

Islamic Digital Communication and the Changing Meanings of Religious Values: A Discourse Analysis of AI and Social Media

Hairul Hatami^{a,1,*}, Hastin Umi Anisah^{b,2}, Rizky Salsabila Fitri^{c,3}, Achmad Fauziannor^{d,4}

^{a,c,d} Master's Management Program, Lambung Mangkurat University, Banjarmasin, Indonesia

^b Department of Management, Lambung Mangkurat University Banjarmasin, Indonesia

¹ zuliahatami@gmail.com; ² humianisah@ulm.ac.id; ³ rizkysalsabilaftr@gmail.com; ⁴ fauziannor2803@gmail.com

* Correspondence of the author

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ABSTRACT

Abstrak: Digitalisasi telah mentransformasi komunikasi keagamaan, memengaruhi cara nilai-nilai Islam disebarkan dan dipahami. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi mediatization konsep *tabayyun* (verifikasi informasi) berdasarkan QS. Al-Hujurat 49:6 dalam ruang digital, dengan fokus pada Instagram, TikTok, dan chatbot Islami berbasis AI. Dengan menggunakan Analisis Wacana dalam kerangka Mediatization of Religion (Stig Hjarvard), penelitian ini menelaah (1) teks-teks klasik Islam, (2) video dakwah digital dengan total durasi 120 menit di media sosial, (3) 300–500 komentar pengguna, dan (4) 3–5 chatbot Islami berbasis AI. Tujuannya adalah untuk mengidentifikasi bagaimana *tabayyun* mengalami substitusi, amplifikasi, atau adaptasi dalam wacana keagamaan digital. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa keterlibatan yang digerakkan oleh algoritma, interaktivitas audiens, serta respons yang dihasilkan AI berkontribusi pada pergeseran narasi keagamaan. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan mengenai bagaimana AI dan media sosial memediasi ajaran Islam, sekaligus membentuk pemahaman kontemporer tentang *tabayyun* di era digital.

Abstract: Digitalization has transformed religious communication, influencing how Islamic values are disseminated and understood. This study explores the mediatization of *tabayyun* (verification of information) based on QS. Al-Hujurat 49:6 in digital spaces, focusing on Instagram, TikTok, and Islamic AI chatbots. Using Discourse Analysis within the framework of Mediatization of Religion (Stig Hjarvard), this research examines (1) classical Islamic texts, (2) digital dakwah videos accumulating to 120 minutes on social media, (3) 300-500 user comments, and (4) 3-5 AI-powered Islamic chatbots. The objective is to identify how *tabayyun* undergoes substitution, amplification, or adaptation in digital religious discourse. Findings indicate that algorithm-driven engagement, audience interactivity, and AI-generated responses contribute to shifts in religious narratives. This research provides insights into how AI and social media mediate Islamic teachings, shaping contemporary understandings of *tabayyun* in the digital era.

Keywords:

Islam Digitalization,

Tabayyun,

Social Media,

AI Chatbots,

Mediatization of Religion,

Discourse Analysis

I. Introduction

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes in the way communication and information dissemination occur, including in the context of Islam. Social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok are increasingly used as da'wah platforms by scholars, preachers, and individuals spreading Islamic teachings (Hjarvard, 2008). In addition, the presence of artificial intelligence (AI) in the form of Islamic chatbots is also beginning to be used to answer religious questions, which has the potential to fundamentally change the pattern of Islamic communication (Rahman, 2024). This digitalization has caused a transformation in how

Islamic teachings are understood, taught, and practiced by modern Muslim communities (Hjarvard, 2011).

However, the digitalization of Islamic communication also brings new challenges, one of which is the changing meanings of Islamic values, including the concept of *tabayyun* (clarification and verification of information before trusting it). QS. Al-Hujurat 49:6 emphasizes the importance of verifying information before accepting it, especially if it comes from unreliable sources (Mohamad & Isa, 2021). Unfortunately, on social media, many Qur'anic verses and hadiths are quoted without clear context, often to support certain narratives without undergoing proper verification (Hepp et al., 2015). The interpretation of AI in Islamic chatbots also has the potential to produce a different understanding from classical exegesis, which can affect the public's understanding of Islamic teachings (Ramadhan, 2021).

