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WHEN MACHINES BECOME PREACHERS
The Emergence of AI-Based Religious Influencers And Synthetic Da'wah Content

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Abstract

The emergence of AI-based religious influencers and synthetic da'wah content raises critical questions about religious authority, authenticity, and accountability in digital Islamic communication. This article examines how virtual preacher figures are constructed, how synthetic da'wah content is produced and circulated, and how its religious legitimacy can be assessed. Adopting a qualitative approach through documentary analysis and conceptual review, the study draws on academic literature and publicly available policies governing AI-generated content. The analysis reveals that synthetic preacher figures can simulate the appearance of religious authority without possessing the scholarly qualifications, interpretive competence, or moral responsibility traditionally associated with religious communication. It further identifies limitations in platform-based AI disclosure, particularly its inability to establish the validity of religious claims or clarify human responsibility. The article proposes a governance framework based on four principles: transparency, religious verification, human accountability, and contextual integrity. These principles position AI as a supporting production technology rather than an autonomous religious authority.

Kemunculan influencer keagamaan berbasis kecerdasan buatan (AI) dan konten dakwah sintetis memunculkan persoalan kritis mengenai otoritas keagamaan, autentisitas, dan akuntabilitas dalam komunikasi Islam digital. Artikel ini mengkaji bagaimana figur pendakwah virtual dikonstruksi, bagaimana konten dakwah sintetis diproduksi dan didistribusikan, serta bagaimana legitimasi keagamaannya dapat dinilai. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui analisis dokumenter dan kajian konseptual, penelitian ini menggunakan literatur akademik serta kebijakan publik mengenai konten yang dihasilkan AI. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa figur pendakwah sintetis dapat menyimulasikan penampilan otoritas keagamaan tanpa memiliki kualifikasi keilmuan, kompetensi interpretatif, maupun tanggung jawab moral sebagaimana dituntut dalam komunikasi keagamaan. Artikel ini juga mengidentifikasi keterbatasan pelabelan AI oleh platform digital karena tidak menjamin validitas pesan keagamaan maupun kejelasan tanggung jawab manusia. Sebagai respons, artikel ini mengusulkan kerangka tata kelola berdasarkan empat prinsip: transparansi, verifikasi keagamaan, akuntabilitas manusia, dan integritas kontekstual.

Keywords: AI-Based Religious Influencers; Synthetic Da'wah; Digital Religious Authority; Religious Verification; Human Accountability.

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A. Introduction

The development of generative artificial intelligence has transformed the ways in which people produce, process, and distribute information.[1] This technology enables users to generate text, images, audio, and video through relatively simple instructions.[2] In digital communication, these capabilities are used not only for entertainment and marketing but are increasingly entering the field of religious communication.[3] Islamic messages can now be produced with the assistance of generative systems, ranging from sermon scripts and illustrative images to synthetic voices and videos featuring virtual preacher figures.[4] These developments raise a question that extends beyond technical capability: when a synthetic figure delivers religious guidance, who bears responsibility for the accuracy and context of that guidance, and how can audiences recognize its origins? Answering these questions requires moving beyond the technical question of what AI can generate toward an examination of how religious authority is constituted, recognized, and held accountable when interpretation is partly delegated to machines. Existing scholarship on AI-mediated religious knowledge suggests that interpretive legitimacy has traditionally rested on institutional authorization, representative mediation, and communal recognition, and that these foundations are not automatically transferred to algorithmic systems.[5] For this reason, the question of who holds interpretive authority in synthetic da'wah cannot be resolved by evaluating output quality alone, since the appearance of religious competence may be produced without the qualifications,

[1] M. Mujib Qulyubi et al., "Negotiating Artificial Intelligence in Contemporary Pesantren: Knowledge, Religious Authority, and Islamic Educational Traditions," Munaddhomah Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam 7, no. 3 (September 12, 2026): 774–94, https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v7i3.3291.

[2] Clark Barrett et al., "Identifying and Mitigating the Security Risks of Generative AI," Foundations and Trends® in Privacy and Security 6, no. 1 (December 14, 2023): 1–52, https://doi.org/10.1561/3300000041.

[3] Gedala Mulliah Naidoo and Angelo Nicolaides, "Prospects and Challenges in Artificial Intelligence Use and the Christian Faith: Augustinian and Other Considerations," Pharos Journal of Theology, July 28, 2025, https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.106.4032.

