Da’wahtainment: The Creativity of Muslim Creators in Da’wah Communication on Social Media

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Abstract
This article aims to analyze how Muslim creators carry out the creativity of da’wah communication on social media. Da’wah through social media is considered more appealing for the younger generation. This research uses the netnographic method that focuses on observations on research subjects on the internet. The research object is contained in videos on the Instagram social media page @nunuzoo and the Youtube channel of Komedi Dakwah Film. The study results show that the creativity of Muslim creators can be seen from the uploaded content that is presented containing entertaining elements, humorous stories, and da’wah themes that are chosen to follow the trend in demand. The da’wahtainment uploads most sought after by netizens are presented in videos/short films rather than just posting photos and infographics. In addition, da’wah communication carried out by communicators, namely Muslim creators, uses sources that do not conflict with Islamic teachings popular media, and can change the younger generation’s lifestyle to be more Islamic.

Keywords
Da’wahtainment, Creator, Da’wah Communications, Social Media.
Introduction

Da’wah, through the use of social media, is more appealing, particularly to the younger generation. The proof is that if a da’wah video upload contains a popular theme, it will receive many likes and comments, subscribers, and even followers until the content goes viral among the general public. Conversely, da’wah, such as attending recitations in mosques, is not extinct through conventional methods. However, various technological approaches, such as maximizing website pages, are currently in demand. (Adib et al., 2019) The use of information technology by individuals and new media has also changed how people act, exist, and communicate today. (Lopes et al., 2020)

In the last two years, especially after the world was shocked by the Covid-19 Pandemic, the study of virtual da’wah through social media tends to increase in demand. Covid-19 was first known to have outbreaks in December 2019, when many people contracted mysterious pneumonia in Wuhan. (Zhu et al., 2020) Thus, many people cannot come to conventional studies and choose to access the internet at home due to this pandemic. Besides being considered safe, it is also free from crowds. The Covid-19 pandemic has had significant consequences in all respects, not only changing the political, economic, and even educational situation that has shifted to digital culture. (Sá & Serpa, 2020)

Social media is a tool that is currently very common for the world community. Moreover, in da’wah, social media is adequate for preachers to reach a broad audience. (Ab Kadir, 2019) During the pandemic ravaged the world, including Indonesia, people were forced to stay at home and avoid social contact. As for government policies, specifically through PSBB (large-scale social restrictions), to the use of data for mapping disease spread via contact tracing. The pandemic has resulted in a shift in communication culture, especially for the younger generation. Today's young people are not afraid to conduct religious studies or participate in religious activities on social media. If it is reviewed on their activity timeline, it will be very evident that social media has become a necessity consumed at all times. (Anwar, 2019)

New media, such as social media, can now argue in the digital age. On social media, we frequently encounter people who will not express themselves explicitly through direct arguments. Yet, many compete to channel their aspirations and certain understandings through creative contests on social media. Hence, all forms of content are presented on social media, from good to bad. (Rahman, 2020) The high internet use in Indonesia is increasingly massive from year to year. The Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) survey results indicate that internet users in Indonesia are primarily young, namely Millennials and Zoomers. Their age range ranges from 19-34 years, with a percentage reaching 49.52%. (Meifitri, 2020)

In Indonesia, one of the most frequently used social media is Instagram. The term Instagram is familiar to all circles, especially young people. Instagram is an application that users use to take photos, videos, apply digital filters, and share posts to other social networking services, including the user's own Instagram account. Because the appeal is
relatively high, making it easier for young people to be able to use Instagram. (Mutia, 2018) This is because the features provided by Instagram are designed to be as simple as possible so that they are easy to use, especially the video feature that we know as *Reels*. This latest feature allows users to create videos with the latest designs and back sounds to make them more attractive. Videos uploaded on *Reels* can be 15 or 60 seconds long. This *Reels* feature resembles the Tiktok app. In addition to using music audio already available in the *Reels* feature, users can also use original audio from the user himself. With *Reels*, users become more pampered and don’t have to switch platforms. Instagram has a modality that, if analyzed visually and even empirically, turns out to have its charm through its algorithm to encourage the involvement of individual users. (Rietveld et al., 2020)

Then the platform that has a reasonably high interaction is *Youtube*. In this digital era, *YouTube* must be very familiar to us. *YouTube* was founded by three people, namely Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim, in February 2005. *YouTube* can share various kinds of videos that they have or various video clips uploaded by several parties involved in the music industry. Various types of videos can be uploaded, such as educational videos, video tutorials, video clips, television shows, live streaming, etc.

