotional engagement of young audiences. Informal da'wah approaches through community spaces, cafes, and creative events have also proven more resonant for Gen Z because they support participation and psychological closeness. However, digital da'wah faces challenges such as competition with entertainment content, the risk of message simplification, and low digital literacy in some da'wah institutions. This study concludes that preaching to Gen Z requires an innovative, participatory, and branding-based multi-channel approach, accompanied by strengthening digital capacity to ensure the sustainability of preaching in the modern era.

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Corresponding Author:

Name: Nandipah Roa'zah
Institution: Universitas Pangeran Diponegoro Nganjuk
E-mail: nandipah@updn.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era has transformed communication patterns and social interactions, especially for Generation Z (Gen Z), who were born and raised in a digital ecosystem. Gen Z is known for being adaptable to technology, possessing strong visual preferences, and tending to favor informal and interactive communication approaches. This shift in generational

characteristics demands a transformation in Islamic missionary management to ensure Islamic missionary work remains relevant, engaging, and effective (

Jalaludin et al., 2021).

This phenomenon has raised academic concerns about how Islamic preaching institutions, preachers, and religious institutions can formulate Islamic preaching strategies that suit the communication needs of Gen Z. Conventional

Islamic preaching traditions that rely on one-way lectures face significant challenges when faced with a generation that prefers creative, concise, visual, and social media-based Islamic preaching experiences. On the other hand, digital Islamic preaching media such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and podcasts have proven to have great potential in shaping Gen Z's religious perceptions, but their utilization is still not optimal in many Islamic preaching institutions (Fadhila & Abdilah, 2024).

In addition to media challenges, managing da'wah for Gen Z also requires the development of institutional strategies such as branding mosques or da'wah institutions, formulating contextual programs, and ongoing management evaluation. Previous research shows that strengthening branding and collaborating with public figures can increase Gen Z's emotional engagement with religious activities. Meanwhile, informal da'wah approaches such as da'wah in cafes, communities, and creative events are among the innovations proven to suit Gen Z's characteristics (Iskandar, 2023).

This situation indicates an urgent need to reformulate the components of effective da'wah management for Gen Z. Without strategic adjustments, da'wah risks losing its audience and failing to address the socio-religious dynamics of the younger generation in the digital era. Therefore, this study aims to comprehensively analyze the components of da'wah management relevant to Gen Z through a review of the latest literature, particularly those related to da'wah strategies, digital media, institutional branding, and non-formal approaches.

This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of generation-based da'wah management studies, as well as provide practical benefits for da'wah institutions, mosques, and da'wah practitioners who want to optimize the da'wah approach to Gen Z in a creative, effective, and sustainable manner.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The methodological approach used in this study shows that a comprehensive

analysis understanding da'wah management for Generation Z can only be achieved through systematic and critical literature mapping. By utilizing the literature review method, this research is able to identify, compare, and synthesize findings from various relevant recent studies. This process takes place through multiple stages, starting from identifying digital da'wah literature and Gen Z characteristics, thematic classification of da'wah strategies, non-formal approaches, to branding issues and contemporary da'wah challenges. These stages enable researchers to build a comprehensive conceptual understanding, as recommended in the content analysis method, namely examining texts, evaluating patterns, and drawing conclusions based on the consistency of the findings.

The data collection and analysis process revealed that digital transformation has brought significant changes in how Gen Z receives, processes, and interprets Islamic preaching messages. Literature compiled from Fadhila & Abdilah [3], and Jalaludin et al. [1] consistently demonstrates that Gen Z is a digital native who demands adaptive Islamic preaching patterns. In this context, the literature study not only maps the phenomenon but also provides a theoretical foundation for a deeper understanding of these dynamics. The reliability of sources is important because digital Islamic preaching involves changes in behavior, technology, communication culture, and complex managerial aspects.

A comparative analysis of the literature reveals an interesting pattern regarding how Generation Z requires interactive, visual, and experiential da'wah. Their familiarity with digital media makes platforms like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and podcasts not just channels for message distribution, but part of their social identity ecosystem. Therefore, the findings in the literature reinforce that da'wah to Gen Z must be conducted through a multi-channel strategy that adapts content formats to how Gen Z consumes information, ranging from short, attention-grabbing content to long-form content that allows for in-depth exploration.

