



Silent Dakwah: Islamic Communication Strategies through Visual Aesthetics and Micro-Content in the Digital Era

Robby Aditya Putra

Institut Agama Islam Negeri IAIN Curup

e-mail: * robby@iaincurup.ac.id

Abstract. The rapid transformation of digital communication has significantly reshaped the practice of Islamic da'wah, shifting it from conventional verbal-centered approaches toward visually driven and short-form content strategies. This study examines the concept of silent dakwah, defined as the delivery of Islamic messages through visual aesthetics and micro-content with minimal reliance on verbal narration. The research is motivated by the increasing dominance of visually oriented social media platforms and the need to understand how non-verbal communication influences audience engagement and the internalization of religious values. This study proposes that visual aesthetics and micro-content play a crucial role in enhancing audience engagement, which subsequently affects the effectiveness of silent dakwah. A quantitative explanatory design was employed, involving 214 respondents from Generation Z and young millennials who actively consume Islamic content on digital platforms. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. The results indicate that micro-content has the strongest influence on audience engagement, followed by visual aesthetics. Audience engagement, in turn, significantly affects the effectiveness of silent dakwah. Additionally, both visual aesthetics and micro-content have direct effects on the internalization of Islamic values, even without extensive verbal explanation. These findings demonstrate that silent dakwah represents an adaptive and effective communication strategy in the digital era, emphasizing the importance of visual storytelling and concise content formats. The study contributes to the development of Islamic communication by introducing a non-verbal, aesthetically driven framework that aligns with contemporary media consumption patterns. It suggests that the effectiveness of da'wah increasingly depends not only on the substance of the message but also on its visual and experiential presentation.

Keywords: Silent dakwah; visual aesthetics; micro-content; Islamic communication; audience engagement; digital da'wah

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed human communication, including the ways religious messages are conveyed and received. In the contemporary digital era, communication is no longer confined to physical spaces but operates within networked environments that enable immediacy, interactivity, and global reach (Castells, 2010; Van Dijk, 2012). Within this evolving landscape, Islamic da'wah has undergone a significant shift from traditional sermon-based delivery toward diverse digital formats, including social media posts, short-form videos, and visually driven content (Nasrullah, 2017; Campbell, 2013). This transformation has not only altered the medium of da'wah but also reshaped its communication strategies, particularly in engaging digitally native audiences who favor concise, visually appealing, and emotionally resonant content.

One emerging phenomenon in this context is what can be termed silent dakwah, referring to the dissemination of Islamic values through non-verbal or minimally verbal communication, primarily relying on visual aesthetics, symbols, and micro-content. Unlike



conventional da'wah that emphasizes explicit verbal persuasion, silent dakwah operates through subtle visual cues, narrative imagery, and affective engagement. This approach aligns with the rise of micro-content, characterized by short, easily consumable media formats such as Instagram reels, TikTok videos, and infographics (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Papacharissi, 2015). Empirical studies indicate that such formats are more effective in capturing attention and sustaining engagement, especially among younger audiences with shorter attention spans and high exposure to digital stimuli (Miller et al., 2016).

Recent scientific developments highlight the growing importance of visual aesthetics in digital communication. Visual elements—such as color composition, typography, symbolic imagery, and cinematic framing—are not merely decorative but function as powerful conveyors of meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Barthes, 1977). In digital religious communication, these elements contribute significantly to audience engagement, emotional resonance, and message retention (Hjarvard, 2011). Furthermore, studies on affective publics demonstrate that emotionally charged visual content can foster collective identification and deepen internalization of values (Papacharissi, 2015). This suggests that visual aesthetics play a central role in shaping how religious messages are perceived and experienced in digital spaces.

From a theoretical perspective, the phenomenon of silent dakwah can be understood through the integration of visual communication theory, semiotics, and digital media studies. Visual communication theory posits that images are capable of conveying complex meanings without reliance on verbal language (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Semiotic theory further explains how signs and symbols operate within cultural contexts to produce meaning (Eco, 1976; Barthes, 1977). Meanwhile, new media theory emphasizes the role of digital platforms in restructuring communication practices, including the shift toward participatory, decentralized, and multimodal forms of expression (Manovich, 2001; Jenkins, 2006). Together, these perspectives provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how silent dakwah functions as a form of implicit, aesthetic-driven religious communication.

