

Da'i (Muslim Preachers) Idols, Fatwas, and Political Constellations: Empirical Study of Millennial Generation Perspective

Fahrudin¹, Mohammad Rindu Fajar Islamy²

¹Departemen Pendidikan Umum, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

²Ilmu Pendidikan Agama Islam, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

Email: fajarislam2000@upi.edu

Keywords

Da'i Idol, Digital Da'wah, Millennial Generation, Fatwa, Politics.

Abstract

This study aims to track the phenomenon of da'i idols among the millennial generation and its impact on the dynamics of accepting contemporary fatwas and the constellation of leader elections in Indonesia. The da'wah transformation from traditional methods to digital media is increasingly adding to the dynamics of changing the youth's perspective in responding to life's problems, such as religious fatwas and political constellations. This study uses mixed methods research. The data collection technique used google Forms by taking 95 respondents, and semi-structured interviews with five informants using random sampling with the criteria enjoy listening to digital da'wah. Data analysis applies the theory of Miles and Huberman with the following steps: data collection, data display, data reduction, and conclusion. The research results show several essential points, including; 1) There is an urgency in the need for da'wah studies in filling the pressure of problems faced by the millennial generation, 2) Communication style and material substance are more important than the intellectuality of a preacher, 3) In the context of certain fatwas, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) is preferred to be used as a reference from their da'i idol, 4) In the context of choosing a leader, they prefer individual ijtihad to a public figure or institutional ijtihad, 5) Digital da'wah contributes significantly to character strengthening, 6) Da'wah themes vary according to the needs of listeners, and 7) characteristics of da'i idol including polite, wise, humble, broad-minded, moderate, good communication, akhlakul karimah.

Kata kunci

Da'I Idol, Dakwah Digital, Generasi Milenial, Fatwa, Politik.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melacak fenomena da'i idola di kalangan generasi milenial dan dampaknya terhadap dinamika penerimaan fatwa kontemporer dan konstelasi pemilihan presiden di Indonesia. Tren transformasi dakwah dari metode tradisional ke media digital semakin menambah dinamika perubahan perspektif anak muda dalam merespon permasalahan kehidupan, seperti fatwa agama dan konstelasi politik. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian mixed methods, dan teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan google form dengan mengambil 95 responden dan wawancara semi terstruktur dengan lima informan menggunakan random sampling dengan kriteria senang mendengarkan dakwah digital. Analisis data menerapkan teori Miles dan Huberman dengan langkah-langkah

sebagai berikut: Pengumpulan data, Tampilan Data, Reduksi Data, dan Kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan beberapa poin penting, antara lain; 1) Adanya urgensi perlunya kajian dakwah dalam mengisi tekanan permasalahan yang dihadapi generasi milenial, 2) Gaya komunikasi dan substansi material lebih penting daripada intelektualitas seorang pengkhotbah, 3) Dalam konteks fatwa tertentu, Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) lebih diutamakan untuk dijadikan rujukan dari dakwah Idola mereka, 4) Dalam konteks pemilihan pemimpin, mereka lebih memilih ijihad individu daripada tokoh masyarakat atau ijihad institusional, 5) Dakwah digital berkontribusi signifikan terhadap penguatan karakter, 6) Tema dakwah bervariasi sesuai dengan kebutuhan pendengar, dan 7) karakteristik da'i idola meliputi sopan, bijaksana, rendah hati, berwawasan luas, moderat, komunikasi yang baik, dan akhlakul karimah.

Introduction

The digital da'wah movement is rapidly increasing along with sophisticated social media features (Ashaari, 2015; Briandana, 2020; Savitri Hartono, 2018). Most scholars consider transforming traditional da'wah culture into a digital one an easy and effective step in spreading universal religious messages worldwide in seconds. Optimizing the role of the media as a new function has spawned many socio-religious movements wrapped in digital da'wah (Cheong, 2011b; Ittefaq, 2021; Kadoda, 2015). As depicted by Dayana Lengauer in her research study on the taqwa spirit movement developed by one of the Muslim youth generation communities in Bandung, the aim is to shape individual piety through online media platforms in building patterns of interaction with their followers (Lengauer, 2018). Another movement called ODOJ (One Daya One Juz) was also born and has attracted 140,000 followers in Indonesia and abroad. This movement was initiated to build the spirit of reading the Holy Quran using the WhatsApp application. The ODOJ (One Day One Juz) movement, framed by a Muslim scholar Eva F Nisa, proves that technological devices can trigger semi-virtual-based religious movements (Nisa, 2018). In another area, Wang Wei Hew, a contemporary sociologist, explores one of Indonesia's religious figures, Felix Siaw, in forming a model and pattern of virtual da'wah. He has successfully attracted 4 million followers on his social media on Facebook and 2 million followers on Twitter (Hew, 2018). From the author's point of view, the phenomenon of digital da'wah cannot be separated from religious orders sourced from the Quran and Hadith to always do good deeds in keeping people alive in their spiritual religion (Arnez, 2009). The study of da'wah in the dimension of modernity seems to be able to attract the attention of scholars around the world to be involved in developing a scientific tradition that focuses on the advancement of da'wah in creating a harmonious, peaceful, religious, tolerant, and wise society (Chaplin, 2018; Ham, 2017; Rock, 2010; Shanahan, 2004; Weismann, 2019).

In the past few years, the famous da'i has emerged in Indonesia (Ikhwan & Wafi, 2022). That famous da'i with many followers includes Ustadz Abdul Somad, Ustadz Hanan Attaki, Ustadz Evie Efendi, Ustadz Adi Hidayat, Ustadz Khalid Basalamah, Gus Baha, Zaidul Akbar, and Abdullah Gymnastiar. They consistently educate the public to get closer to the values of religious teachings. The comparison of his subscribers on his YouTube channel until 2021 can be seen as follows:

Table 1. Number of Subscribers and viewers on the Youtube Channel

No.	Da'i	Subscribers	Viewers
1	Ustadz Hanan Attaki	2,17 milions	81,163,717 (2017-present)
2	Ustadz Abdul Somad	2,31 milions	137,867,249 (2019- present)
3	Ustadz Adi Hidayat	± 2,5 milions	99,020,132 (2019- present)
4	Ustadz Das'ad Latief	2,09 milions	190,788,702 (2017- present)
5	Abdullah Gymnastiar	736.000	68,111,159 (2016- present)
6	Ustadz Aam Amirudin	30.400	2,756,267 (2020- present)
7	Khalid Basalamah	2,03 milions	121,869,188 (2013- present)
8	Ustadzah Oki Setiana Dewi	130.000	4,310,713 (2019- present)