With many *YouTube users* and providing convenience for its users, of course, users can use it to create a *YouTube account* to disseminate the information they have. (Pertiwi, 2021) *YouTube* is loved by young people and a source of recognition where they can see themselves through watching content on *YouTube*. (Balleys et al., 2020)

Through research, (Lidwina, 2021) states that 94% of internet accessors in Indonesia, especially social media, are aged 16-64 years in the past year. This shows that social media does not look at age. Hence, Zoomers and millennials, and the generation above also access social media. In addition, they also use other social media. The majority of netizens in Indonesia use WhatsApp (87.7%), Instagram (86.6%), and Facebook (85.5%). Meanwhile, only 63.6% accessed Twitter, 52.4% Facebook Messenger, and 44.3% Line (Lidwina, 2021). The description is as follows;

<table>
<thead>
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<th>No.</th>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Social Media Type</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
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<td>Whatsapp</td>
<td>87.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16-64</td>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>86.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>16-64</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>16-64</td>
<td>FB Messenger</td>
<td>52.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>16-64</td>
<td>Line</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lidwina, 2021

In social media interactions, we encounter a plethora of new terms to replace communicators who disseminate photo and video content. Some refer to them as content creators, influencers, or celebrities. The three are similar but not identical. Content posted on social media, particularly Instagram by influencers and creators,
typically prioritizes characteristics such as originality and creativity. (Meier et al., 2020)

Content creators and influencers are people who are well-known online. (Balaban & Mustătea, 2019)

Talking about content creator is undeniably linked to communication science. Because content is, in fact, the result of creativity in the application of communication science. According to Carl Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, communication is a process in which a person (the communicator) conveys a stimulus (usually in the form of words). With the intention of influencing or shaping the behaviour of others (the audience). Communication is the exchange of meaning through verbal and nonverbal behaviour. Any behaviour can be called communication if it involves two or more people. Communication occurs if at least a source evokes a response in the recipient through the delivery of a message in the form of signs and symbols, either verbal (words) or nonverbal forms (non-words), without having to make sure beforehand that the two communicating parties have the same symbol system. (Mulyana, 2004)

Lewis (2019) refers to the content creator or influencer as a subset of celebrities. Micro-celebrities, who practice celebrity on a smaller scale, should not be underestimated. Influencers or creators are appealing not only in terms of business profits but also in terms of gaining political power. (Lewis, 2019).

The concepts of communication and da’wah share several characteristics, including communicators and communicants. Sheikh Ali Machfudz (1975), one of the scholars, explained that preaching can bring happiness both in this world and in the hereafter. Da’wah is a method of encouraging people to do good and follow Allah SWT’s instructions. (Rahman, 2020) Da’wah communication is communication that describes how the preacher, who is a communicator according to communication science, constructs the message. The messages of da’wah are therefore conveyed through various media to the communicant, namely the congregation. Messages delivered by preachers in the modern era are more effective when delivered via modern social media. Undeniably, communication formed through religious content aims to improve the behaviour of communicants in the congregation. This is consistent with Lasswell's communication model, which states that communication focuses on who, what the message is, for whom, how it is delivered, as well as what effect it has. (Effendy, 2003)

The term da’wahtainment may sound familiar to our ears. The term da’wahtainment is an amalgamation of Arabic in the form of da’wah and English in the form of tainment, which means the concept of entertainment which means entertainment and appeal. Da’wahtainment is not only through mainstream media such as television, but also new media on the internet such as social media. (Haris Fiardi, 2021)

