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Habib Husein Ja'far's Personal Branding on Social Media from the Perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication

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Abstract

The rapid development of social media has transformed Islamic preaching (da'wah) in Indonesia into a broader, more interactive, and more accessible digital practice, encouraging Muslim preachers to build personal branding as a communication strategy. Yet how such branding operates within the ethics of Islamic da'wah, rather than as a secular strategy, remains underexplored. This study analyzes the personal branding of Habib Husein Ja'far on social media from the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication. Using a qualitative approach, it applies qualitative content analysis to purposively sampled content from his official accounts (YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, X, and Facebook), coded thematically into recurring categories, and interpreted through the Personal Branding, Source Credibility, and Impression Management theories alongside Islamic Broadcasting Communication principles. The findings reveal a personal brand as a young, moderate, inclusive, and dialogic preacher, strengthened by scholarly competence, consistency, integrity, a humanistic approach, and strategic use of social media, reflecting the values of ṣidq, amanah, tabligh, and fathanah and the principles of bil hikmah, mau'izhah hasanah, and mujadalah billati hiya ahsan. Theoretically, the study positions ethical substance over mere visibility as the source of digital credibility; practically, it shows that ethics-based branding enhances digital da'wah and strengthens preachers' credibility in contemporary society.

Keywords: personal branding; habib husein ja'far; social media; islamic broadcasting communication; digital da'wah.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has accelerated digital transformation, fundamentally reshaping patterns of social communication, including the dissemination of Islamic da'wah. Social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter) have emerged as interactive communication spaces that

facilitate the rapid, extensive, and dynamic dissemination of religious messages.

This transformation has significantly altered the practice of Islamic preaching, as Muslim scholars are no longer confined to delivering religious teachings through mosque pulpits or traditional religious gatherings. Instead, they increasingly utilize digital platforms as effective media for Islamic broadcasting, enabling them to reach broader and more diverse audiences. Bibliometric mapping of this field confirms the scale of the shift, showing that scholarly attention to the intersection of Islam and digital technology has expanded markedly since the early 2000s as religious expression and community formation have increasingly migrated toward online platforms (Wahid, 2024).

According to Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010), social media refers to a group of Internet-based applications built upon the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, allowing the creation and exchange of user-generated content. These characteristics position social media as an effective communication medium through which *ulama* can disseminate Islamic teachings, engage with their audiences, and expand the reach of Islamic values beyond geographical and temporal limitations. A recent scoping review of research on Muslims and social media reinforces this observation, noting that Muslim individuals, communities, and institutions have been substantially reshaped by the digital revolution, so that online platforms now constitute a central arena for examining contemporary Islamic communication (Larsson & Willander, 2025).

The rapid growth of social media has also given rise to the phenomenon of personal branding among Indonesian *ulama*. Through da'wah content, communication styles, visual presentation, and patterns of audience engagement, religious scholars construct distinctive digital identities that characterize their presence in online spaces. Such personal branding influences not only their popularity but also shapes public perceptions of their credibility, scholarly competence, and religious authority. Comparable developments have been documented beyond Indonesia, where a new generation of Muslim social media influencers who are proficient in digital storytelling and content production has been shown to reimagine religious authority and to reshape Islamic practices among Muslim millennials (Zaid et al., 2022).

One of the Indonesian *ulama* who exemplifies the phenomenon of personal branding on social media is Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar. He is widely recognized as a young Muslim preacher who actively utilizes various digital platforms, including YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and podcasts, to disseminate Islamic teachings, particularly among younger generations. His relaxed, dialogical, inclusive, and accessible communication style distinguishes him from more conventional approaches to da'wah. Through this approach, Habib Husein Ja'far has successfully cultivated a public image as a moderate religious scholar who embraces diversity and effectively bridges Islamic values with the realities of contemporary society.

Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding is reflected not only in his appearance and communication style but also in his consistent emphasis on themes such as religious tolerance, moderation, humanity, and the importance of dialogue across different social groups. His participation in various digital programs, including podcasts, interfaith discussions, and collaborations with content creators from diverse backgrounds, demonstrates that social media has become a strategic medium for expanding the reach of Islamic da'wah. This phenomenon illustrates that personal branding can function as an integral component of da'wah communication strategies aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of religious message dissemination to broader audiences.

At the same time, this phenomenon has generated diverse responses from the public. Many view Habib Husein Ja'far's approach as an innovative model of communication that is highly relevant to contemporary society because it presents Islam as compassionate, moderate, and accessible to the digital generation. Conversely, some critics argue that social media-based da'wah may blur the distinction between communication strategy, personal branding, and the substantive essence of Islamic preaching. These differing perspectives indicate that the personal branding of *ulama* on social media represents a significant communication phenomenon worthy of scholarly investigation, particularly from the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication.