Source: Research Results

The statistical data above certainly provides the potential for a new transformation of new religious authority in the contemporary dimension based on individual public figures rather than institutions (Burhanudin, 2014; Díez Bosch et al., 2017; Possamai, 2012; Radde-Antweiler, 2018). The popular preachers who can attract the congregation in massive numbers are called da'i idols. These preachers become idols for specific communities with massive success in gaining their sympathy to become role models in various aspects. Scholars have pointed out the function of the media as a tool to develop new authorities, and the internet plays an essential role in shaping religious authority in a social movement with four pillars of authority, namely; 1) role, 2) structure, 3) ideology and 4) text (Campbell, 2010). Some examples of case studies related to religious authority and their relevance to power politics, policy, economics, and social change have become a severe discussion in several regions, including Indonesia (Bruzzi, 2015; Burhanudin, 2014; Cheong, 2011a). The transformation of changes in religious authority from Institutions to Individuals has a significant impact on the dynamics of people's thinking. In this case, da'i idols can influence how youth think through their digital da'wah. Thus, it will undoubtedly impact the direction of their point of view in responding to the developing problems around them. The thinking culture of the youth becomes a target for certain groups in instilling

contradictory ideologies with religious values such as radicalism, terrorism, extremism, and others (Suyanto et al., 2019). From another point of view, the concerns of Muslim scholars with the existence of a new religious authority can potentially move public opinion in response to events (Leong, 2019), such as the presidential election constellation, religious fatwas issued by Government Religious Authority Institutions such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), even to the point of power politics.

In some cases, the statistical data found in the field showed a strong correlation between the da'i idols, acceptance of fatwas, and the selection of potential leaders. One of the respondents even stated that he would obey whatever his da'i idol said. Of course, it can significantly impact maintaining the generosity and integrity of government religious public institutions that are already independent and considered public policy authorities regarding legal fatwas (Sirry, 2013; Syafei, 2017). This study focuses on how the younger generation's frame of mind is formed due to the consistent internalization process of the da'wah of a da'i idol to make themselves role models in various aspects. Many studies on da'wah's dynamics and the potential of new religious authorities have been conducted by Muslim and non-Muslim scientists (Campbell, 2010; Cheong, 2011a; Dickson, 2008). The majority of the research in the author's point of view still focuses on specific da'wah thematics by contextualizing it according to the reality faced by each scholar as a study in exploring the millennial generation's framework of thinking in Southeast Asia based on digital da'wah on Social media (Briandana, 2020). Understanding the phenomenon of da'i idols that can significantly impact the construction of the millennial generation's thoughts has the potential to lead them towards a good impact on the integrity of the nation. The research questions are about the characteristics of da'i idols from the point of view of the millennial generation, the relationship between the influence of the da'i idol on political aspects (presidential election constellations) and religious aspects (acceptance of MUI fatwas), and whether there is an impact of the substance of da'i idol's da'wah material on strengthening the character of the millennial generation.

Method

The study was conducted using a mixed-method research type by combining qualitative and quantitative research. The data collection technique was carried out in two stages, namely: 1) The stage of data collection with questionnaires distributed via a google form, where the research instrument was focused on answering several focus problems between dai idol connectivity, the right to choose leaders in politics, response to fatwas; and 2) Stages of data collection with semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation, where the informants were taken using the random sampling technique. The number of participants involved in filling out the google form was 95 participants. In contrast, the number of informants interviewed amounted to 5 people with the criteria of enjoying listening to digital da'wah. Almost 100% of the young

generation involved are 19-24 years old since the selection is based on their point of view. The young generation involved came from regions where the most significant population came from Bandung, approximately 30%. In contrast, the rest came from other cities such as Bogor, Depok, Bekasi, Cianjur, Cimahi, Indramayu, Garut, Jakarta, Purwakarta, Sukabumi, and other areas of Sumatra. I was taking variations of various locations to see the characteristics of respondents' answers in decisions related to fatwas and presidential elections.

In research studies, data analysis is needed to elaborate research results to be more developed and understood. This study uses analytical descriptive data analysis and adopts the Miles and Huberman analysis framework, where the framework is described in Figure 2 below:

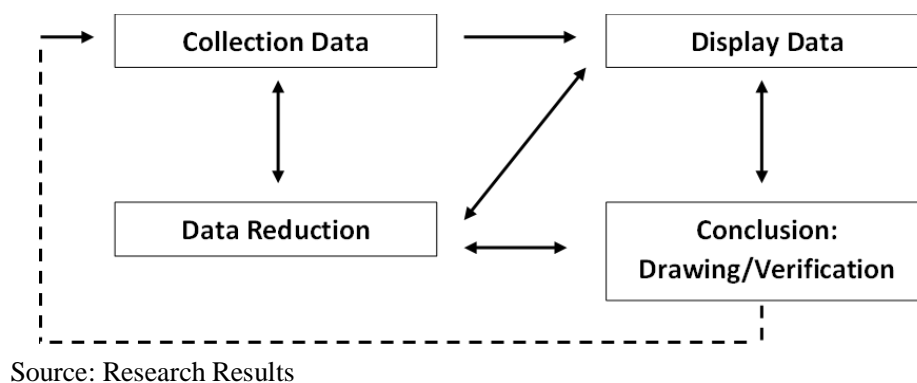


Figure 1. Analysis Framework of Miles and Huberman

Results and Discussion

The Urgency of Optimizing Spiritual Aspect in the Dimension of Modernity

This research was conducted on the millennial generation community, where spiritual-based motivation is needed amidst daily challenges and problems. The complexity of internal and external problems faced by the younger generation almost always appears in their lives. The majority of informant answered that restoring the spirit of individual piety is needed for them, as narrated by one of the respondents with the initials RA: “My reason for listening to da'wah lectures on social media is to strengthen my faith, increase knowledge, and spend my spare time with useful activities.”