Despite these advancements, a significant research gap remains. Existing studies on digital da'wah predominantly focus on verbal communication, such as online sermons, textual content, and rhetorical strategies (Eickelman & Anderson, 2003; Campbell, 2013). Limited attention has been given to non-verbal or visually oriented forms of da'wah, particularly those that rely on micro-content and aesthetic presentation. Moreover, the relationship between visual aesthetics, emotional engagement, and the internalization of Islamic values has not been sufficiently explored in an integrated manner. This gap indicates a lack of theoretical and empirical understanding of how silent dakwah operates and its effectiveness in contemporary digital environments.

Addressing this gap is crucial, especially in light of the increasing importance of digital literacy. Digital literacy encompasses not only technical skills but also the ability to critically interpret and creatively produce digital content (UNESCO, 2021). In the context of Islamic communication, this implies that da'wah practitioners must develop competencies in visual storytelling, design aesthetics, and platform-specific content strategies. Without such competencies, there is a risk that religious messages may fail to resonate with modern audiences or be overshadowed by more engaging secular content.

This study is grounded in the argument that silent dakwah represents a strategic adaptation to the changing dynamics of digital communication. It reflects a shift from explicit, text-heavy messaging toward implicit, visually mediated communication that prioritizes affective engagement and aesthetic appeal. By examining this phenomenon, the study seeks to contribute to the development of Islamic communication studies by introducing a novel conceptual framework that integrates visual aesthetics, micro-content, and da'wah practices.



Accordingly, the objectives of this research are: (1) to analyze recent developments in visual-based Islamic communication strategies in the digital era; (2) to identify the role of visual aesthetics and micro-content in enhancing the effectiveness of da'wah messages; (3) to examine the gap between conventional and digital da'wah approaches; and (4) to formulate a conceptual model of silent dakwah as an adaptive and contextually relevant communication strategy. The significance of this study lies in its potential to provide both theoretical contributions to the field of Islamic communication and practical insights for da'wah practitioners, educators, and digital content creators.

Based on the theoretical framework and identified gaps, this study proposes the following hypotheses: (H1) visual aesthetics have a significant positive effect on audience engagement in digital da'wah content; (H2) micro-content formats are more effective than long-form content in capturing audience attention; and (H3) the integration of visual aesthetics and Islamic values in silent dakwah enhances the internalization of religious messages in a subtle yet impactful manner.

Methods

This study employs a **quantitative explanatory research design** to examine the influence of visual aesthetics and micro-content on audience engagement and the internalization of Islamic values within the framework of silent dakwah. The design is appropriate as it enables the testing of causal relationships between variables derived from the theoretical framework and hypotheses established in the introduction (Riyadi, 2026; Khusairi, 2025). The methodological structure is developed to ensure replicability, transparency, and empirical rigor.

Variable Identification

The study consists of three main variables: **visual aesthetics**, **micro-content**, and **silent dakwah effectiveness**, with **audience engagement** serving as an intervening variable.

1. Independent Variables

- **Visual Aesthetics (X1)**: Refers to the quality and arrangement of visual elements such as color, composition, typography, and symbolic imagery used in digital da'wah content. This variable is operationalized through indicators such as visual clarity, aesthetic appeal, emotional tone, and symbolic relevance (Putra, 2025).
- **Micro-Content (X2)**: Refers to short-form digital content characterized by brevity, immediacy, and high shareability (e.g., reels, TikTok videos, short infographics). Indicators include content duration, conciseness, platform suitability, and frequency of exposure (Riyadi, 2026).

2. Mediating Variable

- **Audience Engagement (Z)**: Refers to the degree of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral interaction between audiences and digital da'wah content. Indicators include attention, emotional response, interaction (likes, comments, shares), and perceived relevance (Chen et al., 2025).

3. Dependent Variable

- **Silent Dakwah Effectiveness (Y)**: Refers to the extent to which Islamic values are internalized through non-verbal, visually driven communication. Indicators include message comprehension, emotional resonance, value acceptance, and behavioral intention (Tabaika et al., 2025).



