Paradigm Shift In The Flow Of Information On Islam In The Era Of Technology

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Abstract: There are few researches that focus on the new emerging paradigm shift in the flow of information from classical to contemporary method through social media. Some literatures have mentioned on how the Internet has grown into the most popular medium of communication worldwide in transmitting information about Islam including in the Muslim world with the development of social media applications such as YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. The significance of this research is the paradigm shift in the flow of information on Islam available on social media where this information on Islam is no longer confined in the school or mosque. Data was gathered by distributing questionnaires to undergraduate students from higher educational institutions in Brunei Darussalam. It is hoped that this study can be as guidance for the government or other relevant authorities to ensure the Brunei society will always receive certify and endorse information on Islam through social media and create a framework or rules and regulation in order to prevent any non-endorsed information on Islam penetrating through social media.

Keywords: paradigm shift, social media, higher educational institutions, information on Islam

I. INTRODUCTION

Based on past literatures, there are only few researches that emphasis on the new emerging paradigm shift in the flow of information from classical to contemporary method through social media (SM). Some literatures have mentioned on how the Internet has grown into the most popular medium of communication worldwide in transmitting information about Islam including in the Muslim world with the development of SM applications such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram and Telegram.

During the early centuries of Islam, the earliest classical venue of education is the mosque where religious scholars and students sat together in teaching circles (Zaimeche, 2002). In the beginning of 10th century, Madrasah was developed as a teaching and residential institution for the Muslim where the method of teaching is still similar; lecturing and dictation by religious teacher or *Imam* of the mosque himself. In the past, the spread of Islamic knowledge throughout the Muslims world was limited due to the lack of communication tools where classical Islamic teaching was communicated through medium of books (Seyed Hosseini et al., 2014). Furthermore, Islamic teaching was regulated by instructive institutions such as the mosque and Madrasah where Islamic knowledge was shared by *Imams* and *sheikhs*. However, with the evolution of SM applications, this drastically changes the pattern of Islamic teaching among Muslim scholars, religious preachers and educators.

According to Abdul Qayyum and Zaid Mahmood (2015), SM has become a popular platform in conveying Islamic knowledge among Muslim preachers and a popular medium of communication among the youth generation worldwide. Nowadays, Muslim religious preachers began to teach al-Quran and Hadith either by uploading their preaching video on the YouTube or share various short verses of al-Quran or Hadith through Instagram and Facebook (Seyed Hosseini et al., 2014). This has been done by some Islamic scholars like Tareq Al Suwaidan and Amr Khaled who have over 600,000 supporters on Twitter and reach about one million Facebook followers (Abdul Qayyum and Zaid Mahmood, 2015). Nowadays, the contemporary Islamic teaching takes place

significantly with the evolution of SM which offers virtual learning opportunities in Muslim world.

PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE FLOW OF INFORMATION ON ISLAM

Nowadays, there is a paradigm shift on the transmission of information on Islam which is from classical method (face to face) to printing, and nowadays, virtual learning through social media (SM). This indicated that there is a gradual evolution for Muslims to transmit and obtain information on Islam.

✓ CLASSICAL

During the period of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w), in his early forties, he received the first revelation of al-Qur'an in a cave on Mount Hira outside of Mecca (Ismail Nawwab, et al., 2019). This event indicated that Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) obtained his first revelation of al-Quran by classical method which was face to face with *malaikat Jibril* and the first five verses of al-Quran revealed to him was *Surah Al-Alaq* (96: 1-5);

> "Read (Proclaim!) In the Name of your Lord who created (1) Created man, out of a clot (of congealed blood). (2) Read (Proclaim), and your Lord is the Most Generous, (3) who taught by the Pen, (4) Taught man that which he knew not. (5)"

This was the first of many revelations that indicated Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) obtained information on Islam in a classical manner from *malaikat Jibril.* Similarly, when Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) spread the word of Allah SWT to his companions which was face to face (oral). From the earliest days of Islam, his companions began to write the words of al-Quran on classical entities such as bark, bone, animal skins and stone (Stacey, 2009). Hence, this infers on how information on Islam has been transmitted in a classical manner before the development of printing and SM.

✓ PRINTING

During the eighth century, a new era of literacy emerged where paper began to be used and knowledge of paper-making spread to Iraq, Syria, Egypt, North Africa and Spain (Bloom, 1999). Bloom (1999) has pointed out that after the death of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w), religious scholars collected and codified Hadith which had been preserved orally, and wrote them in ink and paper. Similarly, Roper (2009) has mentioned that Arab Muslims were also began to write on paper including words from al-Quran which led to a major growth in the production of old manuscript texts.

