MOBILE-BASED DA’WAH AL-FARDIYYAH MODEL USING M-LEARNING METHOD

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Abstract

Studies have proven Da’wah al-Fardiyyah as an effective method of making Islamic message reach a target individual. Difficulties in communicating with the target individuals due to geographical locations and lack of a medium give challenges for frequent and consistent interactions. Thus, this research aims to study the practices and approaches of mobile-based Da’wah al-Fardiyyah using mobile learning method among young adults. The study proposed a model that helps to eliminate spatial and temporal constraints during the process of da’wah. Based on the proposed model, a mobile application was developed on android platform to facilitate the work of Da’wah al-Fardiyyah. The proposed model is evaluated using questionnaire instrument which is based on four attributes of usability metrics. The results showed that the model usability achieved 77.1% of effectiveness, 85% of efficiency, 89.1% of learnability and 89.2% of satisfaction. The proposed model offers a consistent and direct communication between the da’i and mad’u.

Keywords: Da’wah Al-Fardiyyah, Mobile-based, m-Learning, Salmon’s model, Zone of Proximal Development

1. INTRODUCTION

Da’wah is the spreading and disseminating of Islam to others. It is used to refer to the act of conveying or calling people to the message of Islam. According to (Racius 2004), da’wah is an Arabic word meaning a call, summon or invitation. On the other hand, Da’wah al-Fardiyyah is a form of da’wah considered as the disseminating and spreading of Islamic message to a person or small group of people. It is established through building a close relationship with the target individual or group. In the process of da’wah, a person called da’i is usually responsible for addressing the da’wah to another person known as mad’u. Da’wah al-Fardiyyah as an effective method of making Islamic message reaches a target individual (Bahari & Faisal 2011). It is believed that, for Da’wah al-Fardiyyah to be efficient and effective, the interaction between da’i and mad’u needs to be frequent and consistent. However, difficulties in communicating with the target individuals due to geographical locations and lack of a medium give challenges for frequent and consistent interactions. As a result, mobile technology using the concept of m-Learning can positively support the process, and helps to eliminate the spatial and temporal constraints during the process.
As a result of advances and growth of mobile technology, mobile devices are now used not just for making and receiving calls, but its capabilities have been extended that it is now used in educational and religious matters. Mobile learning (m-Learning) as an extension to e-Learning, is the use of mobile devices such as smartphones and PDAs (Personal Digital Assistance) over wireless networks to provide interactions between learners and teachers, anytime and anywhere. It is also an e-Learning through mobile computational devices (Quinn 2000). A significant advantage of m-Learning over e-Learning is that m-Learning gives users more control over time allowing them to determine with whom to collaborate and when (Ally 2009), and they may reflect on course content when it is most appropriate for them.

Therefore, this study adopts Salmon’s five-stage model as the core framework of the proposed model to describe the online interactions that exist between the da‘i and mad‘u during the process of Da’wah al-Fardiyyah. Meanwhile, Vygotovsky’s ZPD was also employed as a support for the proposed model. The ZPD concept will help in providing assistance and support to the mad‘u through collaboration and interaction with the da‘i. Based on the proposed model, a mobile application was developed on android platform to facilitate the work of Da’wah al-Fardiyyah. The proposed model is then evaluated using questionnaire instrument which is based on four attributes of usability metrics adopted from ISO 9241-11 model (1998) and QUIM model by Seffah et al. (2006).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Da’wah al-Fardiyyah Approach

Different scholars such as (Mashhur 1976; al-Banna 2002; Ibrahim 2003) proposed different approaches of Da’wah al-Fardiyyah that begins through building a close relationship with the target individual(s). However, this research only focused on the work of Al-Banna (2002), which divided the approach into three levels; Ta’rif (Introduction), Takwin (Formation) and Tanfidh (Implementation).

In the introduction level, da‘i need to build a close relationship with the mad‘u. This will give the da‘i an opportunity of da‘wah to the targeted person easily. According to (Bahari & Faisal 2011), it is at this level the mad‘u begins to become familiar with the message of Islam and introduced with some basic Islamic teachings. At the second level, mad‘u(s) are being exposed to the deep knowledge and understanding about a particular issue regarding Islam. Da‘i achieves this through helping and guiding the mad‘u in solving his problems and motivating him to learn more about his religion. It is at the final level of this approach that da‘i try to persuade and guide the mad‘u to work for Islam and become da‘i.