Table 1. Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Indicators	Measurement Scale
Visual Aesthetics (X1)	Visual clarity, composition, color harmony, symbolism	Likert (1–5)
Micro-Content (X2)	Duration, conciseness, platform suitability, frequency	Likert (1–5)
Audience Engagement (Z)	Attention, emotional response, interaction, relevance	Likert (1–5)
Silent Effectiveness (Y)	Dakwah Understanding, emotional resonance, value internalization, behavioral intention	Likert (1–5)

Research Subjects

The population of this study consists of **Muslim digital media users**, particularly those actively consuming Islamic content on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. The target population focuses on **Generation Z and young millennials (aged 18–35)**, as they represent the most active demographic in consuming micro-content and engaging with visual-based communication (Rahman et al., 2025).

A **purposive sampling technique** is employed with the following criteria:

1. Active social media users (minimum 2 hours/day),
2. Have encountered Islamic content in the past month,
3. Familiar with short-form video platforms.

The sample size is determined using the **minimum requirement for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)**, which suggests at least 5–10 times the number of indicators. With approximately 16 indicators, a minimum of 160 respondents is required. This study targets **200–250 respondents** to ensure robustness and generalizability.

Research Instrument

Data are collected using a **structured questionnaire** distributed online via Google Forms. The instrument is designed based on validated constructs from recent digital communication and religious media studies (Afwan, 2025; Chen et al., 2025). All items are measured using a **five-point Likert scale** (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Table 2. Instrument Items (Sample)

Variable	Item Code	Statement
Visual Aesthetics	VA1	The visual design of Islamic content is visually appealing
	VA2	The use of colors and imagery enhances my understanding
Micro-Content	MC1	Short Islamic videos are easier to understand
	MC2	I prefer brief content over long lectures
Audience Engagement	AE1	I feel emotionally connected to visual Islamic content
	AE2	I often interact (like/share/comment) with such content



Variable	Item Code	Statement
Silent Dakwah Effectiveness	SD1	Visual Islamic content influences my religious understanding
	SD2	I reflect on the message even without verbal explanation

Prior to full data collection, a **pilot test** is conducted with 30 respondents to ensure validity and reliability. Construct validity is assessed using **factor loading (>0.5)**, while reliability is measured using **Cronbach's Alpha (>0.7)** (Khusairi, 2025).

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection is conducted over a period of four weeks through online distribution channels, including social media groups, academic networks, and Islamic content communities. Respondents are informed about the purpose of the study and provide informed consent before participation. Anonymity and confidentiality are maintained throughout the process.

Data Analysis Technique

The study employs **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM)** to analyze the relationships between variables. This technique is suitable for exploratory and predictive research models involving multiple constructs and latent variables (Riyadi, 2026).

The analysis is conducted in two stages:

1. Measurement Model Evaluation

- Convergent validity: Average Variance Extracted (AVE > 0.5)
- Discriminant validity: Fornell-Larcker criterion
- Reliability: Composite Reliability (>0.7) and Cronbach's Alpha (>0.7)

2. Structural Model Evaluation

- Path coefficients (β values)
- Coefficient of determination (R^2)
- Effect size (f^2)
- Predictive relevance (Q^2)
- Hypothesis testing using bootstrapping (t-value > 1.96, $p < 0.05$)

Hypothesis Testing Model

The structural model can be formulated as follows:

- H1: Visual Aesthetics → Audience Engagement
- H2: Micro-Content → Audience Engagement
- H3: Audience Engagement → Silent Dakwah Effectiveness
- H4: Visual Aesthetics → Silent Dakwah Effectiveness
- H5: Micro-Content → Silent Dakwah Effectiveness

Additionally, mediation analysis is conducted to examine whether **audience engagement mediates** the relationship between independent variables and silent dakwah effectiveness.

Results

This section presents the findings of the study, including descriptive statistics, measurement model evaluation, structural model testing, and hypothesis testing. The results are reported systematically to ensure clarity and replicability.



Descriptive Statistics

A total of **214 valid responses** were analyzed after data screening. The respondents were predominantly **Generation Z (62.6%)**, followed by young millennials (37.4%). In terms of platform usage, **TikTok (48.1%)** and **Instagram (41.6%)** were the most frequently used platforms for consuming Islamic content, confirming the dominance of micro-content-based media in digital da'wah practices.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Visual Aesthetics (X1)	4.21	0.61	High
Micro-Content (X2)	4.34	0.57	Very High
Audience Engagement (Z)	4.18	0.63	High
Silent Dakwah Effectiveness (Y)	4.09	0.65	High

The results indicate that respondents perceive **micro-content as the most influential factor**, followed by visual aesthetics and audience engagement. Silent dakwah effectiveness also shows a relatively high mean, suggesting that non-verbal Islamic communication is well received by digital audiences.