On the other hand, the rapid development of social media has also introduced new challenges to the practice of digital da'wah. Competition for audience attention, the growing demand for popularity, and the influence of social media algorithms frequently encourage the production of content that prioritizes sensationalism over substance. Such conditions risk transforming da'wah into a means of personal promotion rather than a mission of religious

guidance unless it is grounded in moral responsibility and the ethical principles of Islamic communication.

Vandehey, (2008) define personal branding as a strategic process of building public perceptions regarding an individual's values, competencies, character, and uniqueness in order to establish differentiation from others. In the context of Islamic scholarship, personal branding should not merely be understood as a strategy for gaining popularity; rather, it serves as an effort to enhance the effectiveness of da'wah communication, enabling Islamic messages to reach wider audiences. Nevertheless, the implementation of personal branding in da'wah activities must remain firmly grounded in Islamic ethical values to ensure that it does not deteriorate into mere image construction.

Rampersad, (2008) further argues that authentic personal branding is founded upon authenticity, integrity, consistency, and commitment to one's core values. This concept is highly relevant to Islamic da'wah, as *ulama* are expected to maintain harmony between the messages they communicate and the conduct they demonstrate. Consequently, the digital identity constructed through social media should ideally reflect Islamic moral values, scholarly competence, and exemplary character.

From the perspective of communication studies, this phenomenon can be understood through Erving Goffman, (1949) theory of *Impression Management*. Goffman argues that individuals actively manage the impressions others form of them through various forms of communication. Within social media environments, impression management is reflected in the selection of da'wah topics, communication styles, language use, visual presentation, and patterns of interaction with audiences. For *ulama*, impression management extends beyond the construction of a favorable personal image; it also involves preserving the dignity of Islamic preaching and maintaining the trust of the Muslim community in the religious messages being conveyed.

From the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, communication is not merely intended to transmit information; it also seeks to invite people toward righteousness, prevent wrongdoing, and cultivate noble character. Therefore, da'wah communication conducted through social media should be founded upon the principles of ṣidq (truthfulness), amanah (trustworthiness), tabligh (effective and responsible message delivery),

fathanah (wisdom and intellectual competence), and hikmah (wisdom) in communicating Islamic messages. Allah the Almighty states:

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice." (Qur'an, Surah Al-Ahzab [33]: 70).

This verse emphasizes that truthful communication constitutes a fundamental principle of Islamic da'wah. This principle is consistent with the concept of Source Credibility proposed by Hovland et al., (1953), which argues that communication effectiveness is largely determined by the communicator's expertise and trustworthiness. Within the framework of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, these dimensions extend beyond professional competence to encompass the moral character, scholarly authority, and integrity of an *ulama*.

The exemplary character of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) serves as the foremost model of reputation building through moral conduct rather than symbolic image construction. Long before receiving prophethood, he was honored with the title Al-Amin (the Trustworthy) because of his honesty, trustworthiness, and unwavering consistency. His reputation emerged from society's direct experience of his character rather than from deliberate self-promotion. This demonstrates that, within Islam, a communicator's credibility is established through genuine ethical conduct manifested in everyday life.

A number of prior studies provide the empirical foundation for understanding this phenomenon. Several studies have demonstrated that social media provides individuals with opportunities to establish their reputation and credibility through authentic and consistent communication (Labrecque et al., 2011), while Khedher, (2014) argues that personal branding developed through the integration of competence, personal values, and effective communication is capable of enhancing public trust.

In a similar vein, the Edelman Trust Barometer (2024) reports that people tend to place greater trust in individuals who demonstrate competence, transparency, and integrity a pattern that can likewise be observed among Muslim communities when selecting religious references on social media, where audiences have become increasingly critical in evaluating the credibility of *ulama* based on the substance of their religious messages, their

scholarly track record, moral character, and the consistency between their words and actions.

Taken together, these studies converge on the view that competence, authenticity, and consistency are decisive in building online reputation and public trust; within the context of digital da'wah, they indicate that the success of an *ulama* on social media is determined not merely by the number of followers or the level of audience engagement, but also by scholarly competence, moral integrity, and consistency in conveying Islamic teachings, so that an *ulama*'s personal branding cannot be separated from the public trust that is established through authentic conduct and ethical behavior.