With the development of paper and compiled into a book, Islamic teaching began to spread through medium of books (Seyed Hosseini et al., 2014). Printing was first began in Asia which was China (Bank, 2009). Palemor (2014) has mentioned the Chinese has first invented printing which evolve into movable printing type during the Song Dynasty in the 11th century. While Roper (2009) has pointed out that in the late ninth century, Muslims had embraced the Chinese craft of paper making, adopted and developed it widely in the

Muslim lands. Despite the different periods were mentioned by these authors regarding the invention of paper-making, undoubtedly, China was where the Muslims acquired the knowledge of paper-making. Thus, with the development of paper-making, information on Islam began to spread across the Muslims world.

✓ SOCIAL MEDIA

Flow of information including on Islam is limitless through social media (SM) with the development of information communication technology (ICT). SM enables people to share all sorts of information on Islam and communicating with each other in an online community (Mufti Ismail Menk, 2014). Thus, Islam welcomes such advancement. Overtime, with the evolution of SM, virtual educational interactions can occur among the students through SM as part of their learning tool.

However, information on Islam is available on SM and it is uploaded by various groups of people and individuals who have different backgrounds in terms of religious group and perspectives about Islam. Different types of information disseminate through SM among youth with different religious and cultural background. Despite differences in religious and cultural background, the use of SM such as Facebook and Twitter has created a strong bond between them and their peers from around the world (Reily, 2012).

With the evolution of SM, the world's great scholars from different religious sect are on Telegram, YouTube and Facebook which allows information on Islam to become extremely accessible by all. Nowadays, the consequence of the flourishing of authentic Islamic knowledge is that the young generation of Muslims able to enquire Islamic knowledge in compare to their parents who did not have the same access to obtain information on Islam through SM (Karzan et.al, 2018). In relation to youths in Brunei Darussalam, with the availability of information on Islam in SM, this will offer great advantages for them to deepen their faith as Muslims as vast knowledge about Islam is available for them to explore and learn.

A study by Ab Halim and Zarin Ismail (2009) have pinpointed that masses of negative contents in the SM led to negative impacts on its user such as downgraded of moral values and misperception of Islamic knowledge. Hence, looking at the current pattern, SM is widely used to transmit information on Islam among the Muslim worldwide.

II. RESULTS

For this paper, data was gathered by distributing questionnaires to undergraduate students from higher educational institutions in Brunei Darussalam which were randomly distributed to hundred (100) undergraduate students over four main universities which were University Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA), University Brunei Darussalam (UBD), University Technology Brunei (UTB) and Seri Begawan Religious Teachers University College (KUPUSB). The focus group is the undergraduate students who are local

Muslims (Bruneian nationality) and an equal number of gender to avoid any gender discrimination.

Foremost, the quantitative results from questionnaires provide evidence of undergraduate students' inclination to use SM as their medium to acquire knowledge about Islam in compare to face to face and printing. The completed questionnaires were imported into SPSS, a quantitative software for analysis and coding based on common theme that emerged from the data. A summary from the questionnaire results are illustrated and discuss below.

✓ USE OF SM IN EVERYDAY LIFE

For respondents' preference in using SM, most respondents stated that they use SM every day in compare to a very minimal respondents who contrarily have disagreed to have done so as presented in Table 1.1.

University	Use of SM in everyday life	
	Yes (%)	No (%)
UTB	96	4
UBD	98	0
KUPUSB	97	1
UNISSA	91	4

Table 1.1: Use of SM in everyday life

✓ REASONS OF USING SM

Respondents also needs to choose all that apply to their purpose in using SM from multiple options provided; exchanged information with peers, source of news and information, social interaction, learning entertainment and research. Most respondents have chosen to exchange information with peers and as source of news and information as shown in Table 1.2.

University	Exchanged Information	News and Information
	%	
UTB	80	87
UBD	82	94
KUPUSB	55	87
UNISSA	68	83

Table 1.2: Reasons for using SM

✓ RECEIVE AND DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ON ISLAM THROUGH SM

Table 1.3 presents a summary of respondents' preference in using SM as their tool in receiving and disseminating information on Islam. Majority of respondents prefer to receive and disseminate information on Islam through SM.

University	Receive		Disseminate	
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
UTB	76	24	74	24
UBD	65	33	61	37
KUPUSB	66	32	65	33
UNISSA	74	21	68	27

Table 1.3: Receive and disseminate information on Islam through SM

✓ TYPES OF SM USED

Majority of respondents from four universities have chosen Instagram (78% to 93%) in compare to Twitter and YouTube which available as their main types of SM used as shown in Table 1.4. While YouTube (79% to 90%) is the 2nd highest type of SM used by most respondents. The least favorite among respondents is Twitter (33% to 65%). This infer that Instagram is the most popular type of SM used by majority of respondents.