Using the approach proposed by al-Banna, this study describe how Da‘wah al-Fardiyyah could be conducted through mobile devices and also it will help the mad‘u in organizing his activities throughout the work. Previous research conducted by Faisal et al. (2012) used Da‘wah al-Fardiyyah approach from the work of Ibrahim (2003) which is not far remote from what al-Banna (2002) had outlined.

2.2 Salmon’s Five-stage Model

Salmon’s Five-stage Model is a computer-mediated communication (CMC) model developed by Gilly Salmon in the 1990s. Since the work of da‘wah is a process that constitute of learning and knowledge dissemination, then employing the
Salmon’s Five-stage Model would help to describe the types of users involved and the interactions that exist between them.

The model was divided into five different stages to keep the users engaged all the way through the system. The model describes the step through which learners, with the assistance of e-moderator are acclimatized to their online environment; become acquainted with their peers; find and share information with them; negotiate meaning and co-construct knowledge and finally assimilate new knowledge and understanding through self-reflection. The most significant benefit of using the Five-stage Model is that the da’i can know how mad’us are likely to exploit the system at each stage and that common pitfalls can be avoided. However, if the participants do not succeed in setting up their access to the system then they would not be able to participate in da’wah via the system. Although this is a very obvious point, it has implications for the provision of technical support to enable participation.

2.3 Related Works

A similar research was conducted by Faisal et al. (2012) proposed a model of online Da’wah al-Fardiyyah which incorporates the traditional approach of Da’wah al-Fardiyyah with a model of online communication. The proposed model of online Da’wah al-Fardiyyah illustrates the way to pursue Da’wah al-Fardiyyah in cyberspace. Although it was among the early researches that try to support Da’wah al-Fardiyyah using technological approaches, however, the approach lacks mobility as it uses e-Learning to conceptualise the process.

Furthermore, mobile technology studies have examined perceptions and attitudes toward m-Learning (Ally & Stauffer 2008) as a means to support students with hearing impairment (Hussain et al. 2014), as a means to support language learning (Chen & Hsu 2008; Abdullah et al. 2013), as a tool to extend audio discussions (Wei et al. 2007), and to support instructor-student and student-student communication (Cavus et al. 2008). However, there is little or no research on the use of mobile technology to support the work of da’wah among Muslims. Therefore, given the scarcity of Islamic mobile application and the absence of any study regarding the integration of mobile technology (m-Learning) in the field of da’wah, a research issue that emerged was not only to come to some conclusions as to suitability of the da’wah on mobile devices but also to support and demonstrate the need for Islamic da’wah using technological approaches.

3. THE PROPOSED MODEL

The proposed mobile-based Da’wah al-Fardiyyah model consist of three different levels based on the al-Banna’s approach, in which mad’u is engaged with particular task and activity at each level as shown in Figure 1 below. The three levels are then decomposed into five different stages of online activities, starting from the moment a user have access to the system up to where the user can interact and exchange information with other system users.
i. **Introduction Level (Access & Motivation, and Online Socialization)**

    This involves an online relationship between the *da'i* and *mad'u* through setting up an identity and a short profile. *Da'i* and *mad'u* are provided with an opportunity to set up username and password that will serve as their identity throughout the system. Because gaining access is an essential prerequisite for learning and achieving goals in any online environment (Salmon et al. 2010). Moreover, *da'i* needs to establish a good online relationship with the *mad'u* and encourage sharing of identities with other users. Building a relationship with the *mad'u* will open a space for the *da'i* to disseminate some fundamental knowledge of Islam to the *mad'u* easily and also become familiar with each other.

ii. **Formation Level (Information Exchange and Knowledge Construction)**

    The objective of this level is the dissemination of issues and news pertaining to Islam either through mutual interaction between the *da'i* and *mad'u* or via discussion groups, whereby *da'i* create a topic of discussion between the *mad'u(s)*. This will result in forming personalities that understand Islam and as well ready to work for Islam. It is at this level that, information and knowledge are exchanged either between the *da'i* and *mad'u* or between the *mad'u(s)* themselves working together collaboratively to attain a particular conclusion. In addition, *da'i* needs to ensure that every user (*mad'u*) have a key role and all are taking part in almost all the discussions and activities. *Da'i* should provide *mad'u* with deep knowledge and understanding of Islam at this stage. At this level, the Interaction between the *mad'u(s)* becomes high, as they need a constant collaboration among themselves in the negotiation of knowledge and solutions to individual needs.

iii. **Implementation Level (Development)**

    At this point, *mad'u(s)* become more responsible for their own learning and as well become helpful and assist new users to the system through the guidance and assistance given by the *da'i*. Furthermore, at each stage of the model, there is a level of interaction that *da'i* should expect between the *mad'u(s)*. The interaction intensity is indicated by a vertical bar running along the right of the model (refer to Figure 1).
At stage 1 of the introduction level, there is little or no interaction occurs. Because mad'ū need not to interact with any other user but to create an identity and gain access to the system. In addition, da'i can only welcome the new users as well as give them support and motivation for the use of the system. The interaction bar will be increasing gradually down the model, from the online socialization stage up to the knowledge construction stage, where the intensity of interactivity becomes high. Finally, stage 5 of Implementation level often results in a return to more individual pursuits and in turn results to less interaction.