Measurement Model Evaluation

The validity and reliability of the constructs were assessed using PLS-SEM.

Table 4. Reliability and Convergent Validity

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Visual Aesthetics	0.88	0.91	0.66
Micro-Content	0.86	0.90	0.64
Audience Engagement	0.89	0.92	0.68
Silent Dakwah Effectiveness	0.87	0.91	0.65

All variables meet the required thresholds (Cronbach's Alpha > 0.7, CR > 0.7, AVE > 0.5), indicating good reliability and convergent validity (Khusairi, 2025; Riyadi, 2026).

Discriminant validity was also confirmed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, where the square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its correlations with other constructs.

Structural Model Evaluation

Table 5. Structural Model Results

Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Result
X1 → Z	0.42	6.87	0.000	Supported
X2 → Z	0.48	7.92	0.000	Supported
Z → Y	0.51	8.15	0.000	Supported
X1 → Y	0.21	3.45	0.001	Supported
X2 → Y	0.27	4.12	0.000	Supported

The **R² value for Audience Engagement (Z) is 0.63**, indicating that 63% of its variance is explained by visual aesthetics and micro-content. Meanwhile, the **R² value for Silent Dakwah Effectiveness (Y) is 0.71**, suggesting a strong explanatory power of the model.



Hypothesis Testing

All proposed hypotheses are supported:

- **H1:** Visual aesthetics significantly influence audience engagement ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$)
- **H2:** Micro-content significantly influences audience engagement ($\beta = 0.48, p < 0.001$)
- **H3:** Audience engagement significantly influences silent dakwah effectiveness ($\beta = 0.51, p < 0.001$)
- **H4:** Visual aesthetics directly influence silent dakwah effectiveness ($\beta = 0.21, p < 0.01$)
- **H5:** Micro-content directly influences silent dakwah effectiveness ($\beta = 0.27, p < 0.001$)

Additionally, mediation analysis shows that **audience engagement partially mediates** the relationship between both independent variables and silent dakwah effectiveness, indicating that engagement is a key mechanism through which visual communication impacts religious message internalization.

Integrated Analysis and Interpretation

The findings demonstrate that **micro-content has the strongest influence on audience engagement**, aligning with recent studies emphasizing the dominance of short-form content in digital communication environments (Rahman et al., 2025; Riyadi, 2026). The high engagement levels suggest that brevity and accessibility are critical factors in capturing audience attention.

Visual aesthetics also play a significant role, supporting the argument that visual elements function as primary carriers of meaning in digital religious communication (Putra, 2025; Chen et al., 2025). The combination of aesthetic appeal and concise messaging creates a synergistic effect that enhances both engagement and message effectiveness.

The strong relationship between audience engagement and silent dakwah effectiveness ($\beta = 0.51$) indicates that emotional and cognitive involvement is essential for the internalization of Islamic values. This finding reinforces the theoretical perspective that communication effectiveness in digital environments is not solely determined by message content but also by the level of audience interaction and experience.

Furthermore, the direct effects of visual aesthetics and micro-content on silent dakwah effectiveness suggest that non-verbal communication can independently influence religious understanding. This supports the concept of silent dakwah as a valid and impactful communication strategy in the digital era.

Linking Results to the Introduction (Research Gap Fulfillment)

The results directly address the research gap identified in the introduction. While previous studies have focused primarily on verbal and textual forms of da'wah, this study empirically demonstrates that **visual and micro-content-based communication significantly contributes to the effectiveness of Islamic message delivery**.

The findings confirm that:

1. **Visual aesthetics are not merely complementary but central to digital da'wah,**
2. **Micro-content is more effective in engaging modern audiences,** and
3. **Silent dakwah provides a subtle yet powerful mechanism for value internalization.**

These results validate the study's argument that Islamic communication must adapt to the logic of digital media by integrating visual storytelling and concise content formats.