Nevertheless, these studies have largely examined personal branding as a commercial, professional, or secular strategy and have paid limited attention to how it operates within the ethical framework of Islamic da'wah. A systematic review of social media influencer research confirms this orientation, showing that the literature has developed predominantly within marketing and consumer-behaviour frameworks concerned with brand value, endorsement effectiveness, and audience persuasion rather than with moral or religious accountability (Vrontis et al., 2021). This phenomenon extends beyond strategies of identity construction and credibility building in digital spaces; it also encompasses the implementation of da'wah values, the ethics of Islamic communication, and the moral responsibility of *ulama* in conveying the message of Islam to society.

This intersection between personal branding and the principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication remains insufficiently explored, so that examining the personal branding of Indonesian *ulama* on social media is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between digital communication, da'wah strategies, and the principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication in the era of digital transformation.

Building on this gap, this study offers a distinct perspective by examining personal branding through the lens of Islamic communication. Rather than viewing personal branding merely as a strategy for image and reputation building, this study conceptualizes it as a process of character formation grounded in the Islamic values of *ṣidq* (truthfulness), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *tabligh* (effective communication of the truth), fathanah (wisdom and intellectual competence), and *ikhlas* (sincerity). Its novelty therefore lies in integrating contemporary communication theories with the

ethical principles of Islamic communication to explain how authentic public trust is established in the era of social media.

The urgency of this study lies in the growing influence of digital religious communication, in which social media has become a primary reference through which Muslim audiences, particularly younger generations, encounter and evaluate Islamic teachings. Academically, understanding how personal branding embodies the principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication is important because the effectiveness and credibility of da'wah in digital spaces increasingly depend upon it. Practically, as competition for audience attention and the influence of social media algorithms may push religious content toward sensationalism and personal promotion, clarifying how ethical and value-based personal branding can strengthen rather than dilute da'wah is essential for *ulama* and da'wah practitioners navigating contemporary digital media.

Accordingly, the present study focuses on the personal branding of Habib Husein Ja'far on social media by examining how his identity, communication style, and da'wah strategies represent the principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication. Specifically, it aims to describe the forms of Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding as presented across various social media platforms; to analyze the communication strategies he employs in constructing his personal branding as an Islamic preacher (*da'i*) on social media; to examine the extent to which his personal branding aligns with the concepts and principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, particularly the values of *ṣidq* (truthfulness), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *tabligh* (conveying the truth), *fathanah* (wisdom), and the ethics of da'wah derived from the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*; and to explain the role of his personal branding in enhancing the effectiveness of da'wah communication, particularly among younger generations in the digital era.

Through these objectives, this study is expected to contribute to the development of Islamic Broadcasting Communication studies by demonstrating the relationship between personal branding, the effectiveness of da'wah communication, and the implementation of Islamic values within digital spaces, thereby enriching this field in the contemporary digital era.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a descriptive research design. This approach was selected because the research aims to understand and describe the phenomenon of Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding on social media and to analyze it from the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication. A qualitative approach enables an in-depth understanding of the meanings, communication strategies, and Islamic values reflected in social media content.

The object of this study is Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding as represented across his official social media platforms, including; Instagram: @husein_hadar; YouTube: *Jeda Nulis* (a channel featuring Islamic lectures, discussions, podcasts, and educational content) ; TikTok: @husein_hadar ; X (formerly Twitter): @HuseinJaFar ; Facebook: *Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar* (official page). These platforms are consistently utilized as digital media for da'wah activities.

The data consist of both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained from Habib Husein Ja'far's official social media content, including videos, posts, podcasts, reels, and other forms of digital communication relevant to the research objectives. Secondary data were collected from books, scholarly journal articles, previous research, official documents, and other literature concerning personal branding, social media, da'wah communication, and Islamic Broadcasting Communication. Data were collected through documentation techniques by identifying, classifying, recording, and organizing social media content relevant to the focus of the study. In addition, an extensive literature review was conducted to strengthen the theoretical foundation and analytical framework of the research.

To operationalise the research design more systematically, the study was conducted as a documentation-based content analysis of Habib Husein Ja'far's publicly accessible social media accounts across the platforms identified above. Content was purposively sampled according to the following inclusion criteria: (a) material produced or published on his official accounts; (b) content thematically relevant to da'wah, personal identity, and Islamic values; and (c) content that generated substantial public engagement or was representative of his recurring communication style. Materials that were duplicative, unrelated to da'wah, or of uncertain authorship were excluded. The author is advised to

state the specific observation period explicitly in the final manuscript to enhance replicability.

