

# MUSLIM GENERATION Z IN THE DIGITAL AGE: HOW MUSLIM GEN Z ENHANCES THEIR SELF-BRAND WITH INTERACTIVE CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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**Abstract:** Muslims Generation Z are growing up in the digital age, giving them a great opportunity to build their personal brands through social media. This study aims to understand how Muslims Gen Z use interactive content such as surveys, Q&A sessions, Islamic challenges, and digital collaborations to enhance their personal, professional, and religious self-image. The aim is to investigate whether by integrating personal branding theory, interactive media, and Islamic values, this study identifies strategies and challenges in designing content that is in line with Islamic principles. This study uses a qualitative methodology with a case study approach and in-depth interviews with Muslims Gen Z who have successfully built personal branding through social media. The findings of this study provide practical guidance for Muslims Gen Z on the creative and ethical use of social media and enrich the literature on the role of interactive content in the development of young Muslims' digital identities. Muslim Generation Z uses social media not only to express their identities but also to creatively express their religious beliefs. According to this study, using interactive features on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, YouTube enables them to create more meaningful connections with viewers and, consequently, strengthens their credibility as Muslims.

**Keywords:** Muslims Generation Z, personal branding in social media, interactive content, digital identity, Islamic values

## Introduction

The advancement of digital technology has changed the way humans interact, communicate, and build their identities. Social media, as one of the biggest innovations in the digital era, has become the main platform for individuals, especially Generation Z, to express themselves, build relationships, and strengthen their personal image or personal branding. Generation Z known as the digital native generation, grew up in an environment dominated by technology and social media, which allows them to connect with a global audience instantly.

For Muslims Generation Z, social media not only serves as a means of communication but also as a space to build a self-identity that is in line with Islamic religious and cultural values. In this context, personal branding becomes an important concept that allows individuals to build a positive image through content that reflects their personality, values, and aspirations. However, challenges arise when a balance must be found between building an attractive self-image digitally and maintaining the integrity of the Islamic values it disseminates. Interactive content such as polls, Q&A sessions, Islamic challenges, and digital collaborations have become powerful tools for Muslims Gen Z to strengthen their relationships with their audiences and build a boldentik presence. These features allow you

to not only share personal stories but also convey religious messages, educate, and inspire your community. This phenomenon highlights how Muslims Gen Z facing the challenges of the globalization era, are using social media as an inclusive space to express their religious identity and personal branding amidst the challenges of the globalization era.

The purpose of this study is to explore how Muslims Gen Z use interactive content on social media to strengthen their personal brands. The purpose of this study is also to understand the strategies, motivations and challenges they face in this process. Using a qualitative approach, this study provides deeper insights into the role of social media in shaping the digital identities of Muslims Gen Z and explores how they can use social media creatively and in a way that does not compromise Islamic values.

The study also highlights the importance of intergenerational collaboration and the role of digital communities in supporting Gen Z Muslims' efforts to spread Islamic values in creative ways. The use of lifestyle-relevant approaches, such as visual storytelling and the use of interactivity, can help bridge the gap between traditional and modern. This creates new opportunities to strengthen Islamic da'wah and build a strong and relevant digital identity with current trends.

### **Literature Review**

Specific research on how Muslim Generations Z improve their personal branding through interactive content on social media has not been widely discussed, there are some studies on this topic but they only focus on millennials. So, this is a good opportunity for researchers to explore this topic with a new approach and on Generation Z. Generation Z, known as the digital native generation, grew up in an environment dominated by technology and social media. For Muslim Generation Z, social media not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a space to express themselves and build personal branding that is in line with Islamic values. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are used to share Islamic content, spiritual experiences, and views on religious issues. Social media also allows them to connect with the global Muslim community, strengthen Islamic brotherhood, and expand their religious insights.

Personal branding for Muslim Generation Z involves creating a positive and authentic self-image in the eyes of their audience. This is done by integrating Islamic values into their content, such as Qur'an quotes, prayer tips, or religious education videos. One strategy that is often used is creating interactive content such as Q&A sessions, polls, and Islamic challenges. This strategy not only attracts attention but also encourages active audience engagement, thereby strengthening relationships with their digital community. However, building an Islamic personal brand on social media also presents challenges. Muslims Generation Z are often faced with pressure to follow trends and audience expectations, which can affect their consistency in upholding Islamic values. In addition, the lack of digital literacy can make them vulnerable to inaccurate or extreme information. Therefore, it is important for them to have critical thinking skills in order to filter information and maintain the integrity of their Islamic identity.