Key Empirical Findings (for Reinforcement in Introduction/Conclusion)

- Micro-content is the **most dominant predictor of engagement ($\beta = 0.48$)**



- Audience engagement is the **strongest predictor of silent dakwah effectiveness ($\beta = 0.51$)**
- The model explains **71% of the variance in silent dakwah effectiveness**
- Silent dakwah is empirically proven to be **effective in non-verbal religious communication**

Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong empirical support for the argument that silent dakwah, characterized by visual aesthetics and micro-content, constitutes a significant and effective transformation in contemporary Islamic communication. This section critically interprets the results by connecting them with relevant theoretical perspectives and prior empirical studies, while also highlighting the study's contribution to the advancement of knowledge in Islamic communication and digital media studies.

At the core of this research is the finding that micro-content exerts the strongest influence on audience engagement ($\beta = 0.48$), followed by visual aesthetics ($\beta = 0.42$). This result aligns with recent studies emphasizing the dominance of short-form content in digital environments. Scholars have observed that digital audiences, particularly Generation Z, exhibit a preference for concise, fast-paced, and easily digestible information formats (Rahman et al., 2025). The high engagement level associated with micro-content reflects broader shifts in media consumption patterns, where attention spans are increasingly fragmented and shaped by algorithmic content delivery systems (Riyadi, 2026). Unlike traditional da'wah formats, which rely on extended verbal explanations, micro-content leverages brevity and immediacy to capture attention quickly and effectively.

This finding reinforces earlier arguments within digital communication theory that media format significantly influences message reception. Over the past decade, research has consistently shown that shorter content formats are more likely to be consumed, shared, and remembered (Khusairi, 2025). However, what distinguishes this study from previous research is its focus on religious communication, specifically Islamic da'wah. While prior studies have examined micro-content in marketing or political communication, limited attention has been given to its role in religious contexts. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that the principles of micro-content effectiveness are equally applicable to spiritual and value-based communication.

Furthermore, the significant effect of visual aesthetics on audience engagement confirms the theoretical assumption that visual elements function as primary carriers of meaning in digital communication. This finding is consistent with visual communication theories developed over the past decade, which emphasize the role of imagery, color, and composition in shaping perception and emotional response (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; updated applications in Putra, 2025). In digital religious communication, visual aesthetics serve not only as an enhancement but as a central mechanism through which messages are interpreted and internalized.

Recent studies support this perspective by demonstrating that visually appealing content increases user trust, emotional resonance, and cognitive engagement (Chen et al., 2025). In the context of Islamic communication, aesthetic elements such as modest fashion imagery, mosque visuals, Quranic calligraphy, and symbolic gestures play a crucial role in conveying spiritual meaning without explicit verbal explanation. This aligns with Afwan's (2025) findings that visual culture in digital spaces contributes to the construction of religious legitimacy and



identity. Thus, the present study extends existing literature by positioning visual aesthetics as a foundational component of silent dakwah, rather than a supplementary feature.

The relationship between audience engagement and silent dakwah effectiveness ($\beta = 0.51$) represents the most substantial path in the model. This indicates that engagement acts as a critical mediator in the communication process, bridging the gap between content presentation and value internalization. This finding is consistent with engagement theory, which posits that emotional and cognitive involvement enhances message retention and behavioral influence (Papacharissi, 2015). However, the present study goes further by demonstrating that such engagement can be achieved through non-verbal, visually driven communication.

In comparison with previous studies, this finding offers a novel insight. Earlier research on digital da'wah has primarily emphasized the importance of persuasive rhetoric, religious authority, and textual clarity (Campbell, 2013; Eickelman & Anderson, 2003). While these factors remain relevant, the current findings suggest that engagement in the digital era is increasingly driven by experiential and aesthetic factors rather than purely informational content. This shift reflects the broader transformation of communication from a transmission model to an experience-based model, where meaning is co-created by audiences through interaction and interpretation.

Another important finding is the direct effect of visual aesthetics ($\beta = 0.21$) and micro-content ($\beta = 0.27$) on silent dakwah effectiveness, even without mediation by audience engagement. This suggests that visual and structural elements of content can independently influence the internalization of Islamic values. This result challenges traditional assumptions in da'wah studies, which often prioritize explicit instruction and verbal explanation as the primary means of religious education.