Furthermore, the results of the literature synthesis also confirm that da'wah management cannot be separated from the branding aspect of the da'wah institution. Studies such as those by Ardana & Soiman demonstrate how visual identity, message consistency, and professionalism of institutional communication can shape Gen Z's perception of da'wah credibility. These findings indicate that modern da'wah management has evolved from simply program management to managing image and emotional relationships with audiences.

Equally important, the analysis process also revealed that non-formal da'wah approaches are a strategic component in efforts to reach Gen Z. Literature from [7] shows that creative spaces such as cafes, hobby communities, and casual discussion rooms are more effective in creating psychological closeness than conventional lectures. Gen Z tends to avoid overly formal or hierarchical interactions, so delivering da'wah in an informal setting provides space for greater dialogue and participation.

In a managerial context, the literature review demonstrates the need to combine digital, humanistic, and institutional strategies in an integrated manner. The reviewed literature demonstrates the necessity to integrate four main aspects: strengthening digital literacy for preachers and Islamic missionary institutions, optimizing multimedia content, developing authentic branding, and establishing a humanistic and participatory Islamic missionary space. Thus, the synthesis of research findings not only describes the empirical conditions of digital Islamic missionary work but also offers a conceptual model for effective Islamic missionary management for Gen Z.

However, the literature review also revealed several challenges that are important considerations for future da'wah strategies. These challenges include intense competition with entertainment content, the risk of message simplification due to short content formats, and low digital literacy among some da'wah institutions. These findings emphasize that the success of da'wah among

Gen Z is determined not only by content creativity but also by the institution's capacity to manage digital platforms, understand algorithms, and maintain the quality of da'wah content.

Thus, this discussion shows that the literature study method not only functions as a data collection technique, but also as an intellectual framework that brings together various perspectives to produce a holistic understanding of da'wah management for Gen Z. **This approach also ensures that the formulated da'wah strategy has a strong empirical basis, is responsive to the social dynamics of the younger generation, and is in line with the demands of developing digital communication technology.**

3. RESULTS

Characteristics of Generation Z and Their Implications for Da'wah

The literature review shows that Generation Z has fundamentally different social interaction patterns and media preferences than previous generations. As a generation born and raised in a digital ecosystem, Gen Z is accustomed to the rapid flow of information, dynamic visuals, and interactive communication formats. This digital-native nature shapes their preference for concise, easily accessible content that is creatively packaged through various multimedia platforms.

Research by Jalaludin et al. [1] confirms that this shift in information consumption behavior requires da'wah to adapt its methodology and media to remain relevant. Da'wah can no longer rely on conventional, one-way lectures but needs to adopt a dialogic and adaptive delivery model. These findings align with Hatimah and Qudratullah, who demonstrated that the campus environment, as one of Gen Z's primary social spaces, demands a more flexible, less rigid, and responsive da'wah approach to the dynamics of their digital culture.

In practice, Gen Z's emphasis on authenticity, freedom of expression, and contextual relevance often renders traditional preaching less appealing. They tend to be

more receptive to religious messages packaged through informal dialogue, two-way conversations, and delivered in natural language that resonates with their daily lives. Therefore, a deep understanding of Gen Z's psychological, cognitive, and communication preferences provides a strategic foundation for formulating preaching management that truly addresses their spiritual needs and communication styles.

Utilization of Digital Media as the Main Instrument of Da'wah

The use of digital media is one of the most crucial elements in the strategy of preaching to Generation Z, considering that digital space is the main communication environment that shapes method they receive, process, and share information. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and podcasts are not only entertainment but also a medium through which Gen Z constructs their identity, values, and social preferences. Therefore, preaching efforts to reach Gen Z must be present on these platforms in formats that align with their algorithmic logic and digital communication styles.