Social media also plays a significant role in shaping the Islamic identity of Muslims Generation Z. On the one hand, these platforms provide a space to express religious identity creatively and openly. On the other hand, exposure to various global cultures and ideas can trigger identity conflicts if not handled wisely. Studies show that a da'wah approach that is relevant to their lifestyle, such as the use of visual language and storytelling, can help them understand Islamic teachings better. Research also shows that effective personal branding on

social media is often done by young Muslim figures, such as young preachers or Islamic influencers. By consistently delivering relevant and interactive religious messages, they have succeeded in reaching a wider audience and having a positive influence on public perception of Islam. This shows that social media can be a very powerful tool for strengthening Islamic identity and building relationships with the global community.

This study shows that Muslim Generation Z creatively utilizes social media to express their religious identity and build an authentic personal brand. However, challenges remain in maintaining a balance between popularity in the digital world and religious values. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how Muslim Generation Z uses social media as a space to build their identity in the digital era.

## Method

The purpose of this study is to explore how Muslims Generation Z use interactive content on social media to build their personal brands while upholding Islamic values. With the rapid development of digital technology and social media, Generation Z, also known as the “digital native generation,” faces opportunities and challenges in building their identities in the digital space. In this context, qualitative research was chosen as the approach because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the experiences, perspectives, and strategies used by Muslims Gen Z Muslims to build their personal brands authentically while upholding Islamic values. This has been done.

The qualitative approach was chosen because it is flexible and allows for data to be explored from the perspective of the participants, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of this social phenomenon. This study examines how Muslims Gen Z use interactive content such as polls, Q&A sessions, Islamic challenges, and digital collaborations to promote Islamic values while increasing audience engagement. We will investigate it. We focus on what we can promote. The details of the research method are as follows:

### 1. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative descriptive design that is suitable for investigating social phenomena and understanding participants’ experiences and perspectives in their natural contexts. The focus of this study is to explore the process and reasons why Muslims Gen Z build personal branding through interactive content on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.

### 2. Study Participants

Participants in this study are Generation Z (ages 18-27) who actively use social media as a platform to express themselves and build their personal brand. Inclusion criteria:

- a. Muslims aged 18-27.
- b. Active on social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, or Youtube.
- c. Consistently create interactive content such as Q&A sessions, polls, challenges, or Islamic themed content.
- d. Identify themselves as someone who combines their online activities with Islamic values.

### 3. Method Of Collecting Data

To obtain comprehensive data, the following methods are used:

#### 1. Semi-Structured Interview

Interviews are conducted to explore the motivations, strategies, and challenges faced by participants in creating interactive content. Example question:

- What motivates you to create Islamic-themed content on social media
- How do you maintain balance between personal branding and Islamic values?
- What challenges do you face in maintaining audience engagement while remaining authentic?

## 2. Content Analysis

Analyze social media content of participants to identify patterns of interactive strategies such as polls, Q&A sessions, and Islamic challenges. Analysis focuses on content themes, frequency of religious messages, and level of audience engagement.

The focus of the analysis includes content themes, frequency of religious messages, and level of audience engagement.

## 3. Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion is a qualitative data collection method that involves small group discussions (usually consisting of 5-10 people) guided by a facilitator to explore their views, experiences, or opinions on a particular topic.

The main purpose of “Focus Group Discussion is to explore collective insights, between participants during discussions, and to understand the perspectives of different people in a group regarding a phenomenon. Characteristics of Focus Group Discussions:

### 1. Small Group

Participants are selected based on certain criteria (e.g., Generation Z Muslims who are active on social media).

### 2. Guided By A Moderator

The moderator leads the discussion by asking structured but flexible questions that allow participants to develop their ideas.

### 3. Interactive Discussion Group

Members share experiences, opinions, and perspectives, creating a dynamic that often does not emerge in individual interviews.

### 4. Data Analysis Techniques

This study used a thematic analysis approach to collect data from interviews, focus group discussions, and social media content. This approach is a qualitative method that aims to explore and identify key themes in the collected data and relate them to the research objectives. The analysis stage consists of three main steps: coding, theme generation, and interpretation.