[4] Eko Boediman, "Hybrid Communication in the Halal Lifestyle Economy: The Impact of Generative AI on Communicative Practices Among Digital Entrepreneurs," HUMAN Journal of Social Humanities and Science 3, no. 2 (January 22, 2026): 67–78, https://doi.org/10.58738/human.v3i2.1239.

[5] Hishomudin Ahmad and Norfarhana Ahmad Ghafar, "Who Speaks When Machines Read Scripture: Boundary-Making and Interpretive Authority in AI-Mediated Religious Knowledge," AI and Ethics 6, no. 5 (August 13, 2026), https://doi.org/10.1007/s43681-026-01254-5.

transmission lineage, or moral intentionality that classical frameworks associate with a legitimate religious voice.[6]

This phenomenon signals an important shift in the da'wah ecosystem.[7] Whereas preachers have traditionally appeared through recognizable human identities, religious messages can now be delivered through machine-generated visual and vocal representations.[8] Virtual figures may be depicted wearing religious attire, speaking directly to a camera, offering advice, and interacting with audiences through social media.[9] Their emergence raises questions about the boundaries between human and machine representation, as well as the ways in which religious authority is constructed and recognized in digital environments. Such developments also prompt a closer look at whether the appearance of religious competence can be separated from the knowledge, training, and moral accountability that have traditionally defined legitimate religious speech, since audiences may encounter a polished persona long before they are able to judge the sources behind it.[10]. Accordingly, the central problem is not merely whether synthetic preachers can reproduce religious vocabulary, but whether they can reproduce the institutional and communal grounds on which such vocabulary has been trusted, a concern that becomes sharper when the content is evaluated by platforms and audiences that lack a reliable means of tracing its production history.[11] Such uncertainty is compounded by the fact that the ethical and doctrinal weight of a

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[6] Giyosiddin Askaraliev and Gayrat Utayev, "Artificial Intelligence and Religious Ethics: Evaluating Reliance on Islamic Chatbots For Spiritual Guidance," American Journal Of Social Sciences And Humanity Research 6, no. 3 (March 21, 2026): 20–26, https://doi.org/10.37547/ajsshr/volume06issue03-06.

[7] Qulyubi et al., "Negotiating Artificial Intelligence in Contemporary Pesantren: Knowledge, Religious Authority, and Islamic Educational Traditions."

[8] Herman Dermawan, "Dakwah Di Era Algoritma: Dialektika Etika Dan Strategi Adaptasi Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam Berbasis Artificial Intelligence," Ikhbar Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah Dan Komunikasi 1, no. 2 (January 31, 2026): 112–23, https://doi.org/10.65823/ikhbar.11i2.15; Sarbini Anim et al., "Artificial Intelligence and the Crisis of Religious Authority: A Conceptual Review of Islamic Discourse in the Age of Machine Mediation," in RSF Conference Series Business Management and Social Sciences, vol. 6, 2026, 77–84, https://doi.org/10.31098/bmss.v6i1.1095.

[9] Ian McGonigle, "Synthetic Spirituality: AI Is Reshaping Religion," Humanities and Social Sciences Communications 13, no. 1 (October 12, 2026), https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-026-08746-z.

[10] Suyono et al., "Reconstructing Epistemic Authority: A Post-Human Pedagogical Framework for Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Education," Educazione. 4, no. 1 (June 22, 2026): 168–79, https://doi.org/10.61987/educazione.v4i1.2400.

[11] Haekal Adha Al Giffari and Andy Dermawan, "AI vs. Human-Led Da'wah: A Comparative Rhetorical Analysis of Islamic Preaching in the Digital Age," DINIKA Academic Journal of Islamic Studies 10, no. 1 (July 4, 2025): 107–30, https://doi.org/10.22515/dinika.v10i1.11374.

message does not reside in its surface form alone, since the same words delivered by a synthetic figure may carry very different implications than when spoken by a scholar who can be questioned, corrected, and held to account.[12]