1. TikTok and Instagram as Short Content Media

TikTok and Instagram occupy a crucial position because they both rely on short-form video formats that cater to Gen Z's fast-paced and dynamic attention span. Research by Fadhila and Abdilah [3] shows that da'wah rhetoric on TikTok creates a close, communicative atmosphere through the use of light language and engaging visuals. This allows the da'wah message to be received without psychological barriers, while simultaneously fostering emotional closeness between the da'wah preacher and the audience.

Meanwhile, Mazlin et al. revealed that Instagram has the power to commodify Islamic preaching, increasing the appeal of its message through consistent and professional visual aesthetics. Thus, these two platforms function not only as a medium for conveying messages but also as a creative

space where Islamic preaching is produced and perceived as part of Gen Z's digital lifestyle.

2. YouTube and Podcasts as a Space for Deepening

Unlike short content, YouTube and podcasts serve as a platform for deepening the study of Islamic preaching material, which requires longer duration and narrative. Waliyyana et al. emphasize that podcasts, with their intimate and reflective atmosphere, help audiences absorb religious messages more personally. Meanwhile, Maulani et al. show that Habib Ja'far's podcast, for example, can shape the religious character of Gen Z through flowing, light-hearted conversations, yet rich in religious values.

This long-form format allows preachers to elaborate their messages comprehensively, thus not only informing but also building emotional and intellectual connections with their audiences. In other words, the long-form platform serves as a medium for deepening meaning, strengthening Gen Z's religious understanding and attitudes.

3. Multiplatform Combination as an Effective Preaching Strategy

The literature synthesis shows that effective da'wah for Gen Z requires more than just a single platform, but requires an integrated, multi-platform strategy. Short content on TikTok and Instagram serves as a gateway to capture attention, while long-form content on YouTube and podcasts contributes to deepening understanding (meaning deepening). This combination forms a da'wah funnel, gradually guiding the audience from initial interest to more serious religious engagement and understanding.

This multiplatform approach not only aligns with the way Gen Z moves between media, but also ensures that the message of da'wah can be consistently present in the various contexts of their digital interactions.

The Role of Islamic Propagation Institution Branding in Increasing Gen Z Engagement

Branding of Islamic preaching institutions has proven to be an important factor in attracting the attention and trust of Gen Z. Branding includes visual identity, aesthetic consistency, narrative tone, and values. Which communicated by the institution.

Hanifah and Fauji showed that mosques or Islamic missionary institutions with strong branding are more likely to build emotional closeness and loyalty among young audiences. Gen Z tends to judge an institution's credibility not only by the content of the Islamic missionary message, but also by the professionalism of its visuals and the consistency of its communication.

Ardana and Soiman confirms that institutional branding also serves as a representation of the values of moderation, openness, and quality of Islamic missionary services. With strong branding, Islamic missionary institutions are able to compete healthily in a digital space filled with entertainment content and religious information from various sources.

Non-Formal Da'wah Approach and Community Empowerment

Non-formal da'wah is one of the most effective approaches for Gen Z. This is because non-formal formats such as cafe studies, community spaces, thematic discussions, and creative events are more suited to the lifestyle and psychosocial needs of this generation.

Setiawan et al demonstrated that cafes are attractive and non-intimidating spaces for preaching because they provide a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Iskandar [7] added that Gen Z wants to be more than just listeners, but also involved as actors, movers, or even creators of preaching content.

This approach demonstrates that preaching for Gen Z must be participatory, not just informative. Involving Gen Z in activity planning, digital content production, or event coordination increases program effectiveness by fostering a sense of ownership (*sense of ownership*).

The Challenge of Digital Preaching for Generation Z

While digital da'wah offers significant opportunities to expand the reach of religious messages, various structural and technical challenges remain as barriers to its effectiveness. These challenges are important to address because they directly relate to how Generation Z accesses, processes, and responds to religious messages in a fast-paced and competitive digital environment.

1. Competition with Entertainment Content

One major challenge is the dominance of entertainment content in the social media ecosystem. Islamic religious content must compete with entertainment videos that have high visual and emotional appeal, often getting lost in the fast-paced and dense flow of information. Masripah et al. showed that social media algorithms inherently favor entertainment content due to its high engagement rate. This situation requires Islamic religious content to be packaged creatively and communicatively to compete and remain relevant amidst the flood of visual information.