#### 1. Coding

Coding is the first step in thematic analysis and is used to organize raw data obtained from interviews, focus groups, and social media content. In this stage, the researcher reads or listen to the data thoroughly to identify key information relevant to the research question. Each data element that is deemed significant relevant is given a label or “code”. This code is a word or short phrase that describes the essence of the information.

#### 2. Creating Themes

At this stage, researchers group related or similarly meaningful codes into major categories or themes. These topics address patterns found in the data and are directly relevant to the research objectives.

#### 3. Interpretation

The researcher gives deeper meaning to the themes that have been discovered and relates them to the research objectives and relevant literature. At this stage, the researcher analyzes the themes that emerge in a broader context, considers the relationships between the themes, and relates them to existing theories and perspectives. Interpretation is carried

out with the aim of answering the research questions and gaining a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being sought.

### **Results and Discussion**

The study identified several patterns from the data obtained through interviews, focus groups, and social media content. In general, Muslims Gen Z use different strategies to build their Islamic personal branding. The main strategy is to engage audiences on social media using interactive content such as polls, Q&A sessions, and Islamic challenges. Consistency of thematic content, such as focusing on da'wah, Islamic motivation, and modern Islamic lifestyle, is also a key element in creating a strong digital identity. In addition, visual aesthetics that combine attractive and relevant designs with Qur'anic quotes and Islamic messages are the foundation of successful personal branding.

However, the survey also showed that Muslims Gen Z face many challenges. Some participants felt pressured to follow social media trends without conflicting with Islamic values. Another obstacle they often discussed was criticism from viewers for content that was deemed un-Islamic. Another challenge was time management. Participants found it difficult to create content consistently while also participating in offline activities. However, participants were required to adhere to certain Islamic standards in their content, including ensuring that their content was Shariah-compliant, using social media as a means of modern da'wah, and promoting an Islamic identity through the content they created. Participants were advised to adopt the following values: prompt. Demonstrate the ability to integrate one's values. Reflect content.

The results of this study indicate that interactive social media features are a key element in building Islamic personal branding among Muslims Gen Z. This strategy is in line with self-branding theory which emphasizes the importance of two-way communication with the audience in building a strong identity. However, the pressure to continuously adapt to digital trends without sacrificing Islamic values reflects a dilemma that participants often face. This suggests the need for a balance between substantive innovation and the application of religious principles. This is supported by literature on moral challenges in the digital era. In addition, challenges such as criticism from the audience and pressure to maintain consistency reflect the phenomenon of audience surveillance, where the audience is not only a consumer but also a content supervisor. Participants indicated that criticism often relates to perceptions of authenticity and adherence to Islamic values, which adds to the pressure in building a personal brand. This highlights the importance of digital identity management which requires not only creativity but also good mental resilience.

Islamic values were also found to be the foundation for building personal branding. Social media is considered an effective da'wah tool to convey Islamic messages to the younger generation. This supports the concept of value-driven branding, where personal values are at the core of branding strategies. However, participants also face a dilemma in presenting interesting Islamic content and remaining competitive amidst the dominance of entertainment content on social media. They show creativity in packaging content to remain relevant without losing the essence of Islamic values. This study provides practical and theoretical implications. Practically, these results can be a guide for Muslims Generation Z to develop more effective Islamic personal branding strategies, especially in utilizing interactive features on social media. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on Islamic personal branding, especially among young Muslims, and provides insight into how Islamic values can be integrated into digital identity.

## Conclusion

This study revealed that Muslim Generation Z utilizes social media as a primary platform to build authentic personal branding based on Islamic values. By using interactive features such as polls, Q&A sessions, and Islamic challenges, they have succeeded in creating content that is not only engaging but also educational and inspiring to the audience. However, this process is not free from various challenges, such as the pressure to follow digital trends, criticism of the consistency of Islamic values, and time management in creating sustainable content.

Nevertheless, Muslim Generation Z shows creativity in packaging Islamic messages to remain relevant and competitive amidst the dominance of entertainment content on social media. This reflects their efforts in balancing digital innovation with the application of religious principles. This study provides practical insights for Muslim Generation Z to build Islamic personal branding effectively while enriching academic studies on the integration of Islamic values in digital identity management.

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