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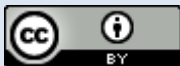
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Research Article

Impacts of *Da'wah* Activities of Selected Muslim Scholars on Social Media Platforms on Yoruba Muslims

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Abstract. Social media has become an integral part of Muslims' personal and public lives. Through the advancement of the Internet, social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, Telegram, Tik-Tok and personal blogs have gloriously allocated space for *Da'wah* activities. Thus, this study aims to assess the utilization of Social media platforms by selected Yoruba Muslim scholars for *Da'wah* activities and the impacts they have on Yoruba Muslims. Descriptive and analytical methods of research have been employed in carrying out this research. The descriptive method assists in describing how social media platforms are utilized by selected Yoruba Muslim scholars. The analytical method helps in analyzing the content of social media post by Yoruba Muslim scholars. Participatory observation, as a research tool, is used to follow some *Du'at* in order to have access to their discussions and posts as well as get information on their impacts. The paper reveals that, as a result of advance in modern information dissemination, social media has provided innovative

platforms for religious leaders to spread their messages and engage with various Muslims conveniently. The paper also reveals the effectiveness of religious scholars' message in influencing good morals and values, promotion of interfaith dialogue and prevention of cyber bullying among their followers. The paper concludes that the role of social media in fostering unity, promoting values, and countering misrepresentation of Islam through the spread of educative and valuable messages cannot be underestimated. Therefore, it is recommended that the Yoruba Muslim scholars should make strategic use of social media platforms positively to impacts the Yoruba Muslims by disseminating knowledge that will foster unity and counter misinformation.

Keywords: Social media, *Da'wah* activities, Muslim Scholars

INTRODUCTION

Social media has transformed communication worldwide, with its extensive reach and ability to disseminate ideas rapidly. Muslims are no different from people of other societies who have increased social media usage in not far years. It has brought changes that have significantly impacted the individual and group of Muslim societies in their daily activities (Adam et.al, 2014). It has become an important element of human lives because it is used to promote man's varied world's connection and interdependence (Thomas, et.al, 2020). Through the utilization of Social media, people communicate and participate in information sharing that has engendered easy accessibility to social interaction. Social media platforms, by their nature, can educate, entertain the audience and the users and they possess an outreaching influence that traditional medium such as Television, Radio, and Newspapers lack (Thomas, et.al, 2020).

Social media has provided opportunity for people to express their opinions to the public and participate in conversations and dialogues. It is worthy of note that *Da'wah* activities have been enhanced with the use of social media. Aside being an interactive medium and communication vehicle among people in general, it is also used as an inevitable tool for Islamic messages delivery in various forms, and these include: religious lectures, photos, drawings, cartoons, Islamic memes, religious appeals, inspirational Islamic stories, video clips of religious songs, wisdom words, religious slogans, studies on Qur'an and Hadith and its interpretation (Adnan and Uyuni, 2021). The spread and quality of information assessed on Social media makes it an appealing tool for *Da'wah* activities and others. Social media is a developed phenomenon in Islamic propagation and Muslim Scholars had realized the importance of social media as a component in *Da'wah* activities and means of reaching out to many people, hence, making use of it extensively days and nights (Thomas, et.al, 2020).

For *Da'wah* activities to be effective and efficient in this present day, the platforms provided by social media which are regarded to as *wasā'il* (means), need to be maximally utilized to enhance and support its implementation (Erwin, 2019). This is because it has become area of focus for Muslim callers, their followers, and other users to engage in *Da'wah* unlike the classical means of propagating Islam which include physical gatherings, *Madrasah*, *Ḥalqah*, and Worship centers that are now

systematically and indirectly deserted. Those classical methods of Islamic propagation are deserted, because *Madāris*, Islamic organizations, and individual scholars have created their own pages on some of social media platforms to conduct teachings and convey information to their audience and beyond. It should be noted that the impacts of *Da'wah* activities on these platforms are felt by Muslims and non-Muslims (Reichmuth, 1989).