2. The Risk of Simplifying Religious Messages

Beyond content competition, the short video format popular among Gen Z also carries its own risks. Aini et al. [8] warn that the use of a very concise format can lead to oversimplification of religious messages. This has the potential to lead to misconceptions or shallow understanding because complex religious values are compressed into short messages that leave little room for elaboration. This challenge requires preachers and missionary institutions to find a balance between creative presentation and depth of content.

3. Low Digital Literacy of Islamic Propagation Institutions

The next issue relates to the internal capacity of Islamic preaching institutions to manage digital media. Hatimah and Qudratullah noted that

many Islamic preaching institutions lack adequate technical capabilities in content production, platform management, and audience behavior analysis. This low digital literacy results in suboptimal use of digital media, both in terms of visual quality and message delivery strategies. As a result, the preaching delivered is often uncompetitive and does not meet the content standards expected by Gen Z.

4. Lack of Evaluation of the Impact of Da'wah

The final challenge identified in the literature is the weak evaluation of the impact of digital da'wah. Many da'wah institutions still use superficial metrics such as views, likes, and shares as the primary indicators of success. However, these indicators do not reflect changes in religious knowledge, attitudes, or behavior, which are the core goals of da'wah. This lack of long-term impact-based evaluation often leads to da'wah strategies often oriented not toward value transformation, but solely toward content popularity.

An Effective Preaching Management Model for Gen Z

The results of the synthesis of various literature analyzed show that the effectiveness of da'wah management for Generation Z is very dependent on the capabilities of da'wah institutions. Several strategic components are integrated. Gen Z lives in a fast-paced, visual, and interactive digital culture, so an appropriate da'wah management model must align with these dynamics. Based on the overall findings, four main components form the foundation of the da'wah model deemed most appropriate for reaching and influencing Gen Z.

The first component is the integrated use of digital media, particularly through a combination of short and long-form content. Short-form content on platforms like TikTok and Instagram serves as an initial attention grabber, while long-form content on YouTube or podcasts serves as a key element. A space for deepening and internalizing values. Combining the two creates a more effective

and sustainable communication flow, while also adapting to Gen Z's media consumption patterns, which tend to shift between platforms.

The second component is strengthening the branding of Islamic missionary institutions, which includes creating a professional image, modern visual aesthetics, and communication narratives relevant to young audiences. A strong identity not only increases the credibility of the da'wah institution, but also helps build emotional closeness and a sense of involvement of Gen Z. In the context of a highly competitive digital space, a clear and consistent identity is an important indicator for the audience in assessing the quality and reliability of the da'wah message.

The third component is a non-formal da'wah approach that places creative space, a dialogical atmosphere, and active participation at the heart of the da'wah process. This approach has proven effective because it better aligns with the characteristics of Gen Z, who value freedom of expression and direct involvement. Da'wah conducted in community spaces, cafes, thematic activities, or creative collaborations creates a more intimate and personal religious experience, thereby enhancing the message's resonance.

The fourth component is improving human resource (HR) capacity in digital literacy, content design, and platform management. The quality of digital da'wah (Islamic outreach) is inextricably linked to the competence of the human resources who manage it. The ability to understand algorithms, produce engaging audio-visual content, and manage interactions on digital platforms are essential prerequisites for da'wah to compete and effectively reach audiences.

The integration of these four components forms a comprehensive and adaptive da'wah management model that addresses the needs and characteristics of Generation Z. This model is not only a response to changes in digital communication culture, but also a solution to various challenges in modern da'wah, such as content competition, message simplification, and low

digital literacy in some da'wah institutions. By implementing this integrated model, da'wah to Gen Z has the potential to achieve a deeper, more relevant, and more sustainable impact.

4. DISCUSSION

The Relevance of Gen Z Characteristics to the Renewal of Islamic Propagation Management

Generation Z (Gen Z) is known for being very familiar with digital technology, multitasking, and having a strong preference for visual and interactive content. These characteristics demand a paradigm shift in da'wah management. Conventional da'wah, which is linear and monologue-based, tends to be less appealing to Gen Z because it doesn't align with their fast-paced and dynamic information consumption patterns.