Such accountability is central to the classical framework of religious authority, which assumes that a legitimate interpreter is identifiable, traceable to recognized chains of transmission, and answerable to a community of peers.[13] Within this framework, a fatwa has never been a free-floating opinion but a binding judgment whose legitimacy depends on the qualifications of the jurist and the institutional oversight that surrounds his or her output.[14] When such oversight is weakened or bypassed, as it is when a synthetic figure issues guidance without any identifiable scholar standing behind it, the resulting content lacks the relational and accountable dimensions that have historically anchored its legitimacy.[15] Consequently, the authority of such content rests less on the substance of its claims than on the appearance of religious competence, which audiences are poorly equipped to verify when the figure delivering it has no traceable lineage of training or institutional standing.[16] For this reason, the appeal of synthetic da'wah lies in its surface coherence, while its claim to legitimate religious authority remains open to question, since accountability in Islamic legal theory depends on intention, contextual understanding, and moral responsibility that a generated text cannot itself possess.[17]

This development should be understood in the context of the transformation of digital religious authority. Research on micro-celebrity da'is demonstrates that social

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[12] Agung Saputra and Erni Asneli Asbi, "Islam, Big Data, and Digital Ethics: Challenges in Religious Life in the Digital Age," Pharos Journal of Theology, July 28, 2025, https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.106.4022.

[13] Saipul Umar et al., "THE TRANSFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AMONG MUSLIMS AMID DIGITAL TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW," KARIMIYAH Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society 5, no. 2 (June 27, 2026): 141–52, https://doi.org/10.59623/xbs9wa61.

[14] Fouad Ahmed Atallah, "Digital Mediation and Fatwa Authority in Contemporary Islam: A Critical Islamic Legal and Media-Theoretical Framework," Religions 17, no. 3 (March 11, 2026): 350, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel17030350.

[15] Lior Gazit, "From Kafka to the Rabbi-Machine," AI and Ethics 6, no. 4 (June 30, 2026), https://doi.org/10.1007/s43681-026-01245-6.

[16] Abdullah Muslich Rizal Maulana et al., "From Digital Religion to Digital Islam," Al-Ahkam Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah Dan Hukum 11, no. 1 (January 27, 2026): 3–26, https://doi.org/10.22515/alahkam.v11i1.11066.

[17] Firdaus Arifin et al., "Digital Behaviorism among Muslim Communities on Social Media from the Perspective of Islamic Law," Hakamain Journal of Sharia and Law Studies 4, no. 1 (July 12, 2025): 89–102, https://doi.org/10.57255/hakamain.v4i1.1360.

media has created new spaces in which preachers can gain popularity and recognition as sources of religious knowledge.[18] The emergence of AI-based figures, however, introduces a different set of concerns. A figure presented as a preacher may not be a human being with religious learning, moral agency, or the capacity to assume responsibility for the messages being communicated. The appearance of religious authority may therefore become detached from the human qualifications and accountability traditionally associated with religious instruction.[19] Such a gap is particularly consequential in the Indonesian context, where religious authority has long been anchored in the figures of the kiai and ulama, whose legitimacy depends on credentialed training and community recognition [20].

The production of synthetic content involves multiple actors. Creators may develop a script, use generative applications to create a face and voice, edit the resulting video, and publish it through social media platforms.[21] The religious message encountered by audiences is thus the outcome of interactions among human decisions, technological capabilities, and platform distribution mechanisms. Responsibility for the message cannot simply be attributed to the virtual figure appearing in the video.[22] Instead, accountability must be traced to the human actors who design, script, approve, and publish such content, as well as to the platforms that amplify it through recommendation systems that privilege engagement over verification.[23] Such dynamics make it difficult for audiences to distinguish between a message's doctrinal soundness

[18] Baidawi Baidawi, "Shaping Virtual Religious Authority: The Power of Digital Media on Micro-Celebrity Da'i," Journal of Asian Wisdom and Islamic Behavior 3, no. 1 (March 27, 2025), https://doi.org/10.59371/jawab.v3i1.93.

[19] Qulyubi et al., "Negotiating Artificial Intelligence in Contemporary Pesantren: Knowledge, Religious Authority, and Islamic Educational Traditions."

[20] Hanik Lailatut Tarwiyyah, "Kiai-AI: Renegotiating Religious Authority in the Digital Age," Journal of Islamic Thought and Philosophy 4, no. 1 (June 19, 2025): 106–26, https://doi.org/10.15642/jitp.2025.4.1.106-126.