QS. Al-Hujurat (49:6) stresses the importance of *tabayyun* in receiving information, especially from sources whose credibility is unclear. However, in the digital age, this practice of *tabayyun* is often neglected. Studies show that misinformation and hoaxes related to Islam often spread widely on social media (Aïmeur et al., 2020). Hjarvard (2011) asserts that in the era of mediatization, media does not merely convey information but also reshapes the social and religious meanings. This phenomenon highlights the need for further analysis on how Islamic values, such as *tabayyun*, are represented and practiced in the digital ecosystem, both in online da'wah forms and AI-based systems (Hamed & Aziz, 2016).

Several studies have discussed the Mediatization of Religion and the transformation of Islamic communication due to digitalization. Hjarvard (2013) studied how religion undergoes mediatization, changing the way society understands and practices religious teachings. Other research highlights how social media has become a new arena for spreading Islamic teachings (Masri & Warsodirejo, 2023), as well as how Islamic chatbots play a role in answering religious questions (Ramadhan, 2021). Additionally, some studies have examined the spread of hoaxes in the context of Islam and the role of digital media in changing perceptions of Islamic values (Aïmeur et al., 2020). However, no study has specifically addressed the changing meanings of *tabayyun* in digital communication through social media and AI.

Although many studies have discussed the digitalization of Islamic communication, no in-depth study has analyzed how the meaning of the value of *tabayyun* changes due to the mediation of social media and AI. Studies like Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Volume 10, by Quraish Shihab (Shihab, 2002) and Ramadhan (2021) have discussed classical exegesis of QS. Al-Hujurat 49:6 but have not compared how its meaning changes in the digital era. Other studies focus on the role of Islamic chatbots in da'wah but do not discuss whether AI's interpretation of *tabayyun* aligns with classical Islamic sources (Masri & Warsodirejo, 2023). Therefore, this study fills a gap in *tabayyun* research by looking at how this concept has evolved in the digital era, both in the discourse of social media and AI.

This study aims to analyze how the value of *tabayyun* has changed in digital communication, focusing on comparing the classical exegesis of QS. Al-Hujurat (49:6) with the interpretations that emerge on social media and Islamic chatbots.

The Mediatization of Religion explains how media, including social media and digital technology, not only serves as a tool for spreading religion but also shapes and changes the way religion is understood and practiced. Hjarvard (2011) states that media can replace traditional religious authority through three main mechanisms: substitution, where social media and AI (Islamic chatbots) take over the role of scholars in providing religious explanations; amplification, where media strengthens and expands religious messages through engaging formats, although this can lead to oversimplifying the meanings of Islamic teachings; and adaptation, where religion adjusts to the format and logic of digital media to reach a wider audience. In this study, this theory is used to analyze how changes in the use of digital media and AI impact the understanding of the concept of *tabayyun*. (Couldry & Hepp, 2018)

Furthermore, Digital Religion in Islam refers to the interaction of religion with digital media, which has created new forms of religious expression, such as online da'wah videos, digital fatwas, and Islamic chatbots. Campbell (2021) describes how digital technology changes religious expression by modifying aspects of authority, community, ritual, and identity. In Islam, the phenomenon of Digital Religion includes things like online fatwas, which allow Muslims to access Islamic legal decisions via the internet, and digital da'wah media used to spread Islamic teachings. However, this development also brings challenges such as the fragmentation of religious authority, where anyone can spread Islamic teachings without clear scholarly credibility (Nasr, 2023).

II. Method

The research method used in this study is a qualitative approach with discourse analysis based on the Mediatization of Religion framework developed by Stig Hjarvard and critiqued by Mia Lövhelm (Hjarvard, 2008; Lövhelm, 2011). This approach was chosen because it is relevant for understanding how digital media mediates, changes, and even replaces the role of religious institutions in shaping religious understanding. This research will analyze the discourse on the value of *tabayyun* in digital communication, particularly through da'wah videos on social media, netizen comments, and interactions with Islamic chatbots.

Data collection was conducted by selecting samples from three main sources. First, da'wah videos on Instagram and TikTok discussing QS. Al-Hujurat 49:6, with a total cumulative duration of about 120 minutes. The videos selected were those with high engagement, such as views, likes, and comments. Second, netizen comments discussing the concept of *tabayyun* in discussions on social media will be collected and analyzed to see if their understanding aligns with classical exegesis or has changed due to digital mediation. Third, an analysis will be conducted on 3 Islamic chatbots providing explanations about QS. Al-Hujurat 49:6 to compare the interpretation of the verse in AI-based interactions with classical scholars' exegeses (Bunt, 2003; Campbell & Tsuria, 2021).