The millennial generation strongly feels the need for spiritual values in globalization and technological developments. The existence of global competition will undoubtedly impact the sectors of their lives, including economic, education, culture, employment opportunities, and even politics (Al-Rawashdeh, 2014; Bruner & Iannarelli, 2011; Watson, 2001; Weldon et al., 2011). An empirical study confirms that globalization has badly contributed to changes in the higher education system, which should have been a public service but is now turning to profit-based commercial

commodities (Machingambi, 2014). The impact of this transformation certainly creates a gap between exclusive students and low-middle students. As a result, globalization will create educational inequality and a lack of social harmonization. The high cost of education can undoubtedly impact the pressure faced by the millennial generation to meet these costs. In Korea, the progress of globalization impacts the inequality of people's economic income (Mah, 2002). The economic pressure created by global competition can also impact one's peace of mind. This portrait of reality is further strengthened by the author's findings on several respondents, as felt by one of the respondents with the initials RSA:

“Firstly, through social media, knowledge from preaching is easy to obtain, yet it must be filtered. Secondly, I want peace of mind and soul, and listening to da'wah can calm the heart and soul.”

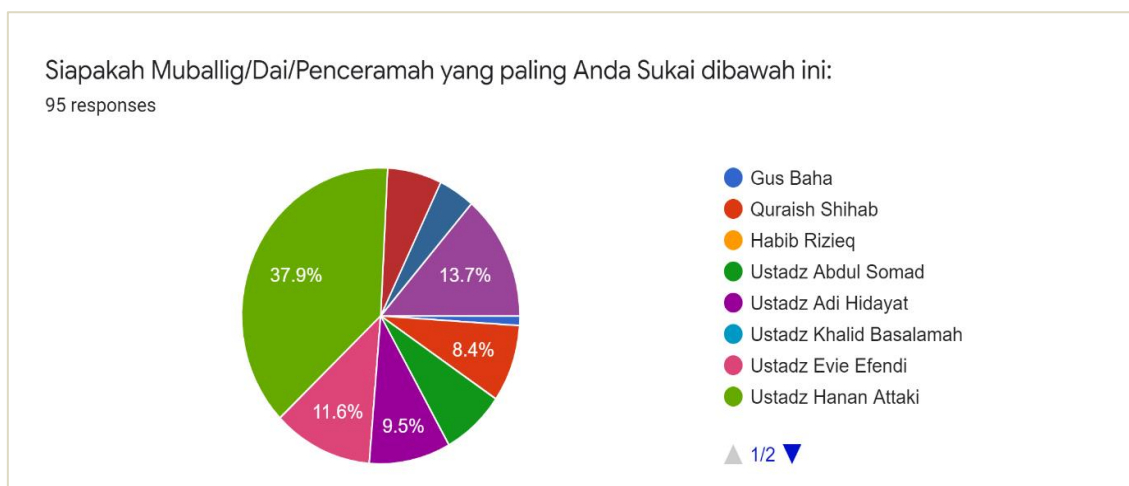
Information technology is crucial in revitalizing religion in another landscape whose presence has been noticed since the 1970s. Socio-religious movements with the support of modern technology can be studied based on two approaches, namely; 1) how the function of digital media is used in building pious traditions and Islamic culture, and 2) how Islamic rituals are developed through a technological approach (Lengauer, 2018). The proliferation of digital da'wah movements initiated by several popular preachers can fill the void in the spiritual context that the younger generation feels. One of the successful strategies the prophet Muhammad SAW carried out in creating toughness and immunity to pressure is his efforts to continually provide motivation based on religious values, termed by *At-Tasyji Ala Al- Iksar Minal Khair* (Rawwas, 1988).

Dayana Lengaeur, in her ethnographic study of the spirit of the *taqwa* community in Bandung, found strong evidence that the millennial generation with the middle class and educated characteristics are motivated to fill the void of their free time with expressions of individual piety (Lengauer, 2018). The use of social media strengthens their ability to re-create and build spaces for collaboration, mutual support, and self-development in a way that other popular media, such as Islamic magazines or TV shows, cannot. These spaces are filled with pious practices and affective expressions of contemporary Islamic subjectivity and modes of social life among young middle-class Muslims in Bandung.

In the literature written by Muslim scholars, the primary purpose of education is to shape one's character and morality based on the Qur'an and *As-Sunnah* (Al-Suri, 1991; Ali, 2002; Bakkar, 2011). Furthermore, it is emphasized that Islam is very concerned about the psychological condition of the young generation in their lives; thus, managing their spiritual health is fundamental to the formation of superior Islamic generations ('Abd Al-Rahmān, 2004). *Tafsir* scholars see that in the Qur'an, many verses allude to the principle of reward and punishment, which aims to motivate a Muslim always to be enthusiastic in expressing individual piety in family, society, and

the nation (Ath-Thabari, 1994; Katsir, 1999). Signs related to motivation can be obtained from how the Qur'an mentions some of the rewards obtained, such as reward, heaven, love of Allah SWT, the pleasure of Allah SWT, being kept away from torment, and so on. Our example of the prophet Muhammad has applied this Quranic principle SAW in pumping the spirit of patriotism to his friends to continue to never give up in the da'wah of Islam.

Characteristics of Da'i Idol: Communication, Da'wah Content, and Personality



Source: Research Results

Figure 2. Diagram of Millennial Generation Da'i Idols

From the statistical data above, it is interesting to develop further regarding the choices of idol preachers from the point of view of the participants, who are the majority of the younger generation. If sorted based on the results of the percentage, then the position of the order from top to bottom can be described as follows: 1) 37.9% chose Ustadz Hanan Attaki, 2) 13.7% Other Ustadz, 3) 11.6% Ustadz Evie Efendi, 4) 9.5% Ustadz Adi Hidayat, 5) 8.4% Prof. Quraish Shihab, 6) 7.4% Ustadz Abdul Somad, 7) 6.3% Abdullah Gymnastiar, 8) 4.2% Ustadz Firanda, and the remaining 1, 1% voted for Gus Baha.