It is a fact that there are several existing literature and research works on *Da'wah* activities on Social media. Thus, in writing this study, the researcher consulted various related literature like *Islam and the Cyber World* by A.O. Shuriye and M.T. Ajala, where the authors asserted that Cyber world has created an avenue for the Muslim *Ummah* in a form of virtual global community and encouraged dialogue as well as access to information on a real time basis. Above all it has facilitated easy access to the Qur'an and other Islamic materials. The writers also pointed out some of the negative aspects of it such as pornography, victimization, bullying, stalking etc, but do not talk on utilization of social media pages by scholars which is the concern of this paper (Shuriye and Ajala, 2014). In a work titled: *Islam and Social Media: Attitudes and Views* by W.A. Hatab. The writer explained that Social Media has positive effects on the promotion of Islam despite the fact that it also creates more enemies for Islam rather than more friends. He concluded that Facebook is the most preferred social platform for the Muslim users (Hatab, 2016). The writer did not explain how Muslim scholars utilize social media for the propagation of Islam which is the focus of this paper.

The article entitled: *Impacts of Social Media on Muslim Society: From Islamic Perspective* by Md. Tarequl Islam, enumerated positive effects of Social Media on Muslim society such as interaction, socialization, teaching of Islamic Knowledge and *Da'wah* among many others. As relevant as this to the study, the writer did not mention how Muslim scholars utilize social media for the propagation of Islam which is the focus of this paper (Islam, 2019).

The work entitled: *Islām, Social Media and the Fallacy of Religious Proselytization in Yorubaland* by M.A. Lawal and K.O. Dauda. The writers examined how social media is utilized and abused by religious scholars in Yorubaland but do not mention social media platforms used by religious scholars, numbers of their followers and the impacts of their messages on the Muslims in South-west Nigeria which is the focus of this study (Lawal and Dauda, 2014).

Another worthwhile article is *an Assessment of the Impacts of Da'wah through the Electronic and Social media among Muslims in Nigeria* by L.F. Oladimeji and B.A. Ajijola. The authors examined *Da'wah* and divided its forms into specific and general which have to do with basic teaching of Islam, modern approach to invitation and teaching of Islam through the use of electronic and social media. The writers pointed out both advantages and disadvantages of electronic and social media among others (Oladimeji and Ajijola, 2012). As suitable as they are to this paper, they do not discuss the utilization of social media platforms by selected Muslim scholars for *Da'wah* activities and their impacts on Yoruba Muslims, which are the focus of this paper.

Spiritualising New Media: The Use of Social Media for Da'wah Purposes within Indonesian Muslim Scholars by Nurdin-Rusli is another important work. The writer

advocated for adoptability of social media for the enhancement of *Da'wah* activities. He opined that social media outlets such as Facebook, Blog, Mailing List, and You Tube, could become elements of new potential communication instrument to be adopted and utilised by Muslims and its scholars for *Da'wah* purposes. As relevant as this article, the writer did not point out areas where the social media platforms have impacted the Muslim users, which this study will cover (Nurdin-Rusli, 2023).

It is against this backdrop that the paper assesses the utilization of Social media platforms by selected Yoruba Muslim scholars for *Da'wah* activities and examines the impacts they have on Muslims in South-west Nigeria. To achieve this, the paper has been divided into seven parts; Abstract, Introduction, Conceptual analysis of *Da'wah* and Social media, Importance of Social media as a medium of *Da'wah* dissemination, Utilization of Social Media by selected Yoruba Muslim Scholars, Impacts of *Da'wah* activities of selected Yoruba Muslim Scholars, Conclusion/Findings.

***Da'wah* and Social Media: A Conceptual Analysis**

It is pertinent to briefly explain some concepts which are very important to this paper for better understanding of the topic. They are: *Da'wah*, Social Media.

Da'wah

Da'wah is an essential activity for spreading Islam and has a variety of meanings, such as: praying, calling (others), propaganda, missionary activity, etc (Edward, 2004). To Oladimeji, *Da'wah* is a process of self-exertion to the utmost, on the part of *dā'iyah* (Callers) in order to disseminate the word of Allah and to make it supreme and it involves removal of all the impediments in the way of its observance (Oladimeji, 2022).

This concept has been referred to as an aspect of calling the attention of others both Muslims and non-Muslims to the faith of Islam, commandments of Allah, explanation of the do's and don'ts of Islam and more, as enshrined in the Qur'an (Edward, 2004). Sometimes, it takes different measures or styles, either by preaching, demonstration through actions, habitual dimensions, proselytization or comparative analysis of the religion (Edward, 2004).