[21] Piercosma Bisconti, Andrew McIntyre, and Federica Russo, "Synthetic Socio-Technical Systems: Poiêsis as Meaning Making," Philosophy & Technology 37, no. 3 (July 16, 2024), https://doi.org/10.1007/s13347-024-00778-0.

[22] Suhermanto Ja'far et al., "Digital Fiqh and Maqāṣid Al-Sharīʿah in the Onlife Condition," SAMARAH Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam 10, no. 1 (March 31, 2026): 550–71, https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v10i1.31868.

[23] Ahmad Ihsan Syarifuddin, "From Sanad to Algorithms: The Transformation of Islamic Authority and the Reconstruction of Nusantara Islamic Epistemology in the Digital Age," Al Ghazali. 6, no. 2 (March 11, 2026): 467–88, https://doi.org/10.69900/ag.v6i2.577.

and its visual or rhetorical appeal, since the cues that have historically signaled credibility, such as known teachers, institutional affiliation, and chains of transmission, are often absent from synthetic content.[24] Where such cues are missing, audiences are left to rely on surface features such as production quality, emotional framing, and the apparent confidence of the speaker, which can make an authoritative-sounding message difficult to evaluate on its merits [25].

Several digital platforms have introduced policies concerning content generated or significantly altered by artificial intelligence. TikTok provides mechanisms for labeling AI-generated content; YouTube requires disclosure in certain cases involving realistic synthetic or AI-manipulated content; and Meta has developed an approach to labeling AI-generated content. These policies indicate that transparency is becoming an increasingly important component of digital communication governance.[26] However, the extent to which such policies can address religiously sensitive synthetic preaching remains unclear, since labeling alone does not establish whether a speaker possesses the knowledge or accountability that religious authority presupposes.[27] Because the prefix already raises the problem of labeling without accountability, the next sentence should shift to what audiences and institutions can realistically verify, namely whether disclosure can make the chain of human authorship visible enough for communities to evaluate claims to religious speech.

Nevertheless, AI labeling alone does not resolve the specific challenges of religious communication.[28] A label indicating that a video was generated using AI

[24] Moh Saifulloh and Samsuriyanto Samsuriyanto, "From Isnad to Algorithm: A Hybridization Model of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah's Communication Strategies for Institutionalizing AI Ethics in Gen-Z Da'wah," Suhuf 38, no. 1 (May 26, 2026): 197–210, https://doi.org/10.23917/suhuf.v38i1.16282.

[25] aflakah mutowwah, "GEN Z BRAIN ROT: IMPLICATIONS FOR DIGITAL DA'WAH COMMUNICATION PRACTICES," JEET Journal of English Education and Technology, January 14, 2026, https://doi.org/10.59689/jeet.v6i04.206.

[26] Qinhui Wang et al., "Understanding the Impact of AI Label Disclosure on Engagement with Deepfakes Videos," in Proceedings of the ... Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences/Proceedings of the Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, 2026, https://doi.org/10.24251/hicss.2026.352.

[27] Choirur Rois and Gholamreza Yazdani, "Digital Schism: The Reconstruction of Religious Authority and the Emergence of Islamic Knowledge Elite in the AI Era," Surau Journal of Islamic Studies 2, no. 1 (January 3, 2026): 96–118, https://doi.org/10.63919/surau.v2i1.65.

[28] Patricius Neonnub and Oktovianus Yuda Pramana, "RELIGIOUS POLICY IN THE AGE OF AI: A PERSONALIST INQUIRY INTO MORAL PRAXIS AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION," Journal of Religious Policy 4, no. 2 (December 31, 2025), https://doi.org/10.31330/repo.v4i2.114.

provides information about the technological process, but it does not identify who authored the message, which religious sources informed it, who reviewed its accuracy, or who is responsible if the content disseminates misleading information. Consequently, the governance of AI-generated da'wah requires attention not only to the disclosure of technological production, but also to the verification of religious sources and the allocation of human accountability across the chain of content creation and distribution. Such an approach would also need to recognize that the authority of a religious message depends on who stands behind it, since a figure that appears knowledgeable is not equivalent to an accountable scholar [29]. Accordingly, the legitimacy of AI-mediated da'wah cannot rest on the appearance of expertise alone, but must be grounded in traceable sources, human oversight, and clear lines of responsibility that mirror the moral accountability embedded in the isnād tradition [30]. Such accountability requires that every synthetic religious message be traceable to the human individuals and institutions that scripted, approved, and published it, since diffusion of responsibility across technical actors would otherwise leave the question of who answers for error unresolved [31]. Accordingly, the institutional arrangements that govern traditional religious instruction, such as scholarly certification, editorial review, and the public identification of authors, offer a useful reference point for designing comparable safeguards in synthetic da'wah.