Not only in Indonesia, which uses the internet as a reference material for preaching, but in other parts of the world as well. Shadiq Al-Uthman, a Moroccan-born preacher living in Brazil, claims that the internet is the most effective medium for carrying out da’wah activities in which he has been involved for a long time. One of the
reasons he prefers to use the internet is due to the size of Brazil. Consider that preaching in one city can take up to three hours of travel time. While da'wah can take up to 12 hours to travel from one city to another. As a result, the widespread use of the internet is very beneficial for preaching activities when compared to having to be done traditionally. (Muhaemin, 2017)

The emergence of Muslim creators who are also preachers with the concept of da'wahtainment has emerged as a distinct phenomenon within the community. Through watching videos uploaded by these creators on social media, Muslim creators encourage the creation of a contemporary hijrah culture among the younger generation. Based on the researcher's observations, there aren't many Muslim creator accounts on Instagram with a da'wah theme. Nurul Azka, the creator, has 441,000 followers on Instagram under the account @nunuzoo.

![Instagram page of @nunuzoo](Source: Instagram.com/nunuzoo)

Figure 1. The Instagram page of @nunuzoo’s Account

Afterward, there's Afgan Kusumanegara, a Muslim creator from Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, with the Komedi Dakwah Film Youtube channel. With over 21,000 subscribers, this channel provides da'wahtainment through an entertaining short film concept. Since 4 years ago, this channel has had 61 videos uploaded to it. Youtube has a significant impact on meeting audio-visual needs. Not only does it provide general information, but it also addresses social issues, one of which is health. It has been demonstrated that during the Covid-19 pandemic, a large amount of health-related information is accessed via YouTube; however, the accuracy of this information has not
been tested. (Oi et al., 2020) Content creators on YouTube are known as vloggers or YouTubers. (Ladhari et al., 2020)

This study aims to analyze how Muslim creators carry out the creativity of da’wah communication on social media with a netnographic approach. Netnography is a new form of qualitative research that seeks to understand cultural experiences that are encompassed and reflected in traces, practice networks, and online tracking systems. (Kozinets, 2019) The creativity of Muslim creators has not been studied much, especially regarding the elements of shows that contain da’wahtainment.

Taufik Rahman (2020) investigated several previous studies on the same theme concerning Da’wah Communication for Millennials. Rahman mentions in his research that there are stages that must be completed for Islamic da’wah communication via the internet, which is more focused on commanding ma’raf (doing the right) first than nahi munkar (forbidding what is wrong). Da’wah communication that is enjoyable and results in solutions is more than just motivation. As a matter of fact, da’wah communication, which can still be facilitated, does not have to be difficult. And media solutions that can be optimized to make religious learning more accessible to the millennial generation, such as through the internet or social media. (Rahman, 2020)

Meanwhile, another study found that the presence of content on social media has an effect on the habits of the younger generation due to the variety of content served. Exposure to certain content results in another term known as inspirational content. (Janicke-Bowles et al., 2018)

Boursier (2020) conducted additional research, stating that social media made it easier for content creators to present visual content, but with a specific purpose. One of them is for the narcissistic purpose of self-promotion, seeking attention in order to gain the influence they desire through their social media content. (Boursier et al., 2020)
Method

This research is constructivist paradigm research with qualitative research methods. The constructivist paradigm assumes that everyone seeks to comprehend the world in which they live and work. The subjective meaning of the experiences they have is assessed, and the meaning is obtained by certain objects. (Creswell, 2013) This study employs a netnographic approach, focusing on observing villages on the internet and how the interactivity of posts in the form of likes and comments on Instagram and YouTube as research objects. Netnography provides opportunities for participation and engagement. The definition of engagement in netnography is that researchers are not required to participate in the activities of the informants studied, such as sending or commenting on user posts, giving likes, and also comments. Participation is challenging because data in Netnography generally exist before the researcher conducts the research. Engagement is a type of data involved in which researchers devote and engage with the data being studied. The following are the levels of netnography engagement: (Kozinets, 2019).