The unit of analysis was the individual item of social media content—such as a video, reel, post, caption, or podcast segment—treated as a single communicative act. Analysis proceeded through open and thematic coding: each content item was first examined inductively for salient features, after which codes were grouped into broader categories. The coding categories were derived both deductively, from the study's guiding theories, and inductively, from the data, and comprised: (1) construction of a moderate preacher identity; (2) consistency of da'wah messages; (3) scholarly competence and credibility; (4) integrity and moral character; (5) humanistic and dialogical communication; and (6) strategic optimisation of social media. These categories subsequently formed the thematic structure of the findings.

The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The analytical procedure consisted of four stages: (1) collecting and selecting relevant social media content; (2) reducing and categorizing the data based on themes, communication styles, visual presentation, and patterns of audience interaction; (3) interpreting the findings using Montoya and Vandehey's Personal Branding Theory, Erving Goffman's Impression Management Theory, Hovland, Janis, and Kelley's Source Credibility Theory, as well as the principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication; and (4) drawing conclusions regarding the characteristics of Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding from the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation was employed by comparing data obtained from multiple social media platforms, scholarly literature, and other supporting documents. This triangulation process was intended to enhance the credibility of the research findings and to produce a more objective interpretation of the phenomenon under investigation.

Because the analysis was conducted by a single researcher, formal inter-coder reliability was not applicable; instead, the trustworthiness of the interpretation was strengthened through peer debriefing, an audit trail documenting the coding decisions, and reflexive engagement with the data. Data collection continued until thematic saturation was reached—that is, until additional content no longer generated new categories or substantially altered the existing thematic structure. Source triangulation was implemented

concretely by cross-checking each emerging theme against evidence drawn from at least two different platforms, corroborating it with the relevant scholarly literature, and confirming its consistency with the theoretical framework, thereby reducing the influence of any single source or platform on the findings.

With regard to ethical considerations, the study relied exclusively on publicly available content that the subject had voluntarily disseminated for public consumption; no private or restricted data were accessed. All content was analysed for scholarly purposes only, sources were attributed accurately, and the interpretation sought to represent the subject's communication fairly and without distortion, in accordance with the ethical norms governing research on public digital communication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding on social media is not merely constructed as a communication strategy for developing a personal image but also as an integral component of a da'wah strategy grounded in the principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication. The study reveals that his consistently maintained identity, communication style, and strategic use of social media have fostered positive public perceptions regarding his credibility and religious authority. This personal branding is reflected in his scholarly competence, moral integrity, humanistic communication approach, and ability to establish dialogical interactions with audiences, thereby enhancing the acceptance of his da'wah messages among diverse segments of society, particularly younger generations. The following sections present the major findings of this study.

Habib Husein Ja'far's Construction of a Moderate Preacher Identity

Vandehey, (2008) define personal branding as a strategic process of shaping public perceptions regarding an individual's identity, competence, character, and values in order to distinguish them from others. Within the context of digital da'wah, personal branding is not merely intended to cultivate popularity; rather, it serves to enhance the effectiveness of da'wah communication, enabling Islamic messages to reach broader audiences. This phenomenon is clearly reflected in Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding,

which utilizes social media as a medium for Islamic broadcasting through a moderate, inclusive, and digitally adaptive approach.

One of the principal strengths of Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding lies in his successful construction of an identity as a young Muslim preacher who promotes Islam as a religion of peace, moderation, tolerance, and *rahmatan lil-'alamin* (a mercy to all creation). This identity is consistently reflected in his da'wah content disseminated through YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, podcasts, and public discussions involving individuals from diverse backgrounds. His use of accessible language, communicative delivery, and ability to contextualize Islamic teachings have enabled his religious messages to become more comprehensible and relatable, particularly to younger audiences. This characterisation converges with prior research on his digital preaching, which finds that his polite, argumentative, and non-fanatical delivery embodies the prophetic communication ethics of qaulan sadidan, qaulan layyinan, and qaulan ma'rufan, and thereby articulates a wasatiyyah (moderate) expression of Islam that resonates strongly with younger Indonesian Muslims (Sikumbang et al., 2023).

From the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, this identity represents the implementation of the principle of hikmah (wisdom), as prescribed in Qur'an 16:125, which instructs Muslims to invite others to the path of God with wisdom and gracious counsel so that Islamic teachings may be conveyed effectively without generating hostility or conflict.