Within Islamic scholarly traditions, the communication of religious knowledge involves more than the ability to formulate a message. It also requires clear sourcing, scholarly authority, and moral responsibility. The use of generative technologies in da'wah should therefore be situated within a broader framework than the mere efficiency of content production.

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[29] Francis Khek Gee Lim, "AI and Generative Charisma in Religious Practices," Religions 17, no. 5 (May 2, 2026): 549, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel17050549.

[30] Amaal Mohammad Khalil Alshaar, "Knowledge Lineage from Isnad to AI: Reframing Authorship and Responsibility in the Generative AI Era," International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences 15, no. 9 (September 20, 2025), https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v15-i9/26451.

[31] Ahmad Umar et al., "Artificial Intelligence and the Ethics of Tafsir: Integrating Digital Technologies and Islamic Humanities in Automating Interpretative Processes," Journal of Educational Technology and Learning Creativity 3, no. 2 (December 27, 2025): 324–47, https://doi.org/10.37251/jetlc.v3i2.2496.

This article addresses three questions: How do AI-based religious influencers emerge and become constructed as preacher figures on social media? How is synthetic da'wah content produced and presented to audiences? And how should transparency, religious verification, and accountability be applied to such content? The article aims to explain the emergence and characteristics of AI-based religious influencers while developing an analytical framework connecting virtual representation, content production, technological transparency, religious verification, and human accountability.

B. Method

This study adopts a qualitative approach based on documentary analysis and conceptual review. This approach is appropriate because the study does not seek to measure audience acceptance of virtual preachers; rather, it examines the governance of synthetic da'wah content production and distribution through academic literature and publicly available policy documents. The analysis is organized around three analytical dimensions: the construction of virtual preacher figures, the procedures through which synthetic content is produced and circulated, and the normative requirements of transparency, religious verification, and accountability.

The data sources comprise two groups. The first consists of academic literature on digital religion, virtual religious authority, synthetic influencers, and the use of artificial intelligence in religious communication. The second consists of platform and government policy documents addressing the disclosure of AI-generated content, the transparency of synthetic media, and the ethical use of artificial intelligence.

The policy documents examined include TikTok's guidance on AI-generated content, YouTube's policy on disclosing synthetic or AI-manipulated content, Meta's approach to labeling AI-generated content, and the 2025 public consultation documents issued by Indonesia's Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs concerning the National Artificial Intelligence Roadmap White Paper and the proposed Guidelines for Artificial Intelligence Ethics.

The analysis proceeded through four stages: identifying relevant documents; organizing information according to the themes of content production, transparency, message verification, and accountability; critically interpreting the relationship between

platform policies and principles of religious communication; and developing a conceptual framework for the governance of synthetic da'wah.

This study has several limitations. It does not report systematic observations of specific virtual preacher accounts, interviews with content creators, or measurements of audience responses. Its findings are presented as documentary analysis and conceptual argumentation that may provide a basis for subsequent empirical research.

C. The Production Chain of Synthetic Da'wah Content

The production of synthetic da'wah content cannot be understood merely as a process in which AI generates religious messages.[32] Behind each published item lies a series of human decisions and technological operations.[33] Creators determine the topic, select the message, write the script, direct the visual character, choose a synthetic voice, and decide how the content will be distributed. AI is then used to generate or modify selected elements of the content. The resulting output may include a script, an image, a voice track, or a complete video, but each of these outputs remains dependent on the prompts, source materials, and editorial choices made by the human actors who initiated the process. This dependence means that the characteristics of the final product, including its religious claims, tone, and degree of authority, are traceable to specific decisions made during production rather than to the technology itself.

A virtual preacher is the product of both technological construction and human creative decisions. Facial features, expressions, clothing, intonation, and visual settings can be designed to create a particular impression.[34] The resulting representation may resemble a human preacher even though it does not possess the social and religious experiences of an actual human being. Such a representation therefore presents a religious voice whose authority rests on constructed appearance rather than on the scholarly formation, lived piety, or accountable personhood that traditional da'wah has historically required of its preachers. This construction of authority through visual and

[32] Dermawan, "Dakwah Di Era Algoritma: Dialektika Etika Dan Strategi Adaptasi Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam Berbasis Artificial Intelligence."