The Islamic obligation to perform *Da'wah* is a command incumbent upon every Muslim to spread the message of Allah to all humanity according to one's ability, and it is a duty, responsibility and task enjoined on every Muslim by Allah as clearly mentioned in the Qur'an that He has appointed the Muslim Ummah as a model community for the whole of mankind (Edward, 2004). Allah says in Qur'an 3:110 thus:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِّنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ
الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. if only the people of the Book had Faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have Faith, but Most of them are perverted transgressors.

It is clearly indicated in the above verse that there should be a group inviting people to do good things and forbid them from doing evil. While reacting to the above Qur'anic verse, Lafiaji remarked that:

Da'wah is fundamental duty upon every believer and it does not suffice to profess faith in Allah and practice His commandments at all level of the individual; the believer is enjoined to extend invitation to others around him, so that society can be reformed both spiritually and morally (Lafiaji, 2022)

Allah has also given a clear guideline on how to spread *Da'wah* through wisdom (*hikmah*) as mentioned in Qur'an 16: 125 thus:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجِدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ
رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in the best way. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is (rightly) guided.

On the authority of Abdullahi bin Amr bin al-^cAs (May Allah be pleased with both of them), Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: "Convey from me even if it is a verse (Khan, 1997). These Qur'anic quotations and Prophetic tradition encourage the Muslims to spread knowledge to others anywhere and anytime as part of their responsibilities toward others. Umar while quoting Hussain sees *Da'wah* as "means of inviting all mankind to obey Allāh and His laws which were handed down to the mankind through His messengers and prophets" (Umar, 2019). He further states that *Da'wah* refers to the call from Allāh to all and sundry through His noble Prophet Muḥammad (May the peace of Allah be upon him) and a call from man to his fellow men in order to wholeheartedly embrace and accept Islam as a religion (*Dīn*). It is also seen as the means of disseminating the teaching and practices of religion of Islam, and the process by which the religion is understood by Muslims and non-Muslims are shown the beauty of Islam (Umar, 2019). It can be concluded that *Da'wah* encompasses all acts of dissemination of Islamic knowledge through preaching, teaching, sermon and charity in order to spread information about Islam, and maintenance of true doctrine of Oneness of Allah (*Tauhid*).

Scholars explained that there are characteristics which distinguished *Da'wah* i.e. Islamic call from other religious calls and they include but not limited to the followings:

- i. **Divine source:** The call to Allah (*Da'wah ila llahi*) comes from Allah, and everything is linked to Him. This linkage gives it a sanctity which cannot be found in other religions, such as Hinduism, Jewish, African Traditional Religion etc., even, the calls of Christianity which was based on heavenly books lack this sacredness for its adoption of the doctrine of the Trinity (Umar, 2019).
- ii. **Global spread:** The call to Allah (*Da'wah ila llahi*) does not pertain to a specific gender, race or nation but should be directed to all human beings, and be in accordance with the Allah's saying: It is universal in terms of time and space (Al-khalaf, 2023).
- iii. **Comprehensiveness of the curriculum:** The caller should ensure that the call (*Ad-Da'wah*) accommodates all segments of society: the learned and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, the believers and the unbelievers. The call should be insightful, understanding, and useful to the called (Al-Khalaf, 2023).
- iv. **The reality of the invitees:** The caller should take into account the social and cultural conditions of the invitees and the nature of their problems (Siddiqi, 1989).

Social Media

Social media is one of the modern technologies which have revolutionized the entire human life. It is a technology that allows people of different background, color, tribe and nation to post or share information with others on social webs and applications (social networking) like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, Wechat, Tiktok and many more. Social media with presence of Internet presents a new model of social interaction among modern society and its existence has become a new identity in the current era (Okojie, 2006). According to Kapoor:

Social media is made up of various user-driven platforms that facilitate diffusion of compelling content, dialogue creation, and communication to a broader audience. It is essentially a digital space created by the people and for the people, and it provides an environment that is conducive for interactions and networking to occur at different levels (for instance, personal, professional, business, marketing, political, and societal (Kapoor, et.al, 2018)

Kaplan and Heinlein explained that social media include web-based and mobile technologies that are used in turning communication into interactive dialogue. It is a group of internet-based applications which is built on ideological and technological foundations which is termed and referred to as web 2.0 for creation and exchange of user-generated content. It exists to provide communication among people regardless of the distance, making it open to people to easily share; information, files, photos, videos etc (Kaplan and Heinlein, 2010). The users usually

download services or applications that offer Social media functionality to their smart phones or tablets. They create interactive platforms where individuals, organizations and communities can discuss, participate, co-create, share and modify user-generated content or self-curated content which are posted online (Brian Dean, 2023). The number of people using Social media is over 4.48 billion worldwide, with the average user accessing 6.6 Social media platforms on a monthly basis. Number of people using Social media in Africa is estimated to be 590,296.163 while the estimated number of Social media users in Nigeria is put at 154,301,195 (Brian Dean, 2023).