To explore the driving factors and individual motivations for choosing the preachers above, I include an instrument related to the reasons for choosing them. The results have described the responses from the respondents in the form of tables so that they can be easily understood:

Table 2. Statistics Data Analysis of Da'i Idol

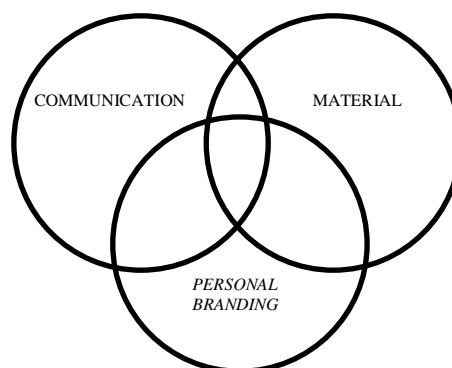
No	Da'i Idol	Percentage	Main Reason	New Interpretation
1	Hanan Attaki	37,9%	The majority answered that their communication	Communication Model, Emotional

			style is in line with millennials; the topic is current, accessible to digest	Relationship, Relevant Topic, Easy to consume
2	Evie Efendi	11,6%	Compatibility with young people, Humorous, easy to digest, good communication	Communication Model, Emotional Relationship, Relevant Topic, Easy to consume
3	Adi Hidayat	9,5%	Detailed & scientific explanations, Integrity, A memorizer of the Quran, Intelligent, Courteous, Not Judging, Easy delivery	Communication Model, Personality, Scientific, <i>Hafidz</i>
4	Quraish Shihab	8,4%	Credible with integrity, moral message according to listeners, moderate Dai, not involved in political interests, polite language, not voicing hatred	Communication Model, Personality, Competence, Moderate Attitude, Integrity
5	Abdul Somad	7,4%	Material to the point, Polite, Mild Language, Humorous, Parents Like to Watch	Communication Models, Humorous, Polite
6	Firanda	4,2%	Teacher and Student Relations, Speaking based on arguments, rational, <i>hafidz</i> , broad knowledge, Clear scientific track record, good delivery	Communication Model, Teacher-Student Relations, Argumentative, Competent, Scientific Background
7	Abdullah Gymnastiar	6,3%	Exciting and motivating content to worship, Polite in speech, lots of experience, communication style	Communication Model, Emotional Relationship, Relevant Topic, Easy to

			touches the heart, easy to understand	consume
8	Gus Baha	1,1%	The information delivery is quite good and peaceful, quirky, with some jokes.	Communication, Moderate, Humorous, Differentiation
9	Ustadz Lainnya	13,7%	Exciting and motivating content to worship, Polite in speech, lots of experience, communication style, easy to understand	Communication Model, Emotional Relationship, Relevant Topic, Easy to consume

Source: Research Results

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the characteristics of da'i who become idols of the younger generation are at least narrowed down to several main characteristics, namely: 1) Communication Style, 2) Light Topics, and according to their needs, 3) Islamic personality. These three components must be owned by a lecturer in the dimension of modernity to win the younger generation's sympathy. There is evidence that the background of mass organizations such as NU, Muhammadiyah, Persis, and others is insignificant. As long as digital da'wah carries out the three aspects above, the author concludes that someone can become a new idol preacher for the younger generation. In the author's analysis, the pillars can be described as follows:



Source: Research Results

Figure 3. The Key Pillar to be a Da'i Idol

Persuasive communication in building emotional relationships plays a vital role in audience acceptance, and this is what most communication observers believe (Ashworth, 2015; Dickson, 2008; Lilleker, 2015; Rude, 2008; Sulastri et al., 2022). Feinstein argues in his scientific studies that there is a strong relationship between

education, communication, and science in building public relations (Feinstein, 2015). In the 1920s, John Dewey and Walter Lippmann wrote important books examining whether the public can play a constructive role in policy, especially when specialized knowledge is involved. According to them, to gain public space sympathy must at least pay attention to several things, including (1) non-scientific frameworks and narratives that people use to interpret news, (2) the “second formation” of scientific facts by the media, and (3) emerging platforms for public engagement (Feinstein, 2015). This certainly further strengthens the findings above that the millennial generation has characteristics as critical thinkers. They will be more open and quicker to receive information when delivered with a good communication framework.

Furthermore, social media allow Muslim users to shape their subjectivity 'in a very new way' and refer to the concept of 'imaginary community.' It also enables them to embrace affective, social exchange forms that display continuity with local forms of social urban religious realities they inhabit. The subjectivity formed in this context is inspired by the model of an economically and politically successful but socially caring Muslim leader who ideally embodies the virtues of creativity and discipline at the same time.

Regarding communication material and history, it seems that Rasulullah SAW has applied this principle as concluded by the expert on comparative studies of religions, Sheikh Muhammad Abdurrahman Al-Arefe, in his work “*Istamti' Bi Hayātika: Funūn At-Ta'āmul Ma'a An. -Nās fī Dzilli Sīrah An-Nabawīyyah*”. Sheikh Arefe named this principle *Ikhtar Al-Kalam Al-Munasib*, which means choosing the correct dialogue and discussion according to the audience (Al-Arefe, 2011). Rasulullah SAW communicated not by relying on one style and model but with a variety of delivery techniques and content that was in line with what was needed by the companions at that time. Even Prof Muhammad Rawwas termed the above principle with the phrase “*Al-Khithāb 'Alā Qadri Fahmi Uqūlihim*” meaning that talking to other people must be built based on the intellectual level of the audience (Rawwas, 1988). In building personal branding, besides being required to master the right communication style and content, preachers are also required to study the characteristics of a person, both individual and community. Knowing the individual character properly, a preacher can build his communication style according to the listener's needs. Then what kind of content do millennials like? The statistical data that the authors found from the survey results. At least specific themes are loved by the majority of the millennial generation, including contemporary issues, life themes, life motivation, marriage and matchmaking, millennial problems, Hereafter, *Pemuda Hijrah*, strengthening faith, Qur'an thematic, and others.

Next, the author is interested in discussing the unique reasons for choosing the da'i idol found naturally, one of which is as stated by a young woman AS:

“I chose Ustadz Firanda because he is my teacher. I sometimes consult about *hafidzhullah* with him. He has a rational way of thinking and always talks with evidence. I have never found his words without evidence. He never includes personal views to understand something but uses *Salafus* pious understanding or *ijma* of the preacher. Masya Allah is a very realistic person, and if he does not know a particular law, he does not hesitate to answer that he does not know.”