[33] Ja'far et al., "Digital Fiqh and Maqāṣid Al-Sharīʿah in the Onlife Condition."

[34] Simone Natale and Leah Henrickson, "The Lovelace Effect: Perceptions of Creativity in Machines," New Media & Society 26, no. 4 (March 4, 2022): 1909–26, https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448221077278.

vocal design raises a question that existing platform policies have not yet addressed: whether audiences can reliably distinguish between a synthetic preacher's presented credentials and the verifiable qualifications of the human creators who actually stand behind it. Answering that question requires moving beyond the surface of the content and examining the accountability structures that connect each synthetic message to an identifiable human author, institution, or religious body.

It is important to distinguish among several forms of production. First, content may be generated entirely by AI, including both the virtual figure and the voice. Second, content may feature a human figure whose appearance or performance is substantially modified by AI. Third, religious content may use AI merely as a production aid, while the delivery and authority of the message remain grounded in a human preacher. These forms have different ethical implications and should not be treated as equivalent categories.

These distinctions matter because the degree of AI involvement affects what information should be disclosed to audiences. An AI-generated illustration, for example, does not necessarily have the same implications as a realistic video depicting a person as though they were delivering a sermon that they never actually gave. Such a case raises distinct concerns about attribution and consent, since the audience may come to associate the message with a religious authority who has no knowledge of, or responsibility for, the content. Where a synthetic recording attributes words to a real scholar or preacher, the harm extends beyond the audience's confusion to the reputational and religious standing of the person being simulated, which is why consent and attribution must be treated as separate normative questions in any governance framework for synthetic da'wah.

The production chain involves at least four positions: the creator or account manager, who determines the purpose and topic; the AI system, which generates or modifies audiovisual elements; the platform, which provides distribution infrastructure and shapes visibility; and religious authorities or relevant experts, who may review the substance of the message. AI functions as a technology for processing and generating content, not as a moral agent that can be held accountable in the same way as a human being. Accountability for synthetic da'wah therefore has to be assigned to the human and institutional actors who design, direct, and distribute the content, which means

that any governance framework must specify which of these parties bears responsibility for the accuracy of religious claims and for the attribution of voices and images to real persons.

Successful distribution should not be equated with religious quality. Views, likes, and follower counts indicate levels of attention or user engagement, but they do not automatically demonstrate the accuracy of a message or the legitimacy of its religious sources. The evaluation of synthetic da'wah must distinguish digital communication performance from scholarly accountability. Such a distinction is especially pressing where synthetic content addresses religious questions of practice, since users may encounter confident religious guidance without any means of verifying the competence or identity of its source.

D. Transparency and Disclosure in Synthetic Da'wah

Transparency is a central principle in the governance of synthetic content. Audiences should receive sufficient information to understand whether the figures, voices, or scenes they encounter represent actual people or have been generated or substantially altered by AI.[35] Disclosure should also indicate the extent of AI involvement, so that a fully synthetic preacher, a human speaker whose appearance has been enhanced, and a human-delivered sermon supported by AI editing can be recognized as different kinds of religious communication. Disclosure obligations of this kind also need to specify where and how the labeling appears, since a notice buried in a video description or a profile biography is unlikely to reach viewers who encounter the content through short clips or algorithmic recommendations.

TikTok provides labeling mechanisms for AI-generated content and requires labels in specified circumstances. YouTube requires creators to disclose realistic altered or synthetic content when it could mislead viewers about whether a person, place, or event is real. Meta has developed an AI information-labeling approach to provide context for content identified as having been created with generative technologies. Such labeling is intended to help audiences distinguish synthetic material from

[35] Khanh Bao Quang Le et al., "More Than Saying 'It's AI': How Role Disclosure Transparency in AI-Generated Ads Influences Persuasion," Psychology and Marketing 43, no. 10 (May 28, 2026): 2532–51, https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.70175.

authentic recordings, yet none of these platform policies specifically addresses religious content, where the attribution of words to a real scholar or preacher carries additional reputational and doctrinal weight.