The netnographic method in this study focuses on observations on research subjects on Instagram and Youtube. Netnography can explore online communication on social media. Through a netnographic approach, researchers can find factors for online success. (Loureiro et al., 2019) The object of research is content in the form of videos on the Instagram social media page of Muslim creators @nunuzoo and Afgan Kusumanegara on the Komedi Dakwah Film Youtube channel. While the research subjects are followers’ accounts or follower accounts that provide likes and comments on the two Muslim creator accounts. The video content that was selected purposively was the content that had the most viewers in the last two years, namely 2020 and 2021. Then the researchers tracked the content that had the highest number of likes and comments from the two Muslim creators' Instagram accounts.

In this study, researchers also used the triangulation method with data sources. In the documentation, the researcher uses data from the media analysis website, notes, and documentation, which in this case is obtained through documents and videos other than those on Instagram @nunuzoo and @evieefendie. According to Yin, there are several types of data collection, including document collection from articles, newspaper clippings, letters, reports, agendas, memorandums, research results, and articles. Service records, survey data, maps, name lists, personal records such as diaries, calendars, and so on are all examples of archival records. (Yin, 2019)

Results and Discussion

The Creativity of Da'wahainment by Muslim Creators with the Concept of Da'wah Communication

Based on the results of the study, there are two uploaded videos on the @nunuzoo Instagram account during the 2020-2021 period that have received the most viewers, likes, and comments. The study's findings suggest that Muslim creators' creativity can
be seen in the upload of content that is presented without being rigid, as well as the theme of contemporary da'wah that is entertaining. Meanwhile, according to the researcher's findings, the most popular da'wahtainment uploads among netizens are in the form of videos/short films rather than photos and infographics.

The @nunuzoo account has a fairly high *engagement rate data* when analyzed from the Social Blade.com website. The platform's engagement rate data will demonstrate the high level of interaction that creators have. According to the researcher's findings, the higher the interaction, the more people will trust the collaboration, also known as an endorsement. The researchers obtained the following information.

Source: Socialblade.com

**Figure 3. Analysis of Instagram Account @nunuzoo**

Based on the image above, Nurul Azka, also known as Nunu, has 443,137 followers on the @nunuzoo account. The account of the creator has been active since 2014, with 317 videos posted. @nunuzoo has a 3.56% engagement rate, with an average of 15,494 likes on all posts and 263,000 comments. This demonstrates that the creativity of these creators merits further examination.

Nurul Azka was born on November 2, 1997, in Jakarta. She has been interested in broadcasting since she was in high school. She has had a passion for acting and expressing herself through parody videos since she was a child. She only recently began to channel her hobby of creating religious content videos that are packaged funny and full of humor after graduating from high school. Nurul Azka once stated in her content that she aspired to be a film director. She chose to pursue the worlds of broadcasting and film both academically and self-taught in order to fulfill this desire. She is currently enrolled in the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Studies at the Jakarta State Islamic University, where she is studying Islamic Communication and Broadcasting.
The most popular da'wahthainment uploads among followers are videos/short films with parodies, rather than just posting photos or infographics. Parody is more popular because it is entertaining and has a humorous story. Furthermore, da'wah communication carried out by communicators, namely Muslim creators @nunuzoo, uses sources that do not contradict Islamic teachings, popular media, and has the potential to change the younger generation's lifestyle to be more Islamic. Here are some video uploads based on the concept of da'wahthainment:

![Video Post of Da’wahthainment on @nunuzoo about Marriage](source: Instagram.com/nunuzoo)

Figure 4. Video Post of Da’wahthainment on @nunuzoo about Marriage

This content was uploaded by Muslim creator nunuzoo with the theme of marriage in Islam. This theme is popular among young people on social media because there are many similar videos uploaded by other Muslim creators that have received positive feedback from netizens. Nurul Azka or @nunuzoo stated in early 2021 content that Islam conveys that the younger generation already has the ability to marry, not even dating.