From the unique case above, the relationship between teacher and student significantly impacts specific individuals. The bottom-up relationship is an appropriate model to describe the above expression. This tradition is almost similar to the models of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools with the yellow book learning model are identical to this model. The students glorify the *kyai*, the teacher, and the cottage elders (Marhumah, 2014). The study of *pesantren* seems to have attracted Muslim scholars to examine further how the relationship between the *kyai* and the student appears to have a non-monolithic relationship. *Mahfudz* captured in his case study of certain *pesantren* that communication patterns can influence the success of *pesantren* in gaining sympathy from the parents in sending their children to *pesantren* (Machfudz, 2019). Even in several well-known modern schools in Indonesia, according to SusyLOWATI, most female students have started to get used to building social interactions by using effective communication (SusyLOWATI, 2019). The bottom-up communication pattern between teachers and students by keeping an eye on the characteristics of the younger generation who tend to be critical in thinking, conveying da'wah themes based on arguments from both the Qur'an and *As-Sunnah* can become a bridge for personal branding so that the preacher can become a da'i idol, as happened in the unique case above. The author sees that the da'wah communication style conveyed by Ustadz Firanda puts forward the slogan of returning to the Qur'an and *As-Sunnah*. This can be seen from the author's lectures on the circulating YouTube channel.

The phenomenon of the da'i idol that occurs among the younger generation shows that at this time, with the increasing popularity of the use of social media, it seems that it has an impact on the shift in patterns of religious authority which used to be more established collectively and institutionally, today it has begun to be abandoned, the concept of personal branding wrapped in a good communication style on social media is the key to success in attracting the sympathy of millennials. The establishment of large institutions and mass organizations such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), Nahdatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, Persis, and others, do not necessarily have their voices heard by young people because, in the case found by the author, millennials are more concerned with personal branding. From the perspective of the Dayana Languaer landscape, within the Muslim community in certain areas, social media plays an essential role in directing the point of view of experiences rooted in digital culture, which is described as a vision of Muslim modernity and the Indonesian information society (Lengauer, 2018). A sharp analysis was carried out by Nur Afni

Muhammad on the socio-religious movement carried out by Felix Siau; in his findings, the representation of Felix Siau as Islamic populism in Social media was due to three reasons; 1) Islamic populism is synonymous with anti-establishment terminology, 2) Islamic populism is synonymous with anti-authoritarian narratives, resistance to the attitudes of the authorities, 3) Populism contains narratives of religious purification and calls for a return to the actual religious teachings (Muhammad, 2021).

The Relationship of Da'i Idol to the Response of Religious Fatwas and Political Constellations

Is it Da'i Idol or the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) on Religious Fatwas?

The author's unique findings are obtained from the statistics of the collected answers, where the millennial generation, in the case of religious fatwas, has various opinions. Some refer to the da'i idol, others are stuck in the middle, but many prefer to fully trust the institution, such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). One example is the SS who chose Ustadz Adi Hidayat as the Idol, but when it comes to certain legal fatwas, such as vaccination in the wake of the Covid-19 outbreak, she refers more to the MUI:

“Maybe I will refer to the *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* because, in my opinion, all issues will be discussed to produce a consensus that becomes the path of the problems that occur. If it is good and no party is harmed, I will choose the problems that occur.”

The author sees that the integrity and credibility of the MUI as a religious authority plays a vital role in determining the decisions of legal fatwas relating to the public domain. Some respondents still believe that competent people in their fields fill the MUI Institution. According to the author, the relationship between the da'i idol and religious fatwa has yet to reach the level of *ta'assub* or fanaticism to individuals. This phenomenon is still in line with the principles that prevailed at the time of the prophet Muhammad regarding *At-Tsiqqah Bi Al-Murabbi*, namely public trust in Murabbi (Rawwas, 1988). Although the context refers to an individual, namely a *murabbi*, if it is associated with the rules of *Al-Ibrah Bi General Al-Lafadz*, then the principle that applies above is that the principle of credibility dramatically determines the level of public trust. In the author's analysis, the MUI has a reasonably good image in the minds of modern society. The news disseminated in various media makes it very rare for people to get negative sentiments toward this institution. Therefore, it is natural that the millennial generation trusts the MUI to formulate fatwa policies that intersect with the public sphere. This dynamic seems to have invited Muslim intellectuals to study the MUI further. As done by Sirry in his research entitled "Fatwas and their controversy: The case of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), this research seeks to uncover some of the fatwa controversies carried out by the MUI. According to him, these fatwas caused unrest in the public realm, so it deserves sharp criticism from observers (Sirry,

2013). The Muslim scholar Syafe'i even highlighted the conceptual *Maqashid Syariah*, which the MUI implemented to build its fatwa framework (Syafei, 2017).

In confident choices, there are also minorities from the millennial generation who prefer to refer to *ijtihad da'i* idols in people's problems related to legal status. As felt by DO, a 20-year-old woman who chose Ustadzah Oki Setiana Dewi as her idol preacher, the narrative is as follows:

"I chose Ustadz Oki Setiana Dewi because she was very gentle in conveying her message and could calm me, and then the delivery was obvious and concise. As for certain fatwas, I usually ask people who understand religion, like Ustadz. I seek information from other sources to strengthen my base, but I am not fixated on one person; I will seek as many sources for my knowledge as possible."

What DO say shows us that there is a gender relation in the *da'i* idol selection process. Polite, gentle delivery and precise, solid material impressed him. Likewise, in terms of choosing to respond to a fatwa, he will refer to a confident religious person who is considered competent. The decision is expanded to absorb other opinions and make sure of his decision so that it will not be wrong. Gender relations also seem to relate to *da'i* idol and their relationship to attitudes in determining responses to fatwas. From a psychological point of view, women are generally closer to emotional and feeling things. Using these two qualities in some instances attracts sympathy in him. This is precisely in line with the message of Islam, where women are placed in a special status, unlike what happened during the *Arab Jahiliyyah* era (Rawwas, 1988). The *Sirah An-Nabawiyyah* literature written by scholars portrays that Islam revolutionized the marginalization and discrimination against women groups in the *Arab Jahiliyyah* era towards a unique and noble position (Al-Arefe, 2011; Al-Umuri, 1994; Ghadhban, 1992).

Is it Da'i Idol or Individual Ijtihad on the Choices of Leaders?