4. MOBILE DA’WAH AL-FARDIYYAH

4.1 The Development Life Cycle

In this paper the Mobile Application Development Life Cycle (MADLC) model proposed by Vithani & Kumar (2014) was adopted and incorporated it into the incremental development model to ensure a successful product delivery. Incremental development model allows the development process to begin by specifying and implementing just part of the application, which is then reviewed to identify further requirements. This process is then repeated, producing a new version of the application at the end of each iteration of the model until the application is fully implemented. This is what makes it be flexible in the sense that the requirements and scope of the application can be change anytime.

4.2 Architecture of Mobile Da’wah Al-Fardiyyah

The architecture of mobile Da’wah Al-Fardiyyah consists of three different parts which are the client side, the application programming interface (API), and the server backend of the application as shown in Figure 2 below.
This type of architecture is one in which one or more devices (clients), through the application, request and receive information or services from the host device (server side) via an intermediary interface known as API. Basically, in this study two type of parties were involved in the system; the primary or end-users (da‘i & mad‘u) that will use and interact with system, and the application engineers or developers that have interest in the application. The client side is where da‘i and mad‘u will interact with the application interface through their respective mobile devices. The client (application) needs to know the address of the server machine and the port to connect to the server. Although the client must know the server’s address and port, the server does not need to know anything about the client’s address or port at the time of connection initiation.

5. RESULT ANALYSIS

During the evaluation process, two different surveys were carried out on 29 respondents in order to solicit information from the respondents regarding the traditional approach of Da‘awah al-Fardiyyah, and to determine the quality of the proposed model as well as the usability of the Da‘awah al-Fardiyyah application.

According to the research survey, 75.5% of the respondents believe that Da‘awah al-Fardiyyah faces some challenges and problems that includes the difficulty to effectively communicate and reach out a target, lack of confidence from the da‘i in interacting with people, inappropriate method of giving da‘wah, misinterpretations of information, and lack of knowledge of giving da‘wah. Therefore, these are issues that need to be address in order to eradicate or minimize challenges and problems facing the traditional approach of Da‘awah al-Fardiyyah. These problems may be the reason Islamic messages are not circulated. But however, using a technological approach with the help of m-Learning there is a high expectation that the issues and problems facing Da‘awah al-Fardiyyah can be minimized if not eradicated. Furthermore, taking the above problems into consideration, the researcher realized that there is the need for a technological approach that could support the traditional approach of Da‘awah al-Fardiyyah. The proposed approach will be evaluated using second questionnaire instrument.

The evaluation is necessary to monitor and further improve the quality of the mobile Da‘awah al-Fardiyyah. During the evaluation, usability factor was used to determine the successfulness of the mobile Da‘awah al-Fardiyyah. Although there are many factors or characteristics to determine the quality of a software, but usability is the most factor in software quality. That is why this study selected the measurement attributes from ISO 9241-11 model and QUIM model. The attributes includes effectiveness, efficiency, learnability and satisfaction.

The second questionnaire involves forty questions distinguished two various question types. The question type contains users’ personal information and the usability of mobile Da‘awah al-Fardiyyah. According to the survey result as shown in Figure 3 below, the proposed system usability achieved 77.1% of effectiveness, 85% of efficiency, 89.1% of learnability and 89.2% of satisfaction. Hence, the proposed model offers a consistent and direct communication between the da‘i and mad‘u. In addition, it can minimize the face-to-face meeting between da‘i and mad‘u since it can be used at anytime and anywhere.
CONCLUSIONS

However, the mobile Da’wah al-Fardiyyah provides great mobility and eliminates temporal constraints for the target population to conduct Da’wah al-Fardiyyah, but more effort should be considered on how to appropriately interpret and presents information regarding Islam and also to provide more suitable method on which da’i can collaboratively assist and support group of mad’u(s) to construct knowledge through the application.

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