Importance of Social Media as a Medium of *Da'wah* Dissemination

The new media facilities such as internet, websites, and applications etc have given Islamic scholars enormous opportunities to explain the real teachings of Islam to the wider world. It is noteworthy that if these facilities are used properly, Islamic teachings will be extended and strengthened in the minds of Muslims and non-Muslims (Sule and Abdulkareem, 2020). According to Abdul and Zaid “dissemination of Islamic messages on Social media are been used to correct minds of non-believers on their perception of Islam and opportunity for the Muslim world to portray the beauty and values of Islam” (Abdul and Zaid, 2015). It should be noted that Islamic messages have been held with great respect and they are not restricted to any specific topic. The Prophet (SAW) said:

Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a only sentence, and tell other the stories of Banu Israel (which have been taught to you), for it is not sinful to do so. And who ever tells a lie on me intentionally, will surely take his place in the (Hell) Fire” (Khan, 1989)

Based on this prophetic tradition, religious messages are posted on Social media by Islamic scholars and preachers. As a result of usefulness of Islamic messages to friends, relatives, and colleagues, some of the users immediately share them on different platforms, and in order to ensure adequate dissemination of Islamic messages and propagation of Islam, some of these messages are voluntarily reproduced, reposted, and re-tweeted by the users, even though many of them are not real Islamic scholars (Briandana, et.al, 2020).

The importance of social media cannot be ignored in this modern world because it has become a new way of life in the world of information and communication on a global level which should be adopted for the propagation of Islam and dissemination of Islamic messages (Umar, 2019). Siddiqui and Singh asserted that it is a well-known fact that modern communication technology (social media) has a gigantic impact on our daily life especially youths' and students' life (Siddiqui and Singh, 2016). To Khouli, the contemporary communication tools have advanced capabilities that can help and provide the best opportunities and different types of service for the users. It has assisted the users to achieve all forms of communication with people around the world (El-Khouli, 2013).

The use of social media has aided the spread of Islam in the modern day. *Da'wah* is considered as the process of disseminating of Islamic messages via the use

of appropriate and practical techniques. Historically, numerous approaches and instruments have been employed by various schools of thought and persons in an attempt to communicate their messages to others (El-Khouli, 2013). Today, various people carry out world-extensive propagation in order to attract people to different thoughts and beliefs. These propagandists try to familiarize people with their opinions and beliefs which eventually resulted to recruitment of new followers with the use of suitable propagation tools and techniques (El-Khouli, 2013). It is observed that throughout the world, social media and other tools of modern medium of communication have aided the general populace in various fields including Islamic *Da'wah*. These have played an important role in assisting the caller (*Da'i*) in the advancement and dissemination of Islamic messages through the use of the facilities they offered (Arifuddin, 2016).

Social media has been a unique platform that is utilized by *Du'at* (Islamic callers) in disseminating Islamic messages and knowledge. He stressed further that it is an important platform that can be utilized as contemporary media for *Da'wah* work because its advantages in terms of efficiency, accessibility, scoping, and openness cannot be overemphasized (Arifuddin, 2016). Nowadays, *Da'wah* dissemination method is no longer in the form of group discussion or in open space forum, it is now done in a more modern way with the use of technology through social media platforms such as Facebook (pages, live-stream, and reel), YouTube, Telegram, Instagram, WhatsApp, Tik-Tok etc (Alfulaniy, 2023). Various Islamic messages are posted by scholars and preachers which are accessed by the public for personal, educational, religious, and business interests. The called (*Mad'u*) who are Social media users do not only look for information but also share what they receive, and add other religious messages through explanation according to what they understand (Rosidi, Wifaq and Abdul-Majid, 2021).