As emphasized by Jalaludin et al. [1], da'wah strategies in the digital revolution era must adapt to technological culture to remain relevant. Research by Hatimah and Qudratullah also shows that Gen Z's social environment, particularly on campus and in digital spaces, has created new preferences for receiving religious messages, namely through relaxed, informal, and dialogical interactions.

Gen Z tends to desire a preaching experience that is relatable, authentic, and relevant to their everyday lives. Therefore, updating preaching management is a strategic necessity, not just a technical option. Emotional closeness and a sense of direct involvement are crucial factors influencing the effectiveness of preaching for this generation.

Digital Media Integration as a Pillar of Da'wah Strategy

Digital media has become the main space for Gen Z interaction, so strategic integration of digital platforms is the key to the effectiveness of da'wah. TikTok and Instagram, for example, are optimal for spreading da'wah in short video formats that easily attract attention (Fadhila & Abdilah, 2024). This platform supports a viral algorithm that allows preaching messages to reach a wide audience in a short time.

On the other hand, YouTube and podcasts have become platforms for long-form Islamic preaching content that requires in-depth study, analysis, and a coherent narrative. Waliyyana et al. demonstrated that podcasts can create emotional closeness between preachers and audiences, while Maulani et al. emphasized that long-form Islamic preaching content can significantly strengthen the religious character of Gen Z.

These findings underscore the importance of a multi-channel communication strategy. A combination of short- and long-form content can build an effective communication funnel: short content serves as an entry point and long-form content serves as a means of deepening religious values. This approach aligns with the flexible mindset of Gen Z, accustomed to switching between platforms.

The Urgency of Branding Islamic Propagation Institutions in Engaging Generation Z

Branding has emerged as a strategic aspect that has a significant influence on how Generation Z perceives Islamic missionary institutions. In a digital context, where visuals and professionalism are key indicators of credibility, Gen Z demonstrates a high sensitivity to an institution's visual appearance, message consistency, and communication quality. Research by Hanifah and Fauji confirms that a strong and consistent visual identity not only increases Gen Z's level of trust but also builds their loyalty to the offered Islamic missionary programs. This demonstrates that an institution's image is no longer merely an accessory but an integral part of the Islamic missionary strategy that influences audience acceptance.

Furthermore, Ardana and Soiman's findings expand the understanding that institutional branding plays a crucial role in building an image of religious moderation. Through a friendly, inclusive, and professional approach, branding becomes a means to convey the core values of Islamic missionary institutions more effectively and more easily understood by the younger

generation. In other words, branding goes beyond visual aesthetics, but involves narrative strategies that depict the institution's vision, mission, and Islamic character in an engaging and relevant manner.

In practice, strengthening the branding of Islamic missionary institutions requires three main pillars. First, a consistent visual identity, encompassing a logo, colors, typography, and design that clearly reflects the institution's character. Second, a relevant communication narrative, namely messages that are structured, contextual, and aligned with the needs and language style of Gen Z. Third, a coherent digital and offline experience, ensuring that what is displayed on social media aligns with the actual experiences received by congregations in Islamic missionary activities.

Without strong branding, Islamic outreach institutions struggle to compete in a digital landscape filled with highly competitive creative and visual content. Therefore, branding is not merely an image-building effort, but a managerial strategy that determines how well Islamic outreach can attract and retain the engagement of Generation Z.

Non-Formal Da'wah Approach as a Transformation of Da'wah Methods

Research shows that informal da'wah has a strong resonance among Gen Z. This approach includes da'wah in cafes, community spaces, thematic discussions, and creative events that are close to the lifestyle of young people. Setiawan et al. found that cafes as da'wah spaces create a comfortable atmosphere so that audiences are more receptive to religious messages.

Iskandar [7] also emphasized that Gen Z's involvement as da'wah actors, for example as da'wah content creators or activity volunteers, increases their sense of ownership and engagement with da'wah activities. Gen Z responds more to a participatory approach than to one-way lectures.