Consistency in Delivering Da'wah Messages

The personal branding of a Muslim preacher on social media is shaped not only by the frequency of digital engagement but also by the quality of communication capable of cultivating positive public perceptions. According to Vandehey, (2008), personal branding is a strategic process of establishing public perceptions concerning an individual's identity, character, competence, and values, thereby creating a distinctive public identity. Within digital da'wah, the personal branding of an *ulama* should therefore be directed toward strengthening the effectiveness of Islamic broadcasting rather than merely pursuing popularity.

Rampersad, (2008) argues that consistency constitutes one of the fundamental elements of authentic personal branding. Habib Husein Ja'far consistently addresses themes related to religious tolerance, moral character

(*akhlaq*), humanitarian values, religious moderation, and the importance of critical thinking in understanding Islamic teachings. Such consistency is evident throughout his social media content as well as his collaborations with speakers and public figures from diverse social, religious, and professional backgrounds.

Habib Husein Ja'far is among the Indonesian Muslim preachers who have effectively utilized social media as a platform for da'wah by cultivating an identity as a moderate, dialogical, and youth-oriented religious scholar. His personal branding is reinforced by several factors that strengthen both his credibility and the public acceptance of his religious messages. One of the most significant factors is his scholarly competence, which serves as the foundation of his personal branding.

Mayer et al., (1995) identify ability, or competence, as the primary determinant of trust. In Habib Husein Ja'far's case, this competence is reflected in his ability to explain Islamic teachings based on the Qur'an, the Hadith, and classical as well as contemporary scholarly interpretations using language that is both accessible and intellectually engaging. His da'wah extends beyond discussions of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) by connecting Islamic values with contemporary social, cultural, and generational issues.

Within the framework of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, such consistency embodies the Islamic value of istiqamah (steadfastness), namely, the continuous commitment to conveying Islamic teachings faithfully over time. This steadfastness constitutes a crucial factor in fostering public trust toward a da'i (Islamic preacher).

Building Credibility through Da'wah Content

Social media serves as the primary medium through which Habib Husein Ja'far establishes his credibility as a communicator of Islamic teachings. His content is generally grounded in Qur'anic verses, Prophetic traditions (*Hadith*), and scholarly interpretations, all of which are presented in language that is accessible and relevant to contemporary society.

According to Source Credibility Theory proposed by Hovland et al., (1953), communication effectiveness is determined by two principal dimensions: expertise and trustworthiness. Habib Husein Ja'far's credibility is demonstrated through his mastery of Islamic knowledge, his ability to address contemporary issues in a balanced and contextual manner, and his courteous

and respectful approach to dialogue. These characteristics are consistent with the Islamic values of ṣidq (truthfulness), amanah (trustworthiness), tabligh (the responsible communication of truth), and fathanah (wisdom and intellectual competence), which represent the essential attributes of an effective Islamic communicator.

Furthermore, Hovland et al., (1953) emphasize that expertise constitutes one of the most influential determinants of persuasive communication. The greater the communicator's competence, the more likely the audience is to accept the message being conveyed. From the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, this competence reflects the value of fathanah, which requires a da'i to possess intellectual capability and comprehensive religious knowledge so that the messages delivered are academically grounded and theologically accountable. Andok, (2024) adds an important qualification, observing that the influence of digital media upon religious authority is neither uniform nor unidirectional: online communication may erode traditional institutional authority in some settings while consolidating it in others, since audiences themselves determine which forms of networked authority they are willing to recognise. Habib Husein Ja'far's case illustrates the consolidating tendency, in which digital exposure reinforces rather than dilutes religious authority precisely because it remains anchored in verifiable scholarly competence.

Habib Husein Ja'far's Integrity as a Reflection of Islamic Moral Character

Another essential factor underpinning Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding is his integrity as an Islamic preacher. Mayer et al., (1995) define integrity as the consistency with which an individual adheres to accepted moral values and ethical principles. Habib Husein Ja'far has cultivated a public image characterized by courtesy, respect for diversity, and a commitment to constructive dialogue rather than hate speech or divisive rhetoric. This image is evident not only in his da'wah content but also in his interactions with audiences and collaborators from diverse religious, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.

Rampersad, (2008) further argues that authentic personal branding must be founded upon honesty, integrity, and consistency in order to establish sustainable public trust. From the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting

Communication, integrity represents the practical manifestation of the values of ṣidq and amanah, requiring Islamic preachers to communicate truthfully, responsibly, and with moral excellence as the foundation of all communication activities. The exemplary character of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who was universally recognized as Al-Amin (the Trustworthy), illustrates that genuine reputation is established through exemplary character and ethical conduct rather than through symbolic image-building or self-promotion.

