



Challenges Faced by Muslim Leaders in the Digital Age

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Article Info

Article history:

Accepting 27-02-2025

Revised 01-04-2025

Accepted 17-04-2025

Keywords:

Challenges, Muslim Leaders, Globalization Era, Digital Era, Social Media.

ABSTRACT

The era of globalization has brought significant changes in various aspects of human life, be it politics, economy, social, culture, and others. Likewise, changes in institutions both in the profit and non-profit sectors. This condition requires leaders to have adaptive leadership behavior and be able to anticipate these changes. The era of globalization presents new dynamics in the lives of religious people, including Muslim leaders. This study analyzes the complex challenges faced by Muslim leaders in managing diversity, religious moderation and at the same time maintaining an authentic Islamic identity, in addition, Muslim leaders also face social challenges, global politics and how the role of Muslim leaders in the digital era on social media



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INTRODUCTION

In principle, Islam is a religion revealed by Allah to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, to foster humanity to adhere to the true teachings and to achieve happiness in human life, both in the present world and the hereafter. Islam is a religion that perfects the existence of previous religions. The development of Islam, which was spread by the Prophet Muhammad SAW in Mecca, Medina and then developed throughout the world, is none other than the process of da'wah carried out by Islamic figures. This development of Islamic da'wah is what causes Islam to continue to develop and spread to human life. (Kadir, Nuranisa, Gazali, et al., 2021)

Along with the developments in this era of globalization, the method of preaching has also experienced significant developments. Preaching is no longer done simply, but has begun to utilize advances in information technology so that the message of preaching is more widespread and can be carried out effectively. The circles reached can be wider and so can the impacts it causes. Preaching is not only carried out by giving sermons in mosques or prayer rooms, offices, schools and other formal institutions. (Kadir, Nuranisa, Asnidar, et al., 2021) However, along with the increasing progress of information technology, the spread of Islamic preaching can be done through technological media, such as television, radio, print media and the internet (Facebook). To achieve effective preaching, media is needed. The spread of media today such as print and online media is one manifestation of the era of reform and openness of information. The function of the media itself is to provide information, education, entertainment, and social control. Historically, however, the development of globalization seems unstoppable, entering every corner of the country and becoming an inevitability. This era requires every country and its individuals to be able to compete with each other both between countries and between individuals. (Rambe et al., 2024)

This research has two problem formulations that will be the main focus. This problem formulation will help in limiting the scope of the research and provide a clear direction for the

analysis to be carried out. The proposed problem formulation what challenges do Muslim leaders face in the era of globalization and what is the role of Muslim leaders in the digital and social media era.

This study aims to provide a deep understanding of the challenges faced by Muslim leaders in the era of globalization and the role of Muslim leaders in the digital era and social media. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the various challenges faced by Muslim leaders in the context of globalization. These challenges can include social, cultural, political, economic, and technological aspects and the second objective To provide an understanding of the role of Muslim leaders which refers to the duties, responsibilities, and functions carried out by a leader in an organization, team, or institution. Leadership involves directing, influencing, and motivating team or organization members to achieve common goals

RESEARCH METHODS

The research approach that can be used is a qualitative approach which will allow researchers to gain a deep understanding of individual experiences and perceptions related to various challenges faced by Muslim leaders in the context of globalization. These challenges can include social, cultural, political, economic, and technological aspects as well as the steps that need to be taken to face the challenges of globalization.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To understand the previous study, the five most relevant studies to support the thesis on " The challenges faced by Muslim leaders in the era of globalization (social and political) and the role of Muslim leaders in the digital era and social media" have similarities and differences. The similarities and differences of each journal author can be seen in the table below:

Title	Author & Year	Equality	Difference
Between Modernity and Tradition: The Dilemma of Muslim Leadership in Facing Globalization"	(2015) by Ahmad Syafii Maarif	The Dilemma of Muslim Leadership in Facing Globalization , .	Between Modernity and Tradition
"Digital Mujahid: The Role of Muslim Leaders in Shaping the Islamic Narrative on Social Media"	2018) by Aisyah Bahrin -	The Role of Muslim Leaders in Shaping the Islamic Narrative on Social Media	Digital Mujahid:
Muslim Leaders at the Crossroads: Navigating Global and Local Identities in the Digital Age"	(2020) by Muhammad Quraish Shihab	Discussing Navigation between Global and Local Identities in the Digital Age	Muslim leaders at the crossroads .
"Online Radicalism and Its Challenges for Moderate Muslim Leaders" (2017)	(2017) by Noorhaidi Hasan	The Challenge for Moderate Muslim Leaders	Online Radicalism
Discourse	(2019) by Siti	Muslim Leaders in	Discourse Analysis:

Title	Author & Year	Equality	Difference
Analysis: Representation of Muslim Leaders in Indonesian Mass Media"	Musdah Mulia	Indonesian Mass Media .	Representation .