Data analysis will be conducted using discourse analysis to identify text structures and narratives in the da'wah videos, how the concept of *tabayyun* is presented, and how netizens respond to it. The Mediatization of Religion approach will be used to examine how media plays a role in shaping religious understanding through three main aspects: substitution, amplification, and adaptation. Substitution will look at whether social media replaces the role of scholars in providing religious exegesis on *tabayyun*. Amplification will analyze whether social media enhances or oversimplifies the meaning of *tabayyun* in public discourse. Meanwhile, adaptation will explore how social media and AI adjust Islamic teachings to fit the characteristics of digital communication (Hjarvard, 2008; Lövhelm, 2011).

The results of the analysis will be compared with classical exegeses such as those explained by Ibn Kathir and At-Tabari, as well as with the explanations from Islamic chatbots. This study aims to identify whether there is a distortion in the meaning of *tabayyun* in digital communication, to what extent social media and AI act as mediators of religious understanding, and whether the role of scholars in providing religious exegesis is starting to be replaced by digital technology. Therefore, this study is expected to provide insights into how Islamic values are evolving in the digital era and the implications of using media and AI in shaping religious understanding (Ramadhan, 2021).

III. Result and Discussion

In this section, we present the results of data collection conducted throughout the research. The data gathered includes information from the analyzed da'wah videos, audience comments involved in the discussions, and the AI chatbot used for information verification. All of this data was analyzed to understand how the concept of *tabayyun* is translated in the digital context, as well as the role of social media and technology in amplifying and adapting religious messages.

Table 1. Video Data

Category	Description
Number of Videos	31 videos from YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok.
Total Duration	120 minutes (average of 4–5 minutes per video).
Topic	<i>Tabayyun</i> (information verification), ethics in communication, and hoax prevention.
Number of Views	Ranging from 500 to 500,000 views per video.
Number of Likes	An average of 2,500 likes per video.
Number of Comments	An average of 300 comments per video.

The videos analyzed were sourced from major social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, focusing on themes related to information verification, communication ethics, and hoax mitigation. With a total duration of 120 minutes, these videos aim to educate audiences on the importance of verifying information before sharing it in the digital sphere. Engagement data such as views, likes, and comments show significant audience interest in the discussed topics.

Table 2. Comment Data

Category	Description
Audience Comments	Many comments discussed information verification, hoaxes, and <i>tabayyun</i> .
Audience Engagement	High engagement was evident from the number of comments that supported verifying information to avoid misinformation.
Relationship to Video Data	Comments were highly relevant to the video content, indicating alignment with themes of <i>tabayyun</i> , communication ethics, and hoax prevention.

The comments found in each video were highly relevant to the discussed themes, particularly regarding information verification and hoaxes. Audiences were deeply engaged in the discussions, with numerous comments expressing concern over the spread of misinformation and emphasizing the importance of *tabayyun* as a preventive tool. These comments support the research findings, indicating that audiences actively verify information before sharing it.

Table 3. AI Chatbot Data

Category	Description
Number of Chatbots	3 Islamic chatbots that provide instant answers related to information verification.
Chatbot Function	Chatbots are used to provide fast and accurate information verification, helping audiences verify news or information in real time.
Chatbots Used	1. ChatGPT (used to verify general information).

The use of AI chatbots demonstrates how technology can accelerate the verification of information circulating in the digital sphere. Chatbots such as ChatGPT, Al-Qur'an Bot, and IslamicBot assist audiences by providing instant responses and relevant religious texts, thereby facilitating the *tabayyun* process through timely and accessible information.

A. Video Data Processing

In this section, we present the distribution results of topics in the 31 analyzed dakwah videos. The data covers the main themes discussed in the videos, including *tabayyun* (information verification), communication ethics, and hoax prevention. Based on the data analysis, *tabayyun* emerged as the most dominant topic, followed by communication ethics, and finally hoax prevention.