Utilization of Social Media by Selected Yoruba Muslim Scholars

It is on record that Yorubaland occupies the modern-day countries of Nigeria, Togo and Benin and covers a total land area of 142,114 km (Olojede, 2011). Out of 142,114 km² land area, 106,016 km² (74.6%) lies within Nigeria, 18.9% in Benin, and the remaining 6.5% is in Togo (Olojede, 2011). The Yoruba people are one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria and they spread all over Nigeria and their major states are Ekiti, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo and Lagos States. Kwara and Kogi States are not counted as states of Yoruba politically but they have great number of Yorubas. Some important cities and towns such as Offa, Erinle, Omuaran, Igbaja, Oke-Ode, Oro, Isanlu, Kabba, Aiyetoro, Mopa, Odo-Eri, Obajana and many others are entirely Yorubas (Obateru, 2006). For the purpose of this study, Yorubaland is used to cover religious scholars (*Du'at*) in virtually all states in South-West Nigeria.

As it has been established that *Da'wah* is an aspect of calling the attention of others both Muslims and non-Muslims to the faith of Islam, commandments of Allah, explanation of the do's and don'ts of Islam and more, as enshrined in the Qur'an (Edward, 2004). Calling people to the path of Allah was considered as the most important part of the works of Muslim scholars in Yorubaland. The early scholars in cities, towns and villages in Yorubaland such as Lagos, Oyo, Ibadan, Ondo, Ekiti,

Igbaja, Omu-aran, Ora, Iwo, Ede, Isanyin, Ogbomoso spent their time and efforts in conveying the messages of Islam to the Muslims in general and non Muslims specifically; and they carried out *Da'wah* activities in line with Qur'an injunctions (Qur'an 3:110). Establishment of Arabic schools for teaching and learning of Islamic education, religious conversion, open public lectures, Friday sermons, philanthropy and attending to people's spiritual problems were among the strategies used by Yoruba Muslim scholars to disseminate Islamic messages among the Muslims in Yorubaland (Lawal and Dauda, 2014).

In order to ensure and support the dissemination of Islamic messages via the internet some Muslim countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and others have created Social media pages which are managed by specialized organizations. For example, a Facebook page named Saudi Arabia Ministry of *Hajj&Umrah* was created on 16 June, 2022 for the purpose of enlightening Muslims on *Hajj* and *Umrah* rites and it is been followed by 235,000 people (Omar, Hassan and Sallahudeen, 2014). This powerful medium gives modern callers to Islam (*Dā'ī*) the opportunity to share and spread the knowledge about Islam to Muslims and non-Muslims in their localities and beyond. It should be noted that due to easy accessibility to post, tweet, upload, retrieve and share *Da'wah* contents, the older Muslim scholars have also seized the opportunity presented by the Social media to spread their knowledge about Islam to their followers (Lawal and Dauda, 2014).

In the course of spreading religious information through *Da'wah* in the contemporary times, social media has received tremendous consideration by Islamic scholars and their followers particularly in South-west, Nigeria. Scholars such as Lateef Folounsho Oladimeji, Sikiru Adenigba, Saheed Badmus Suraju, Olalekan Rasheed Azeez, Sanusi Haruna Lafiaji, Nafiu Arikewuyo, Ishaq Akintola (The founder of Muric), AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef popularly known as Honorable Iyeye, Sharafdeen Gbadebo, Shaykh Habeebullahi Adam, Shaykh Imran Eleha, Abu Raheemah, Mallam Yusuf Adepoju, Al-Imaam AbdulHakeem Al-Kutubi, Alfa Saheed Shittu, Sheikh Sulaiman Amubieya, Dr. Bilal Surajdeen Asrau', Amīr Qamardeen Ajala, Sheikh Ibrahim Alkhaleely Onimejesi, Ustaz Suenu Hujjatullah Olawale, Oniwayo meta, Sheikh Adam Alfanla, among others use Social media for Islamic information dissemination either on Facebook, WhatsApp, You-Tube or Instagram and each of them has followers.

It is pertinent to note that the Yoruba Muslim scholars and preachers who are utilizing these modern communication devices are gradually on the border lines of shifting the Islamic awareness from what is seen as conservative, rigid belief to what one can be understood and narrated to others without the stress of attending conventional Islamic centres. It has provided an opportunity for the scholars and preachers to reach out to the masses who may pretend to have not recognized Islam (Ittefaq and Ahmad, 2024). It should be noted that these scholars, preachers and bloggers also utilize other platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Tik-Tok, You-Tube, Telegram, Twitter and others because they appear to be the most widely used for religious purpose and are easily accessible for quick consumption of Islamic teachings and other related issues (Lawal and Daud, 2014).