This informal approach is not only communicatively effective but also psychologically relevant. Informal spaces

help reduce the hierarchical distance between preacher and audience, creating a more equal and welcoming dialogue. This is a crucial strategy in generation-based da'wah.

The Challenge of Digital Preaching for Gen Z

Despite its enormous potential, digital da'wah faces several challenges. First, competition from entertainment content is a major obstacle, as da'wah content must compete with short videos and highly visually engaging entertainment (Masripah et al., 2024). Second, there is the risk of simplifying religious meaning when messages are delivered in very short formats [8]. Content that is too concise has the potential to lead to misunderstandings or diminish religious values.

Third, digital literacy among Islamic missionary institutions remains relatively low. Hatimah and Qudratullah revealed that many Islamic missionary institutions lack trained human resources in digital media management, content design, and audience data analysis. As a result, digital Islamic missionary strategies often proceed without a clear direction.

These challenges require increasing the capacity of human resources for da'wah, developing content standards, and integrating digital da'wah and face-to-face da'wah to strengthen the meaning and consistency of the message.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide an important contribution to enriching theoretical studies on contemporary da'wah management. Theoretically, this study shows that modern da'wahNoIt can no longer be understood solely as a rhetorical activity or the verbal delivery of religious messages. Da'wah now operates within a more complex communication ecosystem, requiring the integration of various disciplines such as digital communication, branding, media psychology, and audience participation theory. This aligns with the thinking of Jalaludin et al. [1], who assert that da'wah in

the digital era is multidisciplinary, combining social, technological, and managerial approaches to ensure effective message delivery.

In practical terms, the results of this study yield several strategic recommendations for Islamic outreach institutions. First, Islamic outreach institutions need to adopt a multi-channel strategy in delivering religious messages to reach Gen Z, who are active on various digital platforms. Second, increasing human resource capacity is a must, especially in digital literacy and content production, so that institutions can compete with the evolving visual and communicative standards in the digital world. Third, institutional branding must be built consistently, encompassing a visual identity, communication style, and narrative relevant to the character of Gen Z. Fourth, non-formal and participatory Islamic outreach approaches need to be strengthened to create a more humanistic, dialogical, and close-knit interaction space for Gen Z. Fifth, Islamic outreach institutions need to develop more comprehensive evaluation indicators, no longer relying solely on digital metrics such as likes or views, but also assessing changes in audience attitudes, understanding, and religious engagement.

Thus, the theoretical and practical implications obtained from this study confirm that preaching to Generation Z requires an adaptive, consistent approach based on a deep understanding of the dynamics of digital media and the sociocultural characteristics of the younger generation.

5. CONCLUSION

This research shows that managing da'wah for Generation Z requires

fundamental changes in communication strategies, methods, and approaches. The highly digital, visual, interactive, and multitasking nature of Gen Z makes conventional da'wah less effective if not tailored to their media consumption patterns. The integration of digital media such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and podcasts has become a key pillar in delivering da'wah messages because it can meet Gen Z's needs for concise, creative, and in-depth content.

Beyond media aspects, branding of Islamic preaching institutions has proven to play a strategic role in attracting attention and building loyalty among Gen Z. Consistent visual and narrative branding enhances the credibility of Islamic preaching institutions and creates an emotional connection with young audiences. Informal Islamic preaching approaches through communities, casual spaces, and creative activities are also effective in reducing the psychological distance between preachers and their audiences, thus better aligning with Gen Z's communication style.

However, digital da'wah for Gen Z also faces significant challenges, including intense competition with entertainment content, the risk of message simplification, and low digital literacy among some da'wah institutions. Therefore, strengthening human resource capacity, developing multi-channel strategies, and developing comprehensive evaluation models are strategic imperatives to ensure the sustainability of da'wah.

Overall, this research confirms that preaching to Gen Z must be adaptive, creative, collaborative, and based on a deep understanding of their characteristics. Without such updates, preaching institutions risk losing relevance amidst the dynamics of technological developments and changes in modern communication culture.

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