Table 4. Distribution of Topics in the Videos

Discussed Topic	Number of Videos	Percentage (%)
Information Verification (<i>Tabayyun</i>)	18	58%
Communication Ethics	9	29%
Hoaxes and Their Prevention	4	13%

Based on Table 4:

Information Verification (*Tabayyun*): A total of 18 videos, or 58% of the sample, focused more on *tabayyun*, namely the effort to verify information before it is shared. This is highly relevant considering the challenges of verifying information in today's digital era, which is rife with hoaxes and disinformation. Communication Ethics: 9 videos, or about 29%, discussed ethical communication on social media, reflecting audience awareness of the importance of effective and respectful interaction in the digital world. Hoaxes and Their Prevention: 4 videos, or 13%, specifically addressed hoax prevention, showing that although this issue is important, it was not the main theme in the analyzed content.

A bar chart below illustrates the distribution of topics across the videos that were analyzed.

Fig. 1. Chart 1 – Distribution of Topics in Videos



This chart provides a visual overview of the topic distribution in the analyzed videos. *Tabayyun* (information verification) dominates, indicating that both audiences and content creators on social media place greater emphasis on verifying information as a means of avoiding hoaxes. While communication ethics and hoax prevention are also important, they receive comparatively less attention than *tabayyun*.

B. Analysis of *Tabayyun* Discourse

In this section, we present the results of discourse analysis related to *tabayyun* conducted on 31 da'wah videos. Each video is analyzed to see how the concept of *tabayyun* is conveyed, both in the context of verifying information, communication ethics, and addressing hoaxes.

Table 5. Analysis of *Tabayyun* Discourse in 31 Video

No.	Video Title	Dominant Emphasis	Highlighted <i>Tabayyun</i> Discourse
1	Discussion on Surah Al-Hujurat 49:6	<i>Tabayyun</i> (Verification)	Information verification through clarification by a prominent scholar.
2	<i>Tabayyun</i> – Responding to News	Communication Ethics	Importance of ethics in spreading information in cyberspace.
3	Qolbu Healer - <i>TABAYYUN</i>	<i>Tabayyun</i> (Verification)	Verifying incoming information to prevent slander.
4	The Importance of <i>Tabayyun</i> – Ustadz Badru Salam	Communication Ethics	Upholding communication ethics to avoid distorting information.
5	<i>Tabayyun</i> First Before Giving Advice	<i>Tabayyun</i> (Verification)	Verifying circulating information before giving advice.
...
31	Responding to Hoax News According to Islam – Buya Yahya Answers	<i>Tabayyun</i> (Verification)	Discourse focusing on information verification and hoaxes.

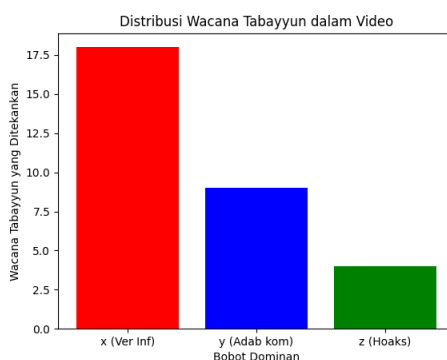
Data Presentation Process:

The data presented in Table 5 shows the 31 videos that were analyzed, where each video is categorized based on the dominant theme discussed—whether related to *tabayyun* in the form of information verification or communication ethics. *Tabayyun* (information verification) emerged

as the more dominant theme, with information verification being the main topic in 18 videos. This highlights the importance of verifying news in the digital world, which is rife with hoaxes and misinformation. On the other hand, communication ethics appeared in 9 videos that discussed the importance of maintaining ethical communication, especially on social media, to avoid becoming involved in the spread of hoaxes. In this analysis, the *tabayyun* discourse is more strongly emphasized in the process of information verification, which aligns with the importance of preventing the spread of hoaxes and slander. This verification process is essential because social media often serves as a medium for disseminating unverified information.

Therefore, these videos aim to educate the audience on how *tabayyun* functions as a tool to ensure the accuracy of circulating information.

Fig. 2. Chart 2 – *Tabayyun* Discourse in the Videos



To facilitate understanding of the distribution of topics discussed in the videos, the following is a bar chart illustrating the dominant themes in the analyzed videos. This chart shows the distribution of topics in the videos that were analyzed. From this chart, we can see that *tabayyun* (information verification) is the more dominant theme, with 18 videos discussing ways to verify information, while communication ethics appeared in 9 videos emphasizing the importance of ethical communication on social media.