The followings include the ways through which social media platforms are been used for the dissemination and source of knowledge of Islam:

i. **Public Lectures**

In a recent time, Social media has been employed for the uploading of both offline and online public lectures, which has makes it easier for religious leaders to upload their recorded videos on Islamic teaching online, for the public access and consumption (Lawal and Dauda, 2014). These audios and videos of the lectures contain important messages and information that are relevant for the understanding of the religion, and help in the provision of opportunity for Muslims and non-Muslims to learn about Islam. For example, in the month of Ramadan and public functions, live videos on Facebook and Instagram are maintained by Islamic scholars. While the audio and video lectures that are recorded either before or during the functions are shared among their followers on WhatsApp, YouTube and other relevant platforms (Rosidi, Wifaq and Abdul-Majid, 2021).

ii. **Friday Sermons (Jum^ʿat Khutbah)**

Before the advent of social media, *Da^ʿwah* activities are carried out within the four walls of Mosques on every Friday. The evolution of Social media has assisted the scholars of Islam in Yorubaland and across the world to promote and disseminate Islamic messages during the delivery of sermons on Fridays. It should be noted that most of Friday sermons are live streaming from the beginning to the end. While other scholars would post their sermons after the Jum^ʿat service to enable their followers share it across the Social media sites (Halim and Rahim, 2010).

iii. **Debates**

Daily, series of religious debates are carried out on Social media and they are accessible to both Muslims and non-Muslims. These debates are mostly between Muslims and non-Muslims, particularly the Christians and they are used as means of clarifying religious issues such as monotheism, trinity, birth and death, and coming of Prophet ^ʿissah (Jesus Christ) usually form the content of discourse. These debates which sometimes terms as religious dialogue are usually found on the Social media sites, such as YouTube, Facebook and Instagram (Halim and Rahim, 2010).

Level of Utilization of Social Media by Selected Yoruba Muslim Scholars

This provides a holistic approach at the extent to which selected Yoruba Muslim scholars are using Social media platforms to spread *Da^ʿwah*. Nine (9) prominent scholars were assessed through their Social media platforms. Among these scholars, three (3) were selected from three states as follows:

1. Lagos State

- i. Prof. Ishaq Akintola,
- ii. Dr. AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef, and
- iii. Sheikh Abdulakeem Khutubi

2. Oyo State
 - i. Dr. Sharafdeen Gbadebo,
 - ii. Sheikh Sulayman Amubieya,
 - iii. Mikhail Abu Rahimo
3. Osun State
 - i. Mallam Yusuf Adepoju,
 - ii. Ustaz Abdulhakeem Oniyawo-meta,
 - iii. Dr. Siraj Bilal Asrau'

The Social media platforms that are been used by the selected scholars majorly are four, and they are as follows:

Table 1. Facebook

S/N	NAME	PROFILE NAME	FOLLOWERS/ SUBSCRIBERS
1.	Prof. Ishaq Akintola (Muric)	Ishaq Akintola	14,000
2.	Dr. AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef	Dr. AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef TV	405,000
3.	AbdulHakeem Khutubi	The Voice of Truth	79,000
4.	Shaykh Sulaiman Amubieya	Amubieya online	104,000
5.	Imam Mikhail Abu Rahima Ibadan	Abu Rahima	2,397
6.	Dr. Sharafdeen Gbadebo Raji	Dr. Sharafdeen Gbadebo Raji	33,000
7.	Mall. Yusuf Adepoju (Acadip)	Adepoju Yusuf Acadip	88,000
8.	Abu Mardiya Oniyawo-meta	Al-Madrasatu An-Nabawiyyah	95,000
9.	Dr. Bilal Ashrau'	Al-Wassatiyah TV	21,000

Source: Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, November (2023).

Table 2. You Tube

S/N	NAME	PROFILE NAME	FOLLOWERS/ SUBSCRIBERS
1.	Prof. Ishaq Akintola (Muric)	-	-
2.	Dr. AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef	Dr. AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef	490,000
3.	AbdulHakeem Khutubi	The Voice of Truth	203,000
4.	Shaykh Sulaiman Amubieya	Amubieya online	446,000
5.	Imam Mikhail Abu Rahima Ibadan	-	-
6.	Dr. Sharafdeen Gbadebo Raji	-	-
7.	Mall. Yusuf Adepoju (Acadip)	ACADIP TV	481,000
8.	Abu Mardiya Oniyawo-meta	Al-Madrasatu An-Nabawiyyah	336,000
9.	Dr. Bilal Ashrau'	Al-Wassatiyah TV	394

Source: Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, November (2023).