The leader is a crucial choice in determining the future of the nation. Religious literature instructs Muslims to choose a leader based on the right and ideal choice. From the author's statistics in the field, almost 90% of millennials seek to carry out *ijtihad siyasah* "individual political *ijtihad*" in determining the presidential election. The rest, less than 10%, show that there is diversity in determining leaders, some are based on the direction of parents, *da'i* idol, and some even answer organization society. The following table shows the majority's answers along with the reasons why they chose this option:

Table 3. Statistical Data of Respondent's Minority Answer

No	Initial	Character	Choice	Reason
1	AAI	Woman, 21	Parent	"Because parents are more politically savvy

		Th		and parents also follow the choices of the ulama”
2	RWK	Woman, 20 Th	Community Organization	“Because neither my family nor I follow information about state politics, I choose based on the mass organizations I trust.”
3	DAA	Woman, 20 Th	<i>Majelis Ulama Indonesia</i> (MUI)	“Because the decision is trustworthy.”
4	DCW	Woman, 20 Th	Da'i Idol	“Hope Indonesia has a leader who can enforce Islamic law.”
5	RRB	Man, 20 Th	Da'i Idol	“For reasons/words, he can be used as a strong reference because he is my favorite preacher.”

Source: Research Results

The relatively few opinions of the younger generation almost converge on the principle of trust, although the standardization is different and varied; some belief in their parents as acknowledged by AAI in 20 years, some believe more in community organization as chosen by RWK 20 years, some prefer to the choice of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) as the choice of the 20th DAA. However, what is unique here is the choice presented by DCW, a 20-year-old woman who aspires to an opinion that refers to the da'i idol to realize the existence of law based on Islamic sharia. For some scholars, narratives like this hint at a radical point of view. This finding at least further strengthens the research developed by intellectual Suyanto in his study entitled “Pseudo-Radicalism and the De-Radicalization of Educated Youth in Indonesia”, where he captured indications of the Indonesian state being used as a channel for the spread of the ideology of radicalization or extremism, as well as terrorism in the Southeast Asian region, where according to him this understanding will be internalized to the younger generations (Suyanto et al., 2019). Even further, statistical data released by the Setara Institute, in 2016, as many as 171 schools in Jakarta and Bandung were indicated to be targets for spreading radicalism through learning in schools. Another statistic was put forward by the Wahid Institute, which found that 40% of senior high schools in Rohis extracurricular activities were allegedly a field for spreading caliphate understanding

(Suyanto et al., 2019). The data above, of course, should be a severe concern, how a preacher will significantly determine the mindset and point of view of the millennial generation in the future. The author considers the need for a particular government institution that is ready to monitor the actions of these da'i idols on social media so that their thoughts are at least in line with the values of unity and integrity in maintaining religious harmony.

Another finding was seen in the data above, in the area of the political constellation, the role of the media in orbiting da'i idol can trigger the problem of *ta'assub fardi* "individual fanaticism." As stated by RRB, a 20-year-old man states that whatever choice is made by his da'i idol, he will continue to follow whatever the risk. In the religious landscape, most scholars, such as Sheikh Sayyid Muhamad Alawi Al-Maliki, see that blind fanaticism and extremism in religion are prohibited because they will be very dangerous (Al-Mālikī, 2008). In his view, the roots of radical movements carried out by extremist groups such as ISIS start from an extreme point of view in understanding religion. Therefore, the impact is that there is a belief that one's group is the right one and the others are wrong, which sometimes leads to *takfirization* efforts to "consider Muslims" (Al-Mālikī, 2004). Western intellectual figures commented on this fanaticism. According to Zimmerman, some extremist movements, such as Al-Qaeda have connectivity with other transnational groups in several regions, such as Somalia, Libya (Zimmerman, 2017). Indeed, at this time, it is undeniable that Western domination of Muslim countries has become a new model of the da'wah movement, or what is popularly known as Islamism. Where the agenda of this group is to realize modern political ideology to respond to and balance the ideology of secularism echoed by the West and Europe by strengthening the ideology of Islamic teachings (Fuad, 2020; Roy, 2004), they view Western culture as dangerous for Islam and its followers (Hirschkind, 2009).

Internalization of Digital Da'wah for Strengthening Religious Character

In a global scope, character formation is a fundamental aspect in determining the success of a learning process. The internalization of the moral values of the millennial generation has also become a primary concern for education practitioners lately (Barni, 2020). In developed European countries such as Spain, Isabel Martínez highlights the internalization of the values of forming self-esteem in adolescents based on parenting patterns (Martínez, 2007). Meanwhile, in Indonesia, several observers have monitored schools that have started internalizing positive values, such as school culture, in raising awareness of *Pancasila* values (Nurizka, 2020). The quality of student's behavior and cognitive development can at least be influenced by the cultural system prevailing at the school. As a citizen who adheres to *Pancasila*, the Internalization of *Pancasila* values as the nation's ideology must be included in the school culture in the education system. For

most educational scientists, internalizing moral values can help them shape their religious character (Djibat, 2018; Roth, 2011).

The principle of internalization is not only carried out by teachers but also by da'wah activists. The trend of increasing digital da'wah content based on religious values is seen as capable of shaping the millennial generation's religious character. The statistical data we found in the field confirms this statement. 100% of respondents felt a change after listening to digital da'wah content from their da'i idols.

In addition, respondents who feel calm in terms of their spirituality are getting better, as felt by RA, 20 years old: "The impact of da'wah on me is to become calmer and strengthen my faith." Even the respondent SF, a 20-year-old woman, stated that with digital da'wah, the mind becomes more open, more moderate, and wiser in dealing with things: "Heart is calmer, the mind is more open."

Seeing the existing reality, the psychological burden teenagers feel due to the pressure they face apparently can be reduced by listening to motivational lectures. From our perspective, this is one of the advantages of Ustadz Hanan Attaki so that he can become a role of a model preacher whom young people favor. Light communication style, contemporary themes, and age are just a short distance from the youth community; they like this. Internalization of religious values by idol preachers in their digital da'wah content in scientific studies is seen as effective and efficient for changing the moral morality of the younger generation for the better. The values of honesty, tolerance, openness, prudence in acting, patience, and motivation to always do good are positive values generated by digital da'wah on social media.

Seeing the existing reality, the psychological burden teenagers feel due to the pressure they face apparently can be reduced by listening to motivational lectures. From our perspective, this is one of the advantages of Ustadz Hanan Attaki so that he can become the role of the model preacher whom young people favor. Light communication style, contemporary themes, and age, not too far from the youth community, this is what they like. Internalization of religious values by idol preachers in their digital da'wah content in scientific studies is seen as effective and efficient for changing the moral morality of the younger generation for the better. The values of honesty, tolerance, openness, prudence in acting, patience, and motivation to always do good are positive values generated by digital da'wah's existence on social media.