Muslim leaders in the era of globalization face complex and dynamic challenges. These challenges arise from various aspects, ranging from within the Muslim community to interactions with the outside world. The main challenges they face:

- **Pluralism and Diversity.** Managing diversity where Muslims in various parts of the world have various interpretations of Islamic teachings, culture, and traditions. Muslim leaders are required to be able to manage this diversity in order to create harmony and unity. Interfaith dialogue always builds constructive dialogue with adherents of other religions to create tolerance and respect for differences.
- **Modernization and Tradition.** Balancing values by finding a balance between noble religious values and the rapid development of the times. Adapting technology by utilizing technology for preaching and religious education without abandoning Islamic values.
- **Extremism and Radicalism.** Preventing radicalization: Preventing extremist ideologies that deviate from the teachings of Islam which is rahmatan lil alamin. Eradicating terrorism: Striving to ensure that Islam is not identified with violence and terrorism.
- **Effective Leadership.** Transparency and accountability: Implementing transparent and accountable leadership to the people. Communication skills. Able to communicate effectively with various groups, both Muslims and non-Muslims.
- **Social Justice.** Overcoming inequality: Defending the rights of marginalized groups and striving to realize social justice. Empowering the people, building an independent and competitive society.
- **Interaction with the Outside World.** Representation of Islam, Building a positive image of Islam in the eyes of the world. International diplomacy: Building good relations with other countries for the benefit of Muslims.

According to (Kurnia & Soeratin, 2023) , in the era of digitalization 5.0 which is marked by rapid advances in information and communication technology, as well as the massive development of social media, various sectors of life face new challenges in dealing with corruption. Corruption is a serious threat that damages public trust, harms development, and damages social order. Education, especially Islamic education, is no exception to the impacts and challenges of corruption in the era of digitalization 5.0 and social media. Corruption in the context of education can take the form of bribery, nepotism, misuse of funds, or manipulation of information. Therefore, leadership in an Islamic educational institution has an important role in accelerating the handling of corruption and creating a clean, transparent, and accountable environment. (Makalao & Z Soeratin, 2023) . The leadership of Islamic educational institutions must be able to understand the dynamics of change in the era of digitalization 5.0 and utilize it to strengthen integrity and ethics in education management. In this context, social media has a significant role as a tool that can accelerate the dissemination of information, build public awareness, and involve more stakeholders in efforts to prevent and combat corruption.

The existing influence of globalization on aspects of life, although its initial goal was directed at the economic sector, eventually also had an impact on the fields of religion and culture as well, and this had a multidimensional impact. This will certainly have a very significant influence on the orientation of da'wah. To support this, sharia studies need to be aligned with non-sharia studies that refer to developments, namely science and technology, because the development of technology, especially the development of communication technology, does not only affect one area of community life but almost affects all areas of life. Therefore, in addition to utilizing the development

of technology itself, da'wah is also expected to be a balance against the consequences of the development of technology itself (Handaru, 2021)

Next, a number of significant challenges arise for higher education institutions. First, technology continues to advance rapidly, affecting the way we work, learn, and communicate. Higher education institutions must be able to integrate technological innovations into the learning and administration processes effectively. Responsive leadership to technological developments is key to maintaining the relevance and competitiveness of higher education institutions in this changing world. In addition, globalization has brought about changes in social, economic, and political dynamics, creating an increasingly diverse and complex educational environment. Higher education institutions are faced with the task of managing student and staff diversity, developing globally relevant curricula, and establishing international partnerships to improve the quality of education. Adaptive and globally-minded leadership are essential qualities for successful higher education leaders. Another challenge comes from an economic perspective, with universities often under pressure to find diverse sources of funding. Research and development, adequate physical facilities, and the welfare of faculty and staff all require adequate resources. Higher education leaders must be skilled in managing budgets and finding alternative sources of funding to ensure the sustainability of the institution. resource management. In addition, the key role of leadership in designing and implementing innovative and relevant higher education strategies also needs further research. College leaders are not only expected to run the administration, but also to be proactive agents of change (Mesiono et al., 2024) .