This is the first da'wah-themed video from @nunuzoo that incorporates the stop motion concept, namely a video with a moving photo display. Although this content appears simple, it has a high level of creativity and touches the hearts of netizens who see it because it is accompanied by heartfelt background music. This video received 39,000 likes and 543 comments on the @nunuzoo Instagram account, owing to her creativity. This figure cannot be considered small given that the netizens who watched @nunuzoo's content came from a diverse range of backgrounds. Lewis (2019) investigated this and concluded that creator content is a micro form of celebrity. Micro- celebrity, or celebrity on a smaller scale, should not be underestimated. The allure of
influencers or creators is not limited to monetary gain but can extend to other goals such as political power. (Lewis, 2019).

There are several comments and responses from netizens on the @nunuzoo Instagram page in response to the video post. There are those who agree with the ideas and concepts that @nunuzoo wishes to convey about the prohibition on dating in Islam, but there are also several netizen accounts that deny and criticize the content. The following are screenshots of netizen comments:

The @asyarihasan163 account appears to be criticizing @nunuzoo's content posts, questioning why it only discusses the disadvantages of dating before marriage. Everything, according to the netizen, has a positive and negative side. Then, @nunuzoo immediately responded to this comment, saying;

I know that dating has its positives… But, how come this is something that is clearly forbidden by Allah… so if it's positive, but Allah clearly forbids it, hmm, how come… do you understand? (laughing emoticon).

According to @nunuzoo's comment, the da'wah communication used is a creative approach that does not offend on the surface and employs good verbal language. The emoticons used do not also contain elements that mock or degrade netizens who disagree with them. Furthermore, da'wah communication carried out by communicators, namely Muslim creators, uses sources that do not contradict Islamic teachings, popular media, and has the potential to change the younger generation's lifestyle to be more Islamic. This is consistent with Mulyana's (2004) view that communication is a process of sharing meaning through verbal and nonverbal behaviour. (Mulyana, 2004).

The following section contains the Lathi Da'wah version. This is the creator @nunuzoo's post about the Lathi challenge, which is currently going viral in the middle of 2020 on various video-based social media platforms such as Instagram, Tiktok, and Youtube. This content describes a woman's regret for engaging in backbiting or gossiping activities. This activity is forbidden or haram in Islam, according to the Quran. Then it is explained that in Surah Al Hujurat verse 12, it is stated that backbiting is equivalent to eating one's own brother's carcass.
This video content with entertaining elements has over 35,000 likes, and there are approximately 1614 comments on Instagram @nunuzoo. Furthermore, many accounts reposted this video, causing it to go viral. Based on the two videos, it is clear that the Muslim creator @nunuzoo was successful in creating a stimulus to change or shape the understanding and behavior of Instagram users. The Muslim creator @nunuzoo's da'wah communication demonstrates clearly how the message is constructed by the preacher, who is a communicator according to communication science. The content containing the da'wah message is then distributed via social media, which is most popular among the younger generation, so that it reaches the communicant, namely netizens.

The next object of research is Afgan Kusumanegara's YouTube channel, "Komedi Dakwah Film," which is run by Muslim creators from Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. With up to 21,000 subscribers, this channel provides da'wahtainment in the form of entertaining short films. In the last four years, this channel has had 61 videos uploaded to it. Subscribers to the Komedi Dakwah Film Youtube channel come from all over the world, not just the archipelago. Subscribers are viewers who indicate a desire to watch more videos and receive notifications from the content creator. Subscribers are also thought to play an important role in the success of YouTube creators, also known as YouTubers, because they can watch videos and content that is created more frequently than those who do not subscribe. This Komedi Dakwah Film Channel has 61 video posts packaged in the form of short films, all of which are played by Muslim creator Afgan Kusumanegara and his friends. The Komedi Dakwah Film channel's video page is as follows:
Based on the netnographic analysis, there were two video uploads that received the highest rating from the viewer's perspective, as measured by the number of likes and comments. The following is the most popular upload/content with a da'wah theme from the Comedy Da'wah Film YouTube channel:

According to the video upload, the video has been viewed more than 37,000 times since it was first posted on February 7, 2020, with a total of 21,000 subscribers. The episode 8 video is 1 hour 44 minutes long and features a rural setting in Lombok with the idea of making a comedy-themed short film. The plot revolves around Adrian, who, on a whim, decides to fool his friends by pretending to be a hajj. He wore Pak Gan's robe and hajj cap, which were being made at Mumfazal's (late) home. And it turns out that this film won the Best Script for Moviemont 2017 award. Although the dialogue in
this short film upload is generally in the local language, namely Lombok, the creators provide Indonesian subtitles so that viewers can still enjoy the film's storyline, which contains local wisdom.