Conclusion

Social media contributes significantly to orbiting the da'i idol to internalize religious values for the millennial generation in the dimension of modernity. The emergence of da'i idol for the youth community is built on three fundamental components: persuasive communication styles, the substance of digital da'wah material that is right on target, and their branding in managing their image to remain in harmony with religious teachings. The fact shows that the relationship between the younger

generation's liking for da'i idol does not necessarily significantly impact certain cases. In policies related to *fiqh* fatwas on issues related to the public sphere, the younger generation is more likely to rely on the results of consensus issued by the religious authority institution. Another fact is related to the dynamics of the political constellation in Indonesia. Almost all respondents tried to do *ijtihad siyasah* (individual political *ijtihad*) in determining the choice of a presidential leader, and they did not refer directly to the da'i idol.

Of course, this is very reasonable, considering leaders' choice is crucial in determining the civilization of the Indonesian nation in the future. Digital da'wah, from the aspect of character education, has a substantial impact on increasing the religious values of the millennial generation. This research certainly has limitations, where the studies we raise are still limited to the younger generation and only raise a few case studies from certain idols. Hopefully, future research will explore the dynamics of connectivity between da'wah content from idols to religiosity, frame of mind, and character formation, and perhaps even towards specific issues such as radicalism discourse, religious intolerance, and religious moderation.

References

- 'Abd Al-Rahmān, J. (2004). *Atfāl al-Muslimīn Kaifa Rabāhum al-Nabiyyu al-Amīn*.
- Al-Arefe, M. bin A. (2011). *Istamti' Bi Hayātika Funūn At-Ta'āmul Ma'a An-Nās fī Dzilli As-Sīrah An-Nabawiyyah*. Saudi Arabia: Sarikah Muslim.
- Al-Mālikī, M. bin A. (2004). *At-Tahdzīr min Al-Mujāzafati bi At-Takfīr*. Kairo: Dār Jawāmi' Al-Kalim.
- Al-Mālikī, M. bin A. (2008). *Manhaj As-Salaf fī Fahmi An-Nushūsh baina An-Nadzariyyah wa At-Tathbīq*. Beirut: Al-Maktabah Al-Ashriyyah.
- Al-Rawashdeh, M. S. (2014). The Impact of Globalization on the Political Culture of the Arab Youths. *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)*, 8(4), 81–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19370679.2014.12023250>
- Al-Suri, Y. K. H. (1991). *Asalib al-Rasul fī al-Dakwah wa al-Tarbiyah* (p. 85).
- Al-Umuri, A. D. (1994). *As-Sirah An-Nabawiyyah As-Shahihah* (p. 722). Maktabah Al-Ulum Wa Al-Hikam.
- Ali, S. I. (2002). *Ushul Al-Fiqh At-Tarbawi Al-Islami: As-Sunnah Al-Nabawiyyah Ru'yah Tarbawiyyah*. Kairo: Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi.
- Arnez, M. (2009). Dakwah by the Pen. *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 37(107), 45–64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639810902743040>
- Ashaari, M. (2015). The improvement of teaching and learning in the course “Da'wah roduction in electronic media” through scripts and hosting. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 2015, 666–672.
- Ashworth, P. (2015). Developments in public communications on CCS. *International Journal of Greenhouse Gas Control*, 40, 449–458. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijggc.2015.06.002>

- Ath-Thabari, I. J. (1994). *At-Tafsīr Ath-Thabari: Jāmi' Al-Bayān 'An Ta'wīl Al-Qurān* (p. 607). Muassasah Ar-Risalah.
- Bakkar, A. K. (2011). *Haula At-Tarbiyyah wa At-Ta'lim*. Beirut: Dar Al-Kalam.
- Barni, D. (2020). Adolescents' internalization of moral values: the role of paternal and maternal promotion of volitional functioning. *Journal of Family Studies*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2020.1789494>
- Briandana, R. (2020). Da'wah communication and social media: The interpretation of millennials in southeast Asia. *International Journal of Economics and Business Administration*, 8(1), 216–226. <https://doi.org/10.35808/ijeba/543>
- Bruner, R. F., & Iannarelli, J. (2011). Globalization of Management Education. *Journal of Teaching in International Business*, 22(4), 232–242. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08975930.2011.653908>
- Bruzzi, S. (2015). Contested Religious Authority: Sufi Women in Ethiopia and Eritrea. *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 45(1), 37–67. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15700666-12340028>
- Burhanudin, J. (2014). History, authority and power: A case of religious violence in Aceh. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 8(1), 112–138. <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2014.8.1.112-138>
- Campbell, H. A. (2010). Religious authority and the blogosphere. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 15(2), 251–276. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2010.01519.x>
- Chaplin, C. (2018). Salafi activism and the promotion of a modern muslim identity: Evolving mediums of da'wa amongst Yogyakarta university students. *South East Asia Research*, 26(1), 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967828X17752414>
- Cheong, P. (2011a). Religious Communication and Epistemic Authority of Leaders in Wired Faith Organizations. *Journal of Communication*, 61(5), 938–958. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2011.01579.x>
- Cheong, P. (2011b). Religious leaders, mediated authority, and social change. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 39(4), 452–454. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00909882.2011.577085>
- Dickson, D. (2008). Communication, relationships, and religious difference in the northern ireland workplace: A study of private and public sector organizations. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 36(2), 128–160. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00909880801922847>
- Díez Bosch, M., Micó Sanz, J. L., & Sabaté Gauxachs, A. (2017). Typing my Religion. Digital use of religious webs and apps by adolescents and youth for religious and interreligious dialogue. *Church, Communication and Culture*, 2(2), 121–143. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23753234.2017.1347800>
- Djibat, B. (2018). Developing education through value internalization of hapolas tradition in north Maluku. *International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research*, 7(3), 125–130.
- Feinstein, N. W. (2015). Education, communication, and science in the public sphere.

- Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 52(2), 145–163.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.21192>
- Fuad, A. F. N. (2020). Da'wa and politics: lived experiences of the female Islamists in Indonesia. *Contemporary Islam*, 14(1), 19–47. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-019-00442-x>
- Ghadhban, M. M. (1992). *Fiqh As-Sirah An-Nabawiyah* (p. 752). Jami'ah Ummur Qura.
- Ham, J. R. (2017). Cooking to be Modern but Eating to be Healthy: The Role of Dawa-Dawa in Contemporary Ghanaian Foodways. *Food, Culture and Society*, 20(2), 237–256. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15528014.2017.1305827>
- Hew, W. W. (2018). THE ART OF DAKWAH: social media, visual persuasion and the Islamist propagation of Felix Siau. *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 46(134), 61–79. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.1416757>
- Hirschkind, C. (2009). *The ethical soundscape: Cassette sermons and Islamic Counterpublics*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Ikhwan, S., & Wafi, M. H. (2022). Internet and Religious Identity Construction: Jurus Sehat Rasulullah (JSR) Da'i (Preacher) Zaidul Akbar. *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah*, 32(2), 184–198. <https://doi.org/10.24014/jdr.v32i2.15711>
- Ittefaq, M. (2021). Movements for Change: How Individuals, Social Media and Al Jazeera Are Changing Pakistan, Egypt and Tunisia. *International Journal of Communication*, 15, 1875–1878.
- Kadoda, G. (2015). Contemporary youth movements and the role of social media in Sudan. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 49(1), 215–236. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2014.953556>
- Katsīr, A. A.-F. I. bin U. bin. (1999). *Tafsīr Al-Qurān Al-Adzīm*. Riyadh: Dar Thayyibah.
- Lengauer, D. (2018). Sharing semangat taqwa: social media and digital Islamic socialities in Bandung. *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 46(134), 5–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.1415276>
- Leong, C. (2019). Social media empowerment in social movements: power activation and power accrual in digital activism. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 28(2), 173–204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0960085X.2018.1512944>
- Lilleker, D. G. (2015). Interactivity and Branding: Public Political Communication as a Marketing Tool. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 14, 111–128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2014.990841>
- Machfudz. (2019). Communication effects word of mouth (Wom) in Wali santri's decision on pesantren selection. *International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research*, 8(11), 1397–1403.
- Machingambi, S. (2014). The Impact of Globalisation on Higher Education: A Marxist Critique. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 5(2), 207–215. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09766634.2014.11885625>
- Mah, J. S. (2002). The impact of globalization on income distribution: the Korean

- experience. *Applied Economics Letters*, 9(15), 1007–1009. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504850210149124>
- Marhumah. (2014). A historical analysis on the geneology and the teaching of bulugh al-maram in pesantren Al-Munawwir krapyak Yogyakarta Indonesia. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 8(1), 139–184. <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2014.8.1.139-184>
- Martínez, I. (2007). Impact of parenting styles on adolescents' self-esteem and internalization of values in Spain. *Spanish Journal of Psychology*, 10(2), 338–348. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1138741600006600>
- Muhammad, N. A. (2021). Populisme dan Dinamika Otoritas Keagamaan Dalam Islam Di Media Sosial. *Jurnal Peurawi Media Kajian Komunikasi Islam*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v8i2.199->
- Nisa, E. F. (2018). Social media and the birth of an Islamic social movement: ODOJ (One Day One Juz) in contemporary Indonesia. *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 46(134), 24–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2017.1416758>
- Nurizka, R. (2020). Internalization of school culture to foster awareness of Pancasila values in elementary school students. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(10), 4818–4825. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.081053>
- Possamai, A. (2012). Authority and liquid religion in cyber-space: The new territories of religious communication. *International Social Science Journal*, 63(209), 197–206. <https://doi.org/10.1111/issj.12021>
- Radde-Antweiler, K. (2018). Introduction: Religious authority: Ascribing meaning to a theoretical term. *Journal of Religion, Media and Digital Culture*, 7(3), 368–380. <https://doi.org/10.1163/21659214-00703009>
- Rawwas, M. (1988). *Dirasah Tahliliyyah Li Syahshiyati Ar-Rasul Muhammad* (pp. 1–303). Dar An-Nafais.
- Rock, A. (2010). Amr Khaled: From da'wa to political and religious leadership. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 37(1), 15–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530191003661104>
- Roth, G. (2011). Prevention of school bullying: The important role of autonomy-supportive teaching and internalization of pro-social values. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 81(4), 654–666. <https://doi.org/10.1348/2044-8279.002003>
- Roy, O. (2004). *Globalised Islam; the search for a new Ummah*. London: Hurst.
- Rude, C. (2008). Introduction to the special issue on business and technical communication in the public sphere: Learning to have impact. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 22(3), 267–271. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1050651908315949>
- Savitri Hartono, H. (2018). Virtually (Im)moral: Pious Indonesian Muslim Women's Use of Facebook. *Asian Studies Review*, 42(1), 39–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2017.1407290>
- Shanahan, R. (2004). Shi a political development in Iraq: the case of the Islamic Da wa Party. *Third World Quarterly*, 25(5), 943–954.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0143659042000232045>

- Sirry, M. (2013). Fatwas and their controversy: The case of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI). *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 44(1), 100–117. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463412000641>
- Sulastri, I., Rais, Z., & Bukhari. (2022). Impression Management of the Muslim Preacher in Indonesia. *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah*, 33(2), 113–131. <https://doi.org/10.24014/jdr.v33i2.17045>
- SusyLOWATI, E. (2019). Communication used by female santri as part of their social interaction in Indonesian modern pesantren. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 9(7), 77–94.
- Suyanto, B., Sirry, M., & Sugihartati, R. (2019). Pseudo-Radicalism and the De-Radicalization of Educated Youth in Indonesia. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 0(0), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1654726>
- Syafei, Z. (2017). Tracing Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah in the fatwas of Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI). *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 11(1), 99–124. <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2017.11.1.99-124>
- Watson, K. (2001). The Impact of Globalization on Educational Reform and Language Policy: Some Comparative Insights from Transitional Societies. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 21(2), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2001.10600191>
- Weismann, I. (2019). Between da'wa and Dialogue: Religious Engagement in Muslim-minority Environments. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 30(4), 505–522. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2019.1601909>
- Weldon, P. A., Rexhepi, J., Chang, C. W., Jones, L., Layton, L. A., Liu, A., Mckibben, S., Misiaszek, G., Olmos, L., Quon, A., & Torres, C. A. (2011). Globalization and higher education in Southern California: Views from the professoriate. *Compare*, 41(1), 5–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2010.532360>
- Zimmerman, K. (2017). *America's Real Enemy The Salafi-Jihadi Movement*. American Enterprise Institute.