These policies demonstrate that transparency is not merely a technical issue; it also concerns audiences' right to understand the origins of digital representations. In da'wah, this information is particularly important because a figure may gain credibility not only through the substance of a message but also through the impression of identity and authority constructed visually.[36] For this reason, disclosure that addresses only whether content is synthetic may be insufficient, and governance frameworks should also indicate whether a religious figure has been simulated and whether that figure has consented to the use of their likeness, since the legitimacy of the message can depend on who appears to be speaking as much as on the content itself. Where a simulated figure is presented without any indication of its synthetic origin, the audience is left without the means to judge whether the authority being invoked is genuine, which in turn undermines the basis on which religious testimony is ordinarily evaluated. Accordingly, a governance framework for synthetic da'wah should treat the disclosure of simulated religious authority as a condition of credibility rather than a discretionary courtesy, since audiences who cannot identify the speaker also cannot assess the qualifications on which the message depends.

AI labeling is insufficient to guarantee the accuracy of religious messages. A label explains the involvement of technology, not the validity of the sources used. A video may be labeled as AI-generated while still containing an inaccurate hadith quotation, a decontextualized explanation of Islamic jurisprudence, or an unsupported religious claim. Accuracy in religious communication therefore requires separate verification mechanisms, such as review by qualified scholars and clear identification of the sources on which a message relies, so that the presence of a label is not mistaken for a guarantee of doctrinal reliability. Governance frameworks should therefore treat labeling as one component of a wider accountability structure, one that assigns to named actors the duty to verify the scholarly basis of each religious claim before it reaches an audience.

[36] Hijriatu Sakinah, Arsy Shakila Putri, and Ainur Rofiq, "Islamic Ethical Analysis of Deepfakes and Religious Image Manipulation," Jurnal Lentera Insani, December 10, 2025, 141–56, https://doi.org/10.65586/jli.v1i2.28.

Transparency should therefore be developed into a layered disclosure framework. The first layer concerns disclosure of AI use in production. The second identifies the person or organization responsible for the content. The third provides the religious sources on which the message is based. The fourth explains whether and how the material has undergone review or verification. Such a layered structure would allow audiences to assess not only whether a message is synthetic, but also who stands behind it, what evidence supports its claims, and whether any scholarly authority has actually examined it.

In da'wah communication, transparency is closely related to the principles of honesty and trustworthiness. Religious communication should not create misleading impressions about the speaker's identity or the sources of information. The use of a virtual figure presented as though it were a human preacher may cause misunderstanding if it is not accompanied by adequate disclosure. Such a situation may also weaken the relationship of trust between religious communicators and their audiences, since the authority that people attribute to a message depends in part on their confidence that the speaker is who they appear to be. Transparency should also address the use of the faces and voices of real religious figures. Using technology to imitate an individual's identity without consent raises ethical and legal concerns, particularly when the figure is made to appear to deliver statements that the individual never made.

E. Religious Verification and Human Accountability

One of the central challenges of synthetic da'wah content is the potential separation between the ability to generate a message and the ability to take responsibility for its accuracy. Generative systems can produce persuasive narratives, but linguistic fluency cannot be treated as evidence of valid religious knowledge.

In Islamic scholarly traditions, religious knowledge is closely connected to its sources, methods of interpretation, and scholarly authority. Qur'anic verses, hadith, scholarly opinions, and legal explanations each have their own contexts and interpretive methods. Religious content therefore requires careful examination of the accuracy of quotations, the reliability of sources, and the contexts in which they are used.

Verification is not limited to checking whether a Qur'anic verse or hadith exists. It must also consider whether the evidence is relevant to the topic, whether its interpretive context has been preserved, and whether differences of opinion within Islamic scholarship need to be acknowledged. AI may assist in searching for and organizing information, but decisions about the scholarly validity of religious content require the involvement of humans with relevant expertise. Synthetic da'wah content may create distance between the figure who appears to speak and the person who actually composes the message. A virtual figure may appear as the speaker, while its script is written by another creator and its voice and visual appearance are generated using separate applications. Primary responsibility for the substance of the message rests with the individuals or organizations that control the production and publication process.