A total of 362 accounts expressed interest in the post video/short film episode 8 titled 'Haji Palsu' (Fake Hajj). Meanwhile, there was not a single account that stated that they did not like it. Then, out of a total of 26 comments left by netizens, the majority of them stated that this short film was extremely entertaining. One subscriber even said he couldn't wait for the next work by Muslim creator Afgan Kusumanegara. The following are screenshots of netizen comments on the Comedy Da’wah Film YouTube channel;

The next video post that has the second-highest rating is Episode 28: Sang Petugas (The Officer). This content was published on April 10, 2021, and received a large number of likes, totaling 2,100, as well as 165,594 netizens who watched it. This is how the post appears;
Episode 28: The officer describes the Lombok District Office of Population Control, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection's standard family data collection process (DP2KBP3A). This data collection took place over the course of two months, from April to May 2021. The West Lombok Regency P2KBP3A Service collaborates with the Comedy Da’wah Film in this episode. Adrian, the main character, is always entertaining through funny dialogues and behavior, even though he is in Lombok, as with other episode uploads. This uploaded video, on the other hand, has Indonesian subtitles. According to the post, 177 netizen comments stated that they were thoroughly entertained after watching this episode.

Great film, Mr. Afgan and the rest of the crew, please make more comedy films so that my stomach acid gradually heals because the film can make me happy when I'm tired of being tired.

From the comments regarding the Comedy Da’wah content, researchers can analyze that the content deserves a recommendation for content enthusiasts that carry the concept of da’wah. On social media platforms, content recommendations are deemed effective if they benefit not only content creators but also help netizens obtain important information in an innovative manner. (Xiao et al., 2019) As stated by Correa, followers' involvement in Komedi Dakwah Film content does not occur by itself. If the video uploaded by the Youtuber was a favourite, then involvement will emerge from a cognitive, affective, and behavioural standpoint. (Corrêa et al., 2020)

Da’wahtainment is a combination of da’wah calling and entertainment. Furthermore, based on the concept of the etymology of Da’wah, there is another meaning, namely prayer. As such, da’wahtainment can be defined as the dissemination of Islamic messages in order to provide a means of living a more Islamic life by combining it with entertainment elements (Haris Fiardi, 2021). Based on the posts of Muslim creators and netizen comments, it is possible to conclude that there is a shared
perception among creators and netizens who follow them. As Lou and Yuan (2019) said there must be similarities between creators or influencers and their followers so that if a common perception has been formed towards content or brand, then that similarity can be used to reinforce that perception. (Lou & Yuan, 2019)

Conclusion

The creativity of Muslim creators can be seen in the uploaded content that is presented, which contains entertaining elements, humorous stories, and da'wah themes that are chosen to follow a popular trend. By transforming the concept of da'wahtainment into a separate phenomenon in the community, a Muslim creator who is also a preacher. It doesn't take long for the content created by these Muslim creators to go viral on social media. Furthermore, the creativity of Muslim creators encourages the development of a contemporary hijrah culture among the younger generation by watching uploaded videos and then reposting, commenting on, liking, subscribing, and any other reactions on social media. Da'wah communication describes how the preacher, who is a communicator according to communication science, constructs the message. The da'wah messages are then conveyed through various media in order to reach the communicant, namely the congregation, and then influence the congregation, in this case, netizens on social media.

The content uploads that are presented with contemporary da'wah communication demonstrate Muslim creators' da'wahtainment creativity. Instead of simply posting photos or infographics, the most popular da'wahtainment uploads are videos/short films. Furthermore, da'wah communication carried out by communicators, namely Muslim creators, uses sources that do not contradict Islamic teachings, popular media, and has the potential to change the younger generation's lifestyle to be more Islamic.

References