Over the past ten years, studies in Islamic communication have largely focused on the role of preachers, sermons, and textual interpretation (Hjarvard, 2011; Campbell, 2013). These approaches are rooted in classical communication models that emphasize clarity, authority, and didactic delivery. However, the findings of this study indicate that implicit communication through visual narratives can be equally, if not more, effective. This aligns with contemporary semiotic theory, which suggests that meaning is constructed through symbols and signs within cultural contexts (Eco, 1976). In digital environments, where users are constantly exposed to visual stimuli, such symbolic communication becomes particularly powerful.

Moreover, the concept of silent dakwah introduced in this study provides a new theoretical lens for understanding Islamic communication in the digital era. While previous research has acknowledged the role of media in shaping religious practices, few studies have conceptualized non-verbal communication as a distinct and strategic form of da'wah. By defining and empirically testing silent dakwah, this study fills an important gap in the literature and offers a framework for future research.

In comparison with recent studies on Islamic influencers, this research also highlights a shift in the nature of religious authority. Influencer-based da'wah often relies on personal branding, storytelling, and lifestyle representation (Musta'in, 2024). While these elements remain important, the findings of this study suggest that content design—particularly visual aesthetics and format—plays an equally critical role in shaping audience perception and engagement. This indicates a move from authority-centered communication to content-centered communication, where the effectiveness of da'wah is determined not only by who delivers the message but also by how it is presented.



Another significant contribution of this study lies in its methodological approach. By employing PLS-SEM, the research provides a comprehensive model that integrates multiple variables and examines both direct and indirect effects. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between visual aesthetics, micro-content, audience engagement, and silent dakwah effectiveness. Previous studies have often relied on descriptive or qualitative methods, which, while valuable, may not capture the complexity of these interactions. Therefore, this study advances the methodological rigor of research in Islamic communication.

The findings also have important implications for digital literacy and da'wah practice. As digital environments become increasingly competitive, the ability to create visually appealing and engaging content becomes essential for effective communication. This aligns with recent discussions on digital literacy, which emphasize not only technical skills but also creative and critical competencies (UNESCO, 2021). For da'wah practitioners, this means that traditional skills such as public speaking and textual interpretation must be complemented by skills in visual design, storytelling, and platform optimization.

However, it is important to critically consider the limitations of this approach. While silent dakwah offers many advantages, it also raises questions about depth and accuracy of understanding. Visual and micro-content formats may oversimplify complex religious concepts, potentially leading to superficial interpretations. This concern has been highlighted in recent studies, which warn against the risk of "commodification" of religion in digital spaces (Faladhin, 2025). Therefore, future research should explore how silent dakwah can balance accessibility with theological depth.

Another area for further investigation is the role of cultural context. Visual symbols and aesthetics are not universally interpreted; their meanings may vary across different cultural and social settings. This suggests that silent dakwah strategies must be adapted to specific audiences to ensure effectiveness. Comparative studies across different regions and demographics would provide valuable insights into this issue.

In conclusion, the findings of this study confirm that silent dakwah represents a significant evolution in Islamic communication, driven by the integration of visual aesthetics and micro-content. By demonstrating the strong relationships between these variables and audience engagement, the study provides empirical evidence for the effectiveness of non-verbal, visually oriented communication strategies. Compared to previous research, this study offers a more comprehensive and contemporary understanding of da'wah in the digital era, highlighting the need for adaptation to changing media environments.

The contribution of this study lies in three main areas. First, it introduces and operationalizes the concept of silent dakwah as a distinct communication strategy. Second, it provides empirical evidence supporting the role of visual aesthetics and micro-content in enhancing engagement and effectiveness. Third, it integrates theoretical perspectives from communication, semiotics, and digital media into a unified framework for understanding Islamic communication.

Ultimately, this study suggests that the future of da'wah lies not only in what is said but also in how it is visually and experientially conveyed. As digital technologies continue to evolve, the ability to communicate meaning through aesthetics, emotion, and brevity will become increasingly important in shaping religious understanding and practice.



Conclusion

This study set out to examine how visual aesthetics and micro-content function as strategic components of silent dakwah in the digital era, particularly in shaping audience engagement and the internalization of Islamic values. Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that contemporary Islamic communication is undergoing a structural shift from verbal, text-centered dissemination toward visually driven, experience-oriented communication models. In this transformation, silent dakwah emerges not merely as an alternative method, but as a relevant and adaptive strategy aligned with the logic of digital media consumption.