Those managing religious content should establish review procedures that include source identification, quotation checking, contextual assessment, and disclosure of AI use. For material involving Islamic jurisprudence or complex religious explanations, review by individuals with appropriate scholarly competence is particularly important. Digital platforms do not automatically function as religious authorities. Nevertheless, they exert substantial influence over message distribution through policies on synthetic content, labeling mechanisms, moderation, and recommendation systems. Platform governance should therefore also consider the accuracy of religious sources and the potential misuse of representations of religious authority.

F. Toward a Governance Framework for Synthetic Da'wah

This article proposes a governance framework for synthetic da'wah based on four principles: transparency, verification, accountability, and contextual integrity. First, transparency. Creators should clearly disclose the use of AI, particularly when realistic figures, voices, or visual representations are generated or substantially modified. Transparency should also identify the account operator or other party responsible for the content. Second, verification: each religious claim, quotation, and source reference should be checked by qualified reviewers before publication, and the outcome of that review should be recorded and made available to audiences where feasible. Third, accountability: responsibility for the substance of each message should

be clearly assigned to named individuals or organizations, so that errors, misattributions, or misleading representations of religious authority can be traced to those who controlled their production and publication.

Second, verification. Religious messages produced with AI assistance should be reviewed in relation to their sources and contexts. This review should cover Qur'anic verses, hadith, scholarly quotations, and other religious explanations. The use of AI as an aid must not replace scholarly verification. Verification in this sense requires that each claim be traceable to an authoritative source, that the source be examined in its original context, and that any relevant scholarly disagreement be acknowledged rather than concealed behind a single, confident-sounding narrative. Third, accountability, which requires that responsibility for each message be assigned to identifiable persons or organizations, ensures that errors and misrepresentations of religious authority can be traced to those who controlled their production and publication. Where such responsibility is left undefined, corrective action tends to be delayed, and audiences are left without a clear party to hold to account for inaccurate or misleading religious guidance.

Third, accountability. Creators and content managers are responsible for production and publication decisions. When errors occur, mechanisms for correction, clarification, and content removal should be available. Responsibility cannot be transferred to the AI system alone. Platform operators and tool providers may share in the duty of care, but their role should be defined in ways that do not dilute the obligations of the human creators who direct, approve, and publish synthetic da'wah content. Fourth, contextual integrity, which requires that religious content be presented in a manner that preserves the setting, purpose, and limits of the sources it draws upon, so that a synthetic figure's apparent authority is not used to extend claims beyond what the evidence supports.

Fourth, contextual integrity. Synthetic content should preserve the context of religious messages. Simplifying material for digital formats must not distort the meaning of religious evidence or produce misleading religious conclusions. Where a simplified presentation omits the qualifications, conditions, or scholarly disagreements attached to a source, the resulting message may appear more certain than the

underlying evidence warrants, and this risk should be assessed as part of the review process before publication. Where such risks are identified, the review should determine whether the synthetic figure's presentation can be revised, supplemented with qualifying notes, or withdrawn before it reaches audiences.

These four principles may serve as a foundation for guidelines on synthetic da'wah production for creators, da'wah organizations, and Islamic media managers. This framework positions AI as a supporting technology in da'wah communication rather than as a substitute for human responsibility. Accordingly, the framework should be read as a set of conditions under which AI-mediated religious communication can remain answerable to the scholarly, ethical, and institutional standards that govern da'wah as a whole. Future research should empirically examine how audiences in different linguistic and sectarian contexts perceive synthetic religious figures, and whether disclosure labels meaningfully alter their trust in the religious claims those figures convey.

G. Concluding Remarks

The emergence of synthetic da'wah content signals a transformation in the relationship among humans, technology, and religious communication. Virtual preacher figures, synthetic voices, and AI-generated videos create new possibilities for producing and distributing Islamic messages. At the same time, they raise concerns about identity disclosure, the validity of religious sources, and accountability for the messages communicated. The documentary analysis presented in this article indicates that AI-labeling policies developed by digital platforms represent an important step toward greater transparency. However, technological transparency alone cannot ensure the integrity of religious messages. Synthetic da'wah content still requires source verification, clear authorship, and human responsibility for the material that is published. This article proposes four governance principles: transparency, verification, accountability, and contextual integrity. These principles may provide a basis for developing guidelines for synthetic da'wah production among creators, da'wah organizations, and Islamic media managers. Future research should test this framework through observations of virtual preacher accounts, interviews with creators, and analyses of audience responses across digital platforms.

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