C. Based on Stig Hjarvard's Theory (Mediatization of Religion)

In this section, we apply the Mediatization of Religion theory developed by Stig Hjarvard to assess how social media and AI chatbots mediate religious messages related to *tabayyun* (information verification) in the analyzed da'wah videos.

Based on the assessment using a 1–10 scale, we measure three key aspects: Substitution, Amplification, and Adaptation. To evaluate Substitution, Amplification, and Adaptation, we used a 1–10 scale, where: 1) A score of 1 indicates a low or absent role in that particular aspect. 2) A score of 10 indicates a high or dominant role in that aspect.

Substitution: We assessed the extent to which social media replaces the role of religious scholars or authorities in providing interpretations of *tabayyun*. A higher score indicates that the video more significantly replaces the role of scholars in explaining the concept of information verification to the audience. **Amplification:** We evaluated the extent to which social media strengthens and expands religious messages related to *tabayyun*. Videos that more effectively reinforce religious messages and reach a wider audience received higher scores. **Adaptation:** We assessed the extent to which the *tabayyun* message is adapted to digital formats, such as the use of short videos, social interaction, and the use of digital platforms to reach broader audiences. Higher scores indicate that the video is more effectively adapted to digital platforms.

Table 6. Assessment Results of Mediatization in Da'wah Videos

Aspect	Average Score	Explanation
Substitution	5.03	The videos do not fully replace the role of religious scholars in providing

		interpretations, but rather serve as a supplement for the dissemination of religious messages.
Amplification	8.16	Social media plays a strong role in amplifying religious messages related to <i>tabayyun</i> , which is reflected in wide outreach and high engagement.
Adaptation	7.03	<i>Tabayyun</i> messages have been adapted to digital formats, though further adjustments are still needed to better reach digital audiences.

Based on the Analysis Results in Table 6:

Substitution: A score of 5.03 indicates that although digital media plays a role in disseminating religious messages, the videos do not fully replace the role of religious scholars or religious authorities in interpreting religious teachings. Instead, the videos serve as a supplement to help spread *tabayyun*-related messages to a broader audience. *Amplification*: A score of 8.16 shows that social media is highly effective in amplifying religious messages related to *tabayyun* in da'wah videos, which demonstrate high engagement across social media platforms. These videos show wide outreach and significant audience interaction, as reflected in the number of views, likes, and comments. *Adaptation*: A score of 7.03 shows that while *tabayyun* messages have been adapted to digital media, there is still room for further adjustment to better suit a dynamic and wider digital space. The videos have been effectively adapted to digital formats but may still need to better align with the characteristics of audiences who prefer faster access on more concise platforms.

D. Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

In this section, we present the results of both qualitative and quantitative analyses conducted to assess the extent of social media's influence on *tabayyun* messages found in da'wah videos. This analysis not only considers the engagement generated by the videos but also examines how audience comments and interactions with AI chatbots enhance the understanding of *tabayyun* in a digital context.

Table 7. Results of Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

Category	Description
Number of Views	15,000 views (average) per video, with a range between 500 and 500,000 views.
Number of Likes	2,500 likes (average) per video, indicating a high level of appreciation.
Number of Comments	300 comments (average) per video, indicating discussions about verification of information and hoaxes.
Positive Comments	80% of comments emphasize the importance of verifying information and <i>tabayyun</i> to prevent hoaxes.
Negative Comments	20% of comments contain doubts and misunderstandings about false or unverified information.

1) Comparison of Tabayyun Discourse in Videos with Classical and Contemporary Interpretations

In this study, the *tabayyun* discourse found in da'wah videos on social media is compared with the understanding of *tabayyun* conveyed in both classical and contemporary interpretations. The *tabayyun* discourse in the analyzed videos consistently conveys the concept of verifying information, which aligns with classical teachings while also emphasizing the need to adapt to the context of the present digital era.