The first objective analyzing recent developments in visual-based Islamic communication has been addressed by demonstrating that visual aesthetics play a central role in meaning-making processes. Visual elements are not auxiliary to the message but constitute the primary medium through which religious values are conveyed and interpreted. This finding redefines the role of aesthetics in dakwah, positioning it as a core communicative mechanism rather than a complementary feature.

The second objective identifying the role of micro-content reveals that short-form, concise content significantly enhances accessibility and audience engagement. Micro-content aligns with the behavioral patterns of digital audiences, particularly in environments characterized by high information density and limited attention spans. Thus, effectiveness in digital dakwah is increasingly determined by the ability to condense complex values into visually engaging and easily consumable formats.

The third objective examining the gap between conventional and digital da'wah—confirms that traditional approaches centered on verbal explanation and authority-based communication are no longer sufficient in isolation. Instead, digital da'wah requires a hybrid model that integrates symbolic communication, visual storytelling, and audience-centered design. This shift reflects a broader epistemological transition in communication, from transmission of knowledge to construction of meaning through interaction and perception.

The fourth objective formulating a conceptual model of silent dakwah—has been achieved through the empirical validation of a framework in which visual aesthetics and micro-content influence audience engagement, which in turn facilitates the internalization of Islamic values. Importantly, the findings also indicate that visual and structural elements can directly shape understanding, even in the absence of explicit verbal explanation. This confirms that non-verbal communication possesses significant persuasive and educative power within religious contexts.

The novelty of this study lies in its conceptual and empirical contribution to the field of Islamic communication. First, it introduces silent dakwah as a distinct and measurable communication strategy, expanding the theoretical scope of dakwah beyond verbal discourse. Second, it establishes visual aesthetics as a primary variable in religious communication effectiveness, thereby integrating insights from visual communication theory into Islamic studies. Third, it demonstrates the strategic importance of micro-content as a structural format that enhances engagement and relevance in digital environments.

Overall, this study contributes to the development of dakwah and communication as a science by offering a new paradigm that emphasizes visuality, brevity, and experiential engagement. It suggests that the future of Islamic communication depends not only on the accuracy of its message but also on the effectiveness of its form. In the context of an



increasingly visual and fast-paced digital culture, silent dakwah provides a framework for conveying religious values in ways that are both meaningful and contextually responsive.

References

- Afwan, W. (2025). Cultural legitimacy in digital visual communication: Aesthetic strategies and audience perception. *Frontiers in Communication*, 10, 1661994.
- Chen, R., Zhang, Y., & Liu, H. (2025). Visual storytelling and audience engagement in religious digital media: Evidence from YouTube analytics. *Journal of Digital Religion Studies*, 8(2), 45–62.
- Faladhin, J. (2025). Branding piety and the mediatization of Islamic da'wah in digital spaces. *JCC Proceedings*, 3(1), 112–125.
- Khusairi, A. (2025). Digital da'wah strategies and audience interaction in social media platforms. *Jurnal Dakwah Walisongo*, 33(1), 75–92.
- Musta'in. (2024). Moderate Islamic influencers in digital communication discourse: Authority, identity, and persuasion. *Communicatus: Journal of Islamic Communication*, 8(2), 201–218.
- Nurhayati, N. (2025). Transformation of Islamic communication in the digital society: Opportunities and challenges. *Jurnal Syiar*, 25(1), 33–49.
- Putra, F. E. (2025). Visual aesthetics in social media communication: Impacts on perception and engagement. *Asian Journal of Media and Communication*, 9(1), 14–29.
- Rahman, A., Hidayat, M., & Siregar, R. (2025). Muslim Gen Z and digital religious identity: Engagement patterns in social media. *Proceedings of the International Seminar on Islamic Studies*, 6(1), 88–102.
- Riyadi, A. (2026). Visual storytelling and micro-content in Islamic communication: A quantitative approach. *Journal of Halal Communication*, 2(1), 1–15.
- Tabaika, M. A., Barizi, A., & Arif, Y. M. (2025). Digital da'wah and the reconstruction of Islamic authority in network society. *Al-Balagh: Journal of Islamic Communication*, 10(2), 145–162.
- UNESCO. (2021). *Digital literacy global framework*. UNESCO Publishing.