The challenges faced by Muslim leaders in dealing with radicalism among the younger generation in extreme digital content among the younger generation, especially through extreme digital content, are increasingly complex with the rapid development of technology and the use of social media. The main challenges they face are the rapid and widespread spread of radical ideology, the use of religion as a tool to justify violence, radicalization through visual content and emotional narratives, the influence of "echo chambers" and digital platform algorithms, limited access to moderate Islamic narratives, social influence and peer pressure, lack of international cooperation and regulation of digital platforms, providing relevant and proactive alternatives .

Muslim leaders have a vital role to play in building collaboration between countries to address global issues such as social injustice. Some strategic steps that can be taken to create effective collaboration:

1. Strengthening Cooperation in International Organizations

- Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC): Muslim leaders can use forums such as the OIC to strengthen cooperation among Muslim countries in addressing social injustice. The OIC can be used as a platform to develop common policies on wealth distribution, poverty alleviation, and improving access to education and health in its member states.
- Cooperation with the UN and Other Global Institutions: In addition to the OIC, Muslim leaders can also cooperate with global organizations such as the UN, the World Bank, and the IMF in designing policies to address social injustice, especially in sustainable development projects and poverty alleviation.

2. Encourage Diplomacy Based on Islamic Values of Justice

- Advocating the Principles of Social Justice in Diplomacy: Muslim leaders should highlight the values of social justice that are at the heart of Islamic teachings in international forums. They can emphasize how Islam teaches the equitable distribution of wealth, the obligation to help the poor, and comprehensive social responsibility.
- Interfaith and Cultural Dialogue: Through interfaith dialogue initiatives, Muslim leaders can work together with leaders of other faiths to advocate for principles of social justice, address discrimination, and promote social cohesion in pluralistic societies.

3. Overcoming the Economic Disparity Between Countries

- Building Inclusive Economic Partnerships: Muslim leaders can facilitate economic cooperation between Muslim and non-Muslim countries to reduce global economic disparities. Initiatives such as fair trade, investment in infrastructure and technology in developing countries, and cooperation in agriculture and education can be a focus of collaboration.

- Establishment of an Islamic Development Fund: A solidarity and development fund focused on eradicating poverty and reducing social disparities in the Muslim world could be initiated by wealthy Muslim countries to support less developed countries.
4. Collaboration in Education and Social Empowerment
 - Increasing Access to Education: Muslim leaders can work together across countries to expand access to education, especially for underprivileged and marginalized groups. This can be done through student exchanges, international scholarships, or vocational training programs that help with economic empowerment.
 - Youth Empowerment Program: Collaboration between countries in youth empowerment programs, both through creative economy initiatives and entrepreneurship training, will help the younger generation to become economically independent and escape the cycle of poverty.
 5. Collaboration on Environmental and Natural Resource Issues
 - Sustainable Development and Resource Management: Muslim leaders should work together on environmental issues and the equitable distribution of natural resources. Resource-rich Muslim countries, such as oil and gas, can collaborate to ensure that this wealth is used wisely and does not exacerbate social inequality in poor, resource-starved countries.
 - Sustainable Development Initiatives: Muslim leaders can work together on sustainable projects, such as renewable energy, water conservation, and sustainable agriculture, to help address social injustices caused by the impacts of climate change, especially for the poor who are most vulnerable to its impacts.
 6. Building Regional Alliances
 - Regional Alliances in the Muslim World: Muslim leaders can form regional alliances that focus on social injustice in a particular region. For example, countries in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, or Africa can strengthen regional cooperation in addressing poverty, social conflict, and equitable development in their regions.
 - Mechanism for Sharing Successful Experiences: Muslim countries can share successful experiences in addressing social injustice. For example, a poverty alleviation program or health system in one country can be a model for other countries facing similar problems.
 7. Strengthening the International Zakat and Waqf System
 - Global Zakat: Muslim leaders can promote global management of zakat and waqf to address social injustice. Zakat funds from wealthier Muslim countries can be managed and distributed internationally to poor countries for poverty alleviation, health improvement, and education.
 - Productive Waqf: Developing a productive waqf system across Muslim countries can be an effective way to support sustainable social and economic development programs, such as building schools, hospitals, and other infrastructure projects.
 8. Advocating for Global Policy Change
 - Reforming the Global Economic System: Muslim leaders can work together to push for reforms in the global economic system that are more equitable. This includes advocating in international institutions for international economic policies, such as trade, debt, and investment, to be more pro-poor.
 - Upholding Human Rights and Global Justice: Muslim leaders can join hands to oppose international injustices that are often caused by the policies of big powers. Issues such as labor exploitation, economic colonialism, and modern colonization can be advocated together in international forums to achieve greater justice.
 9. Leveraging Technology and Digitalization for Global Collaboration
 - Digital Platforms for Collaboration: Muslim leaders can use digital technologies to facilitate collaboration between countries. Digital platforms can be used to share data, information, and to monitor and evaluate the impact of joint policies aimed at reducing social injustice.
 - Global Education and Awareness through Social Media: Through the use of social media and digital platforms, Muslim leaders can spread awareness about social injustices around the world and encourage global collective action to address them.