University	Types of SM used		
	Instagram	Twitter	YouTube
UTB	93	48	86
UBD	90	65	90
KUPUSB	78	33	79
UNISSA	87	52	81

Table 1.4: Types of SM used

✓ RECIPIENT OF INFORMATION ON ISLAM

The majority of respondents indicated that they use SM to disseminate information on Islam to their friends rather than to their family, colleague and strangers. Nonetheless, majority of respondents from UTB prefer to disseminate information on Islam to their family in compare to others as presented in Table 1.5.

University	Recipient of information on Islam			
	Family	Friends	Colleague	Strangers
UTB	78	69	44	16
UBD	53	58	32	11
KUPUSB	61	66	47	20
UNISSA	64	73	53	29

Table 1.5: Recipient of information on Islam

✓ RESPOND TOWARDS INFORMATION ON ISLAM

Highest number of respondents prefer to clarify information on Islam available on SM before disseminate it to others as shown in table 1.6. A small percentage of respondents prefer to ignore such information when available on SM range from 11% to 21%. In KUPUSB, more than half of the respondents (61%) prefer to clarify information on Islam available on SM in compare to respondents from UTB, UBD and UNISSA. Due to their religious courses offered and frequent interaction with their religious educators can be the reasons behind their choice.

In compare to respondents from UTB and UBD who have minimal religious courses offered, hence, about 35%-35% of respondents rather simply copy information on Islam available on SM.

University	Respond towards information on Islam		
	Simply copy	Clarify	Ignore
UTB	35	54	11
UBD	36	41	21
KUPUSB	23	61	14
UNISSA	25	55	15

Table 1.6: Respond towards information on Islam

III. DISCUSSION

Consequently, it is important for all Muslim to do clarification on information related to Islam as mentioned in the al-Quran which says, "do not follow that of which you have no knowledge for you shall be questioned for (the use) of your eyes, ears and minds" (al-Quran, *Surah Al-Isra* (17):36). Therefore, Allah disgraces the believers who spread fabricated information which they didn't have knowledge about it. In other words, the al-Quran emphasizes the importance of truth in disseminating information to others.

In the same vein, the importance of disseminating truthful information is also shown in Hadith: it is written in *Sahih al-Bukhari* thus "Do not tell a lie against me for whoever tells a lie against me (intentionally) then he will surely enter the Hell-fire." Henceforth, Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) always remind his people to say nothing but the truth and the place for liars are in the Hell-fire.

The quantitative findings from questionnaires provide evidence of the perceived religious values and experiences of undergraduate students towards information on Islam available on SM. Furthermore, majority of participants stated that there are possibility among youth in NBD didn't have the knowledge about the existence of non-endorsed information available on SM which can influence their mind and perhaps deviate from the right teaching of Islam. In addition, majority of participants preferred to use SM as their tool of communication to receive and disseminate information on Islam due to easy access from their mobile device and laptops.

As result, NBD government or any relevant authorities play important role to create an effective national cyber-security framework which can become a resilient mechanisms in tackling issues related to non-endorsed information on Islam available on SM.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

It is hoped that this study can be as a guidance for the government or other relevant authorities to ensure the Brunei society will always receive certify and endorse information on Islam through social media. The relevant authority can create a framework or rules and regulation in order to prevent any non-endorsed information on Islam penetrating through social media.

The government should regularly organize seminars and workshop in order to share tips and guidance to the Brunei society on how to effectively and efficiently manage their SM applications to avoid from any involvement in spreading hoax or fake news to others.

V. CONCLUSION

The data findings had revealed that majority of participants preferred to use social media as their tool to receive and disseminate information on Islam due to easy access from their mobile device. This indicates that paradigm shift in the flow of information on Islam from classical to virtual through social media has occurred among youths in Brunei Darussalam. Therefore, there are also possibility among youths who didn't have the knowledge about the existence of non-endorsed information on Islam available on social media which can influence their mind and perhaps deviate them from the right teaching of Islam.

Consequently, this study can be as a guidance for the government or other relevant authorities to ensure the Brunei society receive endorsed information on Islam through SM and create a framework or strategies in order to prevent any non-endorsed information on Islam penetrating through SM. This is to ensure the youths in Brunei Darussalam are using SM in an advantageous and positive ways according to the right path of Islamic teaching based on al-Quran and Hadith.

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