Table 3: Twitter

S/N	NAME	PROFILE NAME	FOLLOWERS/ SUBSCRIBERS
1.	Prof. Ishaq Akintola (Muric)	-	5,635

2.	Dr. AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef	Dr. AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef	-
3.	AbdulHakeem Khutubi	The Voice of Truth	-
4.	Shaykh Sulaiman Amubieya	Amubieya online	-
5.	Imam Mikhail Abu Rahima Ibadan	-	-
6.	Dr. Sharafdeen Gbadebo Raji	-	-
7.	Mall. Yusuf Adepoju (Acadip)	ACADIP TV	2,262
8.	Abu Mardiya Oniyawo-meta	Al-Madrasatu An-Nabawiyyah	-
9.	Dr. Bilal Ashrau'	Al-Wassatiyah TV	-

Source: Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, November (2023).

Table 4: WhatsApp

S/N	NAME	PROFILE NAME	FOLLOWERS/ SUBSCRIBERS
1.	Prof. Ishaq Akintola (Muric)	-	-
2.	Dr. AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef	-	-
3.	AbdulHakeem Khutubi	-	-
4.	Shaykh Sulaiman Amubieya	-	-
5.	Imam Mikhail Abu Rahima Ibadan	-	-
6.	Dr. Sharafdeen Gbadebo Raji	-	-
7.	Mall. Yusuf Adepoju (Acadip)	-	-
8.	Abu Mardiya Oniyawo-meta	-	-
9.	Dr. Bilal Ashrau'	-	-

Source: Survey on Social Media Pages/Channels, November (2023).

The number of scholars and their use of various social media platforms are shown in the above tables. As shown in table 1, all the nine (9) selected scholars have Facebook pages for *Da'wah* lectures such as Qur'anic and *Hadith* teachings as well as other *Da'wah* activities. While six (6) of the scholars utilize YouTube to share their audio and video on their various channels as indicated in table 2. It was shown in table 3 that two (2) of the selected scholars exploit Twitter to disseminate their *Da'wah* activities. Twitter as a Social media platform has a lesser number of usage by scholars because of its character limitation, it allows only 280 characters per tweet so it becomes difficult for the user to tweet in limited characters. The *Da'wah* audios and videos of all nine (9) scholars are usually posted on WhatsApp or other WhatsApp groups created by each of them. However WhatsApp platforms are encrypted social interactive applications that do not give access to someone other than the registered one to view the details of the follower hence the researcher is unable to ascertain the number of people in the WhatsApp Groups of the selected Yoruba Muslim scholars. The findings from the tables shown that the Islamic scholar with the highest followers is Dr. AbdulHakeem AbdulLateef who has 405,000 and 481,000 followers on his Facebook page and YouTube channel, while Imam Mikhail Abu Rahima has fewer followers on Facebook. It is indicated that Facebook and WhatsApp are the most utilized Social media platforms by the majority of the Yoruba Muslim scholars particularly in interacting with their audience to spread the message of Islam as contained in the Glorious Qur'an teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). This signifies that the location and the method of the scholars influence the level or number of his social media followers/subscribers and listeners.

Impacts of *Da'wah* Activities of Selected Yoruba Muslim Scholars among Yoruba Muslims

Social media has really enhanced that propagation of Islam. Group or individual is making use of it either to seek for information about a particular concept or to sensitize people about a religious practice. The use of social media by the Muslim scholars has impacted on Muslims (followers) in the following ways:

- i. Scholars and Audience (followers) Interpersonal Relation
- ii. Increase in Learning of Religious Knowledge
- iii. Combating Islamphobia
- iv. Amplifying charitable activities
- v. Reverting Islam
- vi. Spreading Good Morals and Values
- vii. Empowering Muslim Youths
- iv. Promoting interfaith dialogue
- v. Cyber bullying

1. Scholars and Audience (followers) Interpersonal Relation

Social media makes it easy for the followers of a particular scholar to participate actively, understand the messages and share same through the creation of contents which are reposted on their various social media platforms. It has also made it easier for the scholars to interact with their followers, expand relationships, and shorten distance and time in disseminating information quickly and at a relatively lower cost.