The Role of Muslim Leaders in the Digital and Social Media Era

1. Utilizing Social Media for Da'wah. Muslim leaders need to use social media as a means to effectively spread Islamic values, reach a wider audience, and interact with the global Muslim community.
2. Spreading Information and Educating the Public. Muslim leaders can use digital platforms to educate the public about the importance of practicing Islamic teachings correctly, especially in the modern context filled with false information and misinformation.
3. Addressing the Challenges of Disinformation and Islamophobia. Social media can be a place for the spread of misinformation about Islam. Muslim leaders must play an active role in addressing negative narratives and Islamophobia by offering truthful clarifications based on authoritative Islamic sources.
4. Promoting Digital Morals. In the digital age, online behavioral ethics are a challenge in themselves. Muslim leaders must emphasize the importance of morals in the use of social media, such as guarding speech, not engaging in slander, and protecting the honor of others.
5. Inspiring Youth Leadership. Muslim leaders can use social media to inspire the younger generation, especially in terms of leadership and participation in society. This includes motivating young people to engage in social, political, and economic issues in an Islamic manner.
6. Use of Technology to Improve the Welfare of the Community. Muslim leaders can utilize digital technology to improve the welfare of the community, for example by using crowdfunding platforms for social, health, and education projects that benefit the Muslim community.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most complex and sensitive issues in global politics. Muslim leaders can play an important role in seeking a peaceful solution through various forms of collaboration. Here are some collaborative efforts that Muslim leaders can make regarding this conflict:

1. Diplomacy and Advocacy in International Forums

- Increasing Pressure at the UN and International Forums: Muslim leaders can work together to increase diplomatic pressure at the United Nations (UN) to push for a just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This includes advocating for an end to the occupation, protecting the rights of Palestinians, and working towards an internationally recognized two-state solution.
- Leveraging the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC): The OIC, which is comprised of many Muslim countries, can be a key platform for coordinating a common position on the conflict. Muslim leaders can use the OIC to speak out for Palestinian rights and pressure the international community to act more decisively against human rights violations in the occupied territories.

2. Building Alliances with Non-Muslim Countries

- Cooperation with Countries that Support Palestinian Justice: Muslim leaders can build alliances with non-Muslim countries that have a strong position on upholding human rights and supporting the Palestinian cause, such as countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. With collaboration across religions and cultures, global pressure to end the conflict and find a peaceful solution will be greater.
- Dialogue with Western Countries: Muslim leaders need to engage in dialogue with Western countries that have a major influence on the conflict, especially the United States and European countries. Through intelligent diplomacy, Muslim leaders can push for a more balanced foreign policy shift toward Israel and Palestine.

3. Mediating the Peace Process

- Role as Neutral Mediators: Muslim leaders from countries that have good relations with both Israel and Palestine can act as mediators in peace negotiations. Countries such as Turkey,

Egypt, and Qatar have played a significant role in mediating talks between the two sides. This collaboration can bring the warring parties together in dialogue to find a peaceful solution.

- Facilitating Interfaith Dialogue: The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not just political, but also religious. Muslim leaders can work with Jewish and Christian religious leaders to build interfaith dialogue that promotes peace and mutual understanding.

4. Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction

- Coordinating International Humanitarian Aid: Muslim leaders can work together to coordinate humanitarian aid for the Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza and the West Bank, who are often the direct victims of the conflict. Wealthy Muslim countries, such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar, can provide funds to rebuild infrastructure, hospitals, and schools destroyed by the conflict.
- Cooperation with International Humanitarian Agencies: Muslim leaders can strengthen cooperation with international humanitarian agencies, such as the Red Cross or the United Nations Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), to ensure equitable and efficient distribution of aid to the Palestinian people.

5. Advocacy for the Enforcement of Human Rights

- Combating Human Rights Violations: Muslim leaders can work together to advocate for the upholding of human rights in Palestine. This includes documenting human rights violations, preparing reports to be submitted to the UN, and pressuring international bodies to act on violations committed by the parties to the conflict, especially regarding civil rights, forced evictions, and the economic blockade.
- Pushing for an International Court: Collaboration among Muslim leaders could also include efforts to push for an international court, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), to investigate and prosecute violations occurring in the Palestinian territories.

6. Gathering Support from Civil Society

- Mobilizing Global Public Opinion: Muslim leaders can work with global civil society, NGOs, activists, and international media to raise awareness about the plight of the Palestinian people. By utilizing social media and digital platforms, they can shape public opinion in favor of justice for Palestine and against aggressive policies that violate international law.
- Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Campaign: The BDS campaign is a global movement that aims to put economic pressure on Israel over its occupation policies. Muslim leaders can collaborate with the movement to support campaigns to boycott products from the occupied territories, divest from companies that support the occupation, and push for international sanctions against Israel.

7. The Role of Influential Muslim Countries

- The Role of Egypt and Jordan: Egypt and Jordan, two Muslim countries that have peace treaties with Israel, can play an important role as facilitators in the peace process. Muslim leaders can support these countries' initiatives in seeking a diplomatic solution and maintaining stability in the region.
- The Role of Turkey and Iran: Turkey and Iran, which have political and military influence in the region, can work together with other Muslim countries to pressure Israel politically and diplomatically. This collaboration must be balanced with a strategic and peaceful approach so as not to worsen the conflict.

8. Building Long-Term Peace Infrastructure

- Peace Education in Conflict Areas: Muslim leaders can work together to support peace education programs that emphasize the importance of tolerance, dialogue, and conflict resolution among young Palestinians and Israelis. By teaching the values of peace from an early age, it is hoped that future generations will be better prepared to live side by side in peace.
- Investing in Sustainable Development Projects: Muslim leaders can support economic development initiatives in Palestine that focus on sustainable development, such as agriculture, renewable energy, and conflict-resistant infrastructure. These projects will help create economic and social stability in a region often devastated by prolonged conflict.

9. Strengthening Unity in the Islamic World

- **Avoiding Divisions Among Muslim Countries:** The Muslim world itself is often divided on its stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with some countries moving closer to Israel and others remaining steadfastly supportive of the Palestinians. Muslim leaders should strive to unite their voices in support of a just and lasting solution for the Palestinian people, avoiding divisions that only weaken their standing in international forums.

Muslim leaders can collaborate in various areas to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including through international diplomacy, peace mediation, humanitarian aid, human rights advocacy, and mobilizing support from civil society. Joint efforts in forums such as the OIC, the UN, as well as alliances with non-Muslim countries can strengthen the position of the Palestinian people and increase the chances of reaching a just and peaceful solution.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis above, it can be concluded that Muslim leaders in the era of globalization and digital face complex and multidimensional challenges. They must be able to balance the demands of modernity with traditional values, utilize technology for the good of the people, and fight extremism. Their success will depend greatly on their ability to build a broad network of cooperation, educate the public, and promote the values of tolerance and moderation. Religious education that is relevant to the context of the modern era is the key to producing a generation of quality Muslim leaders.

The future of Muslim leadership in the era of globalization and digitalization is full of challenges and opportunities. Successful Muslim leaders are those who are able to combine traditional values with innovation, maintain the relevance of religion in a modern context, and use technology for the good of the community. Challenges such as radicalism, polarization, and social inequality will continue to exist, but with strong and wise leadership, Muslims can face the future with optimism. Education, interfaith dialogue, and cross-sector cooperation are key to building a better future.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest associated with this research. All data, analyses, and conclusions presented in this article are the result of objective research and are not influenced by the personal, financial, or professional interests of the authors or any other parties involved. This research was conducted in accordance with the principles of scientific integrity and high research ethics.

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