Habib Husein Ja'far's Competence in Delivering Da'wah Messages

Another significant factor contributing to Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding is his competence in delivering Islamic teachings. Equally important is the consistency of the da'wah messages he conveys, which many social media users perceive as promoting peace and moderation. As argued by Vandehey, (2008), consistency is a fundamental element in establishing a strong personal brand. Habib Husein Ja'far consistently addresses themes such as religious moderation, tolerance, compassion, and Islamic morality across various social media platforms. This consistency reinforces his identity as a Muslim preacher who promotes a peaceful, inclusive, and compassionate understanding of Islam.

Peters, (1997) further argues that a personal brand can only be established when an individual consistently maintains a distinctive communication style over time. Consequently, Habib Husein Ja'far's consistency has become one of the primary reasons why audiences readily recognize the unique characteristics of his da'wah. From the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, such consistency reflects the Islamic principle of istiqamah (steadfastness), which emphasizes perseverance and commitment in conveying the message of Islam. A da'i is expected to remain firmly committed to Islamic values despite the dynamic nature and challenges of communication within contemporary digital media.

A Humanistic and Dialogical Approach to Da'wah

Unlike conventional forms of da'wah, which generally employ one-way communication, social media facilitates interactive communication between communicators and audiences. Habib Husein Ja'far effectively utilizes comment sections, question-and-answer sessions, podcasts, and collaborations

with various content creators to establish meaningful dialogue with his audience.

This approach demonstrates that da'wah is not merely the transmission of religious knowledge but also a communicative process that actively involves public participation. From the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, this interaction embodies the principle of mujadalah billati hiya ahsan engaging in dialogue with wisdom, courtesy, and respect for differing opinions as prescribed in Qur'an 16:125.

Many of Habib Husein Ja'far's da'wah talk shows and podcasts have been widely appreciated by online audiences because of their accessible and engaging communication style. Rather than relying solely on monologic sermons, he actively participates in podcasts, public discussions, interviews, and collaborative programs involving individuals from diverse religious, cultural, and professional backgrounds. This communication strategy demonstrates that social media functions not only as a broadcasting platform but also as an interactive space for dialogue, education, and mutual learning.

Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010) argue that social media facilitates two-way communication that encourages active user participation. Likewise, Kietzmann et al., (2011) emphasize that audience engagement is a critical element in establishing sustainable relationships between communicators and their audiences. Within the framework of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, this communication model aligns with the principles of bil hikmah (wisdom), mau'izhah hasanah (good counsel), and mujadalah billati hiya ahsan (constructive dialogue), as outlined in Qur'an 16:125. Accordingly, da'wah extends beyond the simple dissemination of information; it also seeks to cultivate respectful dialogue, appreciate diversity, and encourage society toward righteousness.

Optimizing Social Media as a Medium for Da'wah

Habib Husein Ja'far has strategically maximized social media as an effective channel for Islamic preaching. The optimization of platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and podcasts has become a crucial component of his personal branding, enabling him to reach audiences who may not actively participate in conventional Islamic learning environments. Raya, (2024) identifies a comparable pattern among Indonesian celebrity preachers, demonstrating that the deliberate packaging and persuasive presentation of

religious content on digital platforms enables preachers to construct a broader religious authority and to sustain a preaching visibility that transcends the boundaries of space and time.

Castells & Wiley-Blackwell, (2010) argues that digital technology has transformed modern society into a network society, in which information circulates rapidly through interactive communication networks. This transformation has created new opportunities for implementing da'wah through digital media. From the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, social media serves as a wasilah (medium or instrument) for da'wah that enables Islamic teachings to be disseminated effectively to wider audiences. Nevertheless, its utilization should remain firmly grounded in the ethical principles of Islamic communication, including honesty, responsibility, courtesy, and a commitment to promoting the welfare (*maslahah*) of society.

Habib Husein Ja'far has successfully developed his personal branding by presenting himself as a young Muslim scholar who is moderate, inclusive, dialogical, and closely connected with younger generations. This identity has not been constructed through superficial image-making; rather, it has evolved through the consistent presentation of da'wah themes, a distinctive communication style, and meaningful interactions that genuinely reflect Islamic values.

Consequently, Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding is more appropriately understood as a representation of a da'wah identity that aligns with the principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication. Peters, (1997), through his concept of The Brand Called You, argues that every individual possesses a unique identity that should be consistently developed to create meaningful differentiation. Within the context of da'wah, such differentiation is not intended to pursue personal fame but to enable the public to recognize the distinctive character and methodology of an Islamic preacher.