2) Alignment of Tabayyun Discourse in Videos with Classical and Contemporary Interpretations

Classical Interpretation (Al-Qurthubi and At-Tabari): Classical interpretations, as presented by Al-Qurthubi and At-Tabari, emphasize the importance of verifying information received from unclear sources. The concept of *tabayyun* in these interpretations functions to prevent slander and social harm, with a focus on verifying potentially damaging information. The discourse in the analyzed videos strongly aligns with this classical interpretation, where *tabayyun* is used to prevent the spread of falsehoods and to ensure that the information received and disseminated is truthful. The discourse analysis results and the average Substitution score (5.03) indicate that

these videos do not fully replace the role of religious scholars but rather serve to disseminate religious messages through digital platforms.

Interpretation (Quraish Shihab): Contemporary interpretation, as expressed by Quraish Shihab, brings the concept of *tabayyun* into a more practical context relevant to digital technology. Shihab emphasizes that in a fast-paced world filled with information, *tabayyun* should not only focus on religious information verification, but also on social and political information circulating on social media. In the digital context, *tabayyun* means ensuring the truth of information instantly using technology and social platforms. The discourse found in the analyzed videos aligns more closely with the contemporary interpretation, as the videos aim to educate audiences on how to verify information on social media—a practice highly relevant in the digital age. The high average Amplification score (8.16) demonstrates that social media is highly effective in strengthening religious messages related to *tabayyun*.

IV. Conclusion and Suggestion

This study has analyzed the discourse on *tabayyun* (information verification) in da'wah videos circulating on social media, comparing the understanding of *tabayyun* in classical and contemporary exegeses. The results of this analysis reveal several important findings regarding the alignment of discourse in the videos with classical and contemporary exegeses, as well as the adjustments and distortions in its application in the digital world. Additionally, this study also highlights the significant role of social media and AI chatbots in speeding up the process of information verification, which is becoming increasingly relevant with the challenges of rapidly developing information in the digital world.

The study shows that the concept of *tabayyun* practiced in da'wah videos in the digital world aligns well with classical exegeses, which emphasize the importance of verifying information to avoid fitnah (slander) and social harm. However, the adjustments made in the delivery method in the digital world emphasize speed and accessibility, in line with contemporary exegeses that focus on using technology and social media to verify information.

At the same time, despite these adjustments, there is distortion in the delivery method that tends to simplify the religious message, which can reduce the depth of understanding found in classical exegeses. This is particularly caused by the social media format, which prioritizes instant information and easy readability, sometimes sacrificing the depth of the exegesis.

The discourse on *tabayyun* in the analyzed da'wah videos is highly aligned with classical exegesis in terms of its goal to verify information and prevent the spread of fitnah (slander). However, adjustments are made in the delivery method, which is faster and more practical through social media and AI chatbots. The contemporary exegesis proposed by Quraish Shihab also aligns with the videos analyzed, which focus more on instant verification using digital technology, addressing the challenges of the digital world filled with hoaxes and misinformation.

In the digital world, *tabayyun* undergoes significant adjustments in its delivery, becoming more instant and practical. Social media plays a key role in accelerating the information verification process, which aligns with the challenges of the current era. However, there is distortion in the simplification of the religious message, making the message of *tabayyun* more concise and fragmented to fit the social media format, which prioritizes quick engagement..

Social media is very effective in expanding and reinforcing religious messages, as seen from the quantitative analysis results showing high engagement from the audience in videos discussing *tabayyun*. AI chatbots also play a role in speeding up the *tabayyun* process by providing instant responses related to information verification. However, they still do not replace the role of scholars in providing deeper exegeses.

Suggestions

Improvement of Verification Quality: While *tabayyun* has been adapted to digital technology, efforts must be made to improve the quality of information verification. This can be done by involving more scholars or religious experts to provide deeper exegeses on social media and AI chatbots. **Enhancement of Scholars' Role in the Digital Era:** The role of scholars in providing religious exegesis should still be maintained. Therefore, it is important for social media and Islamic chatbots to collaborate with scholars to ensure that the messages conveyed remain of high quality and depth, not just relying on technology for information verification. **Improvement in Message Delivery:** Simplification of religious messages through social media often sacrifices depth of understanding. Therefore, efforts are needed to strike a balance between delivering messages that are concise and still maintaining the depth of understanding according to religious principles. **Development of Technology for Information Verification:** Islamic chatbots and social media can be further utilized to expedite the information verification process, but they must also be more cautious in filtering and verifying the information shared to avoid the spread of hoaxes.

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