2. Increase in Learning of Religious Knowledge

It is noteworthy that several Islamic knowledge subjects, such as the Quran, *Hadith*, *Tafsīr-l-Quran*, *Sīratul An-Nabawiyah*, *Fiqh*, *Tasawwuf*, *Usūl al-Fiqh* and many others have their contents designed by various Islamic scholars and are made accessible on their social media platforms in a different formats (videos and audios) to a large number of their followers (Atiqah et.al, 2020). Muslims in South-west Nigeria are visiting Social media platforms of their favorite scholars to search for information on Islamic related issues such as Islamic guidelines on how to perform *Salat* (Prayer), conduct *Hajj* (Pilgrimage) and *Umrah* (Lesser Pilgrimage), history and stories of the prophets, fasting in the month of Ramadan, and equally to seek for advice on how to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles and practices of Islam (Atiqah et.al, 2020). As a result of this, *Da'wah* activities, particularly on Social media has become new interactive and communicative media, which has evolved into the most frequently utilized medium for seeking Islamic knowledge and information (Adam, Umar and Ali, 2014).

Nowadays, majority of users depend on social media as their primary source of information in order to be up to date with the latest developments in Islamic world. Muslims are updated on daily basis about religion practices through *Da'wah* activities posted and uploaded by Muslim scholars (Adam, Umar and Ali, 2014). Equally, some accounts and pages on Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram,

Youtube etc, are created by students, friends and associates of legend and prominent Islamic scholars in Yorubaland for the purpose of dissemination of their teachings and contributions to development of Islam and preservation of their knowledge for the incoming generations (Ahmad, 2023).

The utilization of Social media by Muslim scholars for Islamic information dissemination has brought some changes to the way the Islamic messages, culture and principles are promoted amongst Muslims and non-Muslims alike (Adam, Anuar and Ali, 2014). It is also worthy of note that, during *Hajj* and *Umrah* exercises, some pilgrims usually post or tweet and add photos and videos reflecting their sense of virtual spirituality to their followers. These methods of information dissemination contribute immensely to the spiritual enhancement and piety of the Yoruba Muslims (Adam, Anuar and Ali, 2014).

3. Combating Islamphobia

Social media has given Muslim scholars and preachers the avenue to correct misinformation and misconceptions about Islam and Muslims which has also assisted their followers to counter the misconception posted or uploaded by scrupulous and unqualified preachers. Through it, beautiful teachings of Islam were spread all over the world which eventually aids the acceptance and adoption of Islamic culture as way of life to many.

It is worthy of note that despite the fact that social media platforms are saturated with pseudo scholars and bloggers, the impacts of *da'wah* activities of Yoruba Scholars are felt by Yoruba Muslims because genuine and unscrupulous scholars were not deterred with volume of distraction they encountered on some of the platform.

CONCLUSION

So far, an attempt has been made to discuss the utilization of Social media platforms by selected Yoruba Muslim Scholars for *Da'wah* activities. The paper discussed the conceptual analyses of *Da'wah* and Social media. The paper further explores dissemination of Islamic Messages on Social Media platforms and the utilization of Social media by Muslim Scholars in a bid to benefit Muslims in South-west Nigeria. The paper highlights some *Da'wah* activities of selected Yoruba Muslim Scholars such as uploading of lectures, Friday sermons, and religious dialogue among many others. The impacts of their *Da'wah* activities on social media platforms include scholars and audience (followers) interpersonal relation, increase in learning of religious knowledge, combating Islamphobia, amplifying charitable activities, reverting to Islam etc. The paper reveals that the social media platform has provided an innovative method for religious scholars to spread educative and valuable messages among their audience.

In line with above discussion, this paper is strongly recommending that the qualified Yoruba Muslim scholars should intensify efforts on the utilization of social media platforms for presentation of Islamic messages by disseminating knowledge that will foster unity, counter misinformation, influence good morals and values, promote interfaith dialogue, and prevent cyber-bulling among their followers. It is

also recommended that Twitter should be adequately utilized by the selected Yoruba Muslim scholars for wider coverage of their activities and impacts of their lectures on corporate people as well as assisting them to fetch followers' opinion about methods of their *Da'wah* activities.

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