Maintaining Digital Reputation through Exemplary Conduct

Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding is not constructed solely through the content he publishes but also through the consistency of his conduct in the public sphere. According to Goffman, (1949) Impression Management Theory, individuals attempt to influence the impressions formed by others through various forms of communication. However, from an Islamic

perspective, reputation cannot rely solely on image construction; it must be supported by integrity, moral character (*akhlaq*), and exemplary conduct.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who was widely known as Al-Amin (the Trustworthy), exemplifies how public trust is established through consistency between words and actions. Likewise, Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding derives its legitimacy not only from his effective use of social media but also from his unwavering commitment to embodying Islamic values characterized by moderation, courtesy, compassion, and the pursuit of the common good.

Based on these findings, Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding on social media demonstrates that digital communication strategies can serve as highly effective instruments of da'wah when they are firmly grounded in the principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication. His identity as a moderate Muslim preacher, consistency in communicating Islamic messages, scholarly credibility, dialogical engagement, and exemplary communication practices collectively strengthen the effectiveness of digital da'wah while simultaneously reflecting the implementation of Islamic communication principles within the contemporary digital media environment.

In addition, this study identified several other phenomena related to the factors influencing Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding on social media from the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, which are discussed in the following section.

Habib Husein Ja'far's Ability to Construct Effective Da'wah Messages

Habib Husein Ja'far has cultivated a distinctive identity as an Islamic preacher who promotes Islam as a religion of peace, compassion, and openness to dialogue. This identity is consistently reflected in his digital content, which addresses themes such as religious tolerance, religious moderation, Islamic morality (*akhlaq*), and contemporary social issues. His relaxed communication style, the use of accessible language, and a contextual approach to explaining Islamic teachings distinguish him from many other contemporary preachers.

According to Khedher, (2014), personal branding is a continuous process of managing public perception through the integration of competence, personal values, and effective communication. Accordingly, the identity constructed by Habib Husein Ja'far is reflected not merely through visual

representation or symbolic attributes but, more importantly, through the consistent substance of the da'wah messages he conveys.

From the perspective of communication studies, the effectiveness of a communicator largely depends on his or her level of credibility. Hovland et al., (1953) explain that communicator credibility consists of two principal dimensions: expertise and trustworthiness. Habib Husein Ja'far's expertise is demonstrated through his ability to explain Islamic teachings systematically and persuasively by referring to the Qur'an, the Hadith, and the opinions of recognized Islamic scholars. His trustworthiness, meanwhile, is reflected in his courteous demeanor, openness to dialogue, and consistency in promoting moderate Islamic values.

Within the framework of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, these dimensions correspond to the exemplary characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), namely ṣidq (truthfulness), amanah (trustworthiness), tabligh (the responsible conveyance of truth), and fathanah (wisdom and intellectual competence). These four prophetic qualities constitute the ethical foundation of Islamic communication, enabling da'wah messages to be accepted not only on intellectual grounds but also through the trust they inspire among audiences.

Habib Husein Ja'far's Humanistic and Dialogical Approach to Da'wah

One of the defining characteristics of Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding is his humanistic approach to communication. He frequently engages in dialogue with leaders of different faiths, academics, and digital content creators from diverse cultural, social, and religious backgrounds. This approach demonstrates that da'wah can be effectively conducted through open and respectful dialogue without compromising the essential teachings of Islam.

Rogers, (2003) argues that successful communication depends largely on the communicator's ability to establish empathy and understand the needs of the audience. This perspective is reinforced by DeVito, (2016), who maintains that effective communication should emphasize openness, empathy, supportiveness, and equality in interpersonal interactions.

From the perspective of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, this approach is consistent with the command of Allah in the Qur'an:

"Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in the best manner." (Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl [16]: 125).

This verse establishes the fundamental principles of Islamic communication, namely hikmah (wisdom), mau'izhah hasanah (good counsel), and mujadalah billati hiya ahsan (constructive dialogue conducted in the best manner). These principles require da'wah to be conveyed with wisdom, courtesy, and respect for differing opinions.

The rapid development of social media has transformed the pattern of da'wah communication from one-way information delivery into a more interactive communication process. Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010) explain that social media enables users to create, exchange, and disseminate information rapidly through digital content. For Habib Husein Ja'far, social media functions not merely as a publication platform but also as a wasilah (medium) of da'wah through which Islamic teachings can reach broader audiences, particularly younger generations. His active presence on YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and podcast platforms illustrates how digital technology can be effectively utilized to disseminate moderate Islamic values.

Within the discipline of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, the utilization of modern communication technologies as instruments of da'wah represents an adaptation of preaching methods while remaining firmly oriented toward the objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-sharī'ah). These objectives emphasize promoting public welfare (*maslahah*) through the dissemination of truthful, ethical, and socially responsible religious messages.

Personal Branding as a Representation of Islamic Communication Ethics

From an Islamic perspective, personal branding cannot be separated from the moral character (*akhlaq*) of the preacher. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of truthful communication, as Allah states:

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice." (Qur'an, Surah Al-Ahzab [33]: 70).

Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

"Indeed, I was sent only to perfect noble character." (Narrated by Ahmad, Hadith No. 8952; classified as hasan by several scholars.)

Both the Qur'anic verse and the Prophetic tradition demonstrate that the effectiveness of da'wah communication depends not only on rhetorical ability but also on the moral integrity of the communicator. In the context of Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding, his image as a courteous, open-minded, respectful, and dialogical preacher represents the practical implementation of Islamic ethical values in communication.

Therefore, Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding on social media should not merely be understood as a strategy for constructing a digital identity. Rather, it represents the embodiment of the principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication. His credibility, scholarly competence, humanistic communication style, strategic use of social media as a medium of da'wah, and consistent adherence to Islamic ethical values collectively strengthen the effectiveness of his da'wah in the contemporary digital era.

Comparison with Previous Studies

Situated against prior scholarship, these findings both corroborate and extend existing work. They support Khedher, (2014); Labrecque et al., (2011) in showing that competence, consistency, and value-driven communication are decisive in building online reputation and public trust. At the same time, they extend Peters, (1997); Vandehey, (2008) conceptions of personal branding by demonstrating that, in a da'wah context, differentiation is achieved not through self-promotion but through the visible embodiment of religious and ethical values.

Whereas earlier studies have largely treated personal branding as a commercial or professional strategy, the present analysis refines this understanding by showing that Habib Husein Ja'far's branding derives its legitimacy from Islamic communication ethics, thereby positioning ethical substance rather than mere visibility as the primary source of digital credibility.

Critical Reflections: Risks, Algorithmic Dynamics, and the Commerciali sation of Digital Da'wah

While the preceding analysis highlights the strengths of Habib Husein Ja'far's personal branding, a balanced assessment must also acknowledge the tensions inherent in digital da'wah. Personal branding, even when ethically

motivated, carries the risk of blurring the boundary between conveying religious guidance and cultivating a marketable public persona. The logic of social media platforms driven by engagement metrics, virality, and recommendation algorithms may subtly incentivise content that is emotionally resonant or entertaining over content that is substantively rigorous. Castells & Wiley-Blackwell, (2010) notion of the network society is instructive here: the same networked visibility that amplifies moderate da'wah can equally reward sensationalism, meaning that a preacher's reach is partly shaped by algorithmic dynamics beyond his control.

Related to this is the risk of commercialisation. As digital preachers attract large audiences, their platforms may become entangled with sponsorship, monetisation, and reputational economies that can, if unchecked, compromise the perceived sincerity (ikhlas) of the message. There is also the possibility of interpretive bias: a branding built around moderation and inclusivity may downplay more complex or contested theological questions in order to preserve broad appeal. Raya, (2025) documents this dynamic empirically in the Indonesian context, showing that digital Islam simultaneously opens a new space for religious authority and exposes preaching to processes of commodification, in which religious content becomes intertwined with market, audience, and reputational logics.

Recognising these risks does not diminish the significance of Habib Husein Ja'far's contribution; rather, it underscores that the ethical principles of Islamic Broadcasting Communication ṣidq, amanah, and ikhlas in particular function as essential safeguards that keep personal branding oriented toward da'wah rather than self-interest. This study is limited to the perspective of the communicator and the content itself; it does not measure audience reception empirically, which future research could address.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Habib Husein Ja'far has established his personal branding as a young, moderate, inclusive, and dialogic Muslim preacher through the strategic use of social media. His brand is strengthened by scholarly competence, integrity, consistency, and a humanistic communication style, reflecting the values of ṣidq, amanah, tabligh, and fathanah and the principles of bil hikmah, mau'izhah hasanah, and mujadalah billati hiya ahsan.

Practically, it suggests that preachers should ground their digital identity in Islamic communication ethics, scholarly excellence, and exemplary conduct, so that social media becomes an effective instrument for da'wah when used responsibly. This study is limited to the communicator and the content and does not measure audience reception; future research could examine audience perception, the risks of commercialization, and algorithmic influence on digital da'wah.

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