

**Islam and Body Discipline:
Remove Tattoos and Da'wah Paths of Hijrah Care Community**

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*Hijrah Movement,
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Abstract

This article examines the hijrah movement within the Hijrah Care Community through the medium of the Free Tattoo Removal Movement. The emergence of Hijrah Care and the Free Tattoo Removal Movement stems from the street culture da'wah and focuses on street children who want to undergo hijrah but still have tattoos on their bodies. Therefore, Hijrah Care endeavors to provide a path of repentance for street children by organizing the Free Tattoo Removal Program. Data were obtained through interviews and observations of Hijrah Care's social media accounts. This article demonstrates that the Free Tattoo Removal Movement serves as a means of da'wah for the Hijrah Care Community to construct an ideological discourse through religious studies, which participants of the tattoo removal must adhere to. There has been a fundamental change in perception and meaning regarding tattoos. Before hijrah, tattoos were seen as art and a representation of themselves and their group. However, post-hijrah, their perception and understanding of tattoos have changed drastically. Tattoos are no longer perceived as art but are now viewed with negative sentiment and even despised.

Kata kunci

*Gerakan Hijrah,
Hijrah Care, Tato,
Dakwah*

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji gerakan hijrah pada Komunitas Hijrah Care dengan medium Gerakan Hapus Tato Gratis. Kemunculan Hijrah Care dan Gerakan Hapus Tato Gratis berangkat dari dakwah street culture dan fokus pada anak jalanan yang ingin berhijrah namun masih memiliki tato dalam tubuhnya, sehingga Hijrah Care berupaya untuk mawadahi jalan pertaubatan anak jalanan dengan mengadakan Program Hapus Tato Gratis. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara dan observasi terhadap akun media sosial hijrah care. Artikel ini menunjukkan bahwa Gerakan Hapus Tato Gratis menjadi jalan dakwah Komunitas Hijrah Care dalam membangun wacana ideologis melalui kajian keagamaan yang harus diikuti oleh peserta hapus tato. Terjadi perubahan persepsi dan pemaknaan yang fundamental terhadap tato, sebelum berhijrah tato dipandang sebagai seni dan sebagai bentuk representasi mereka dan kelompoknya, namun pasca berhijrah persepsi dan pemaknaan mereka tentang tato berubah sangat fundamental, tato tidak lagi dimaknai sebagai seni, namun sudah dipandang sentimen negatif bahkan menjadi dibenci.

Introduction

The digital era has become the paradigm of informationalism (Castells; 2004) providing space for religious groups to represent religious narratives and doctrines in a more modern and contemporary way. The advent of the internet, followed by the emergence of new media, has expanded the production of religious discourse in the public sphere. This, on the one hand, has had an impact on the increasing and widespread religious spirit and awareness.

The rising religious awareness in the public sphere among Muslims in Indonesia has resulted in the process of Islamization of public spaces across various sectors. It is not only mosques that serve as the collective identity of Muslims and as places of worship and religious messages, but Islam has also made its presence known in more modern spaces, reaching a broader Muslim audience for expressing their piety (Hasan, 2009). The da'wah movement has emerged in a more modern, sophisticated, and creative manner with the rise of new creative da'wah agents, offering various innovative approaches within urban Muslim communities

Religion has become a discourse and arena encompassing various complexities and diverse options offered to the public. It is no longer confined to closed spaces; religious discourse has rapidly developed in various domains such as mosques, schools, universities, and various media outlets, including television, magazines, and newspapers, involving different segments of society (Hasan, 2009).

One of the impacts of the development of religious discourse in the public sphere is that Islam has influenced the evolution of Muslim piety. Piety is no longer just a private discourse of individual believers; it has become a trendsetter among religious communities, particularly among urban millennial Muslims. Islam is presented in a sophisticated, appealing, and fresh manner, with lightweight (instant or fast) narratives, making it an alternative for urban society (Hasan, 2009).

The emergence of modern forms of Islamic discourse has marked the rise of popular religious figures such as Aa Gym, Yusuf Mansur, Arifin Ilham, and Uje, followed by popular millennial religious figures who typically present themselves with contemporary appearances and preaching styles. Some of these figures include Ustaz Hanan Attaqi, Salim A. Fillah, Evie Evendy, Handy Bonny, and many others. In addition to religious figures, there has also been the emergence of "hijrah celebrities" who have further strengthened the discourse of religion in the public sphere. Before the rise of popular religious figures and hijrah celebrities, religious practices in the public sphere were characterized by the presence of preachers such as Zainuddin MZ. At the same time, Islamic music, popularized by Rhoma Irama and Kantata Takwa, also gained prominence (Kailani, 2012).

The presence of these figures has contributed to the discourse of the religious movement in the public sphere, one of which is evident in the phenomenon known as the hijrah movement. The hijrah movement has become increasingly popular in recent

years. Hijrah, in addition to signifying an individual's transformation towards piety, has also become a form of populism and lifestyle for those who seek to transform themselves from less Islamic to more Islamic lifestyles.

To this day, the discourse surrounding the hijrah movement in the public sphere continues to grow stronger and more progressive, with various complex models of the hijrah movement emerging. The essence of the hijrah movement lies in bridging repentance from behaviors, actions, or attitudes deemed incongruent with interpreted religious values, norms, and teachings. Pragmatically, the hijrah movement can be understood as a transformation towards piety, from being less devout to becoming more devout. An individual's piety can be assessed from several aspects or popular segmentations within social reality.

This social reality necessitates changes that align with the values and norms derived from religious interpretations. For example, there was the "Indonesia Without Dating" hijrah movement that gained traction a few years ago, and the "Young Marriage" movement aimed at avoiding fornication. More recently, a unique hijrah movement called "Hijrah Care" emerged, focusing on offering free tattoo removal. The "Free Tattoo Removal" movement by Hijrah Care will be the focus of this article. This movement raises questions about why tattoos need to be removed and how the stigma surrounding tattoos is constructed in mainstream religious society.

Starting from that question, let's trace how tattoos are viewed from various perspectives. In (Rokib & Sodik, 2017), mentions that tattoos are considered symbols that contradict religious values in mainstream religious interpretations because they are seen as invalidating a Muslim's religious standing. Within the mainstream discourse of the Muslim community, tattoos are seen in certain circumstances as symbols that can hinder religious validity, such as praying to God, worshiping, and tattoos are viewed as something that can invalidate ablution. In this context, when someone has a tattoo, it is considered to have invalidated their ability to worship. The mainstream society in Indonesia views tattoos with a negative stigma of prohibition, grounded in various arguments and religious evidence.

On the other hand, aside from the religious context, Rokib mentions that in the perspective of the Muslim Punk Community, tattoos are seen as a cultural or distinctive identity, while spirituality and piety are considered separate realms. According to him, spirituality is an intuitive realm that is transcendental in nature and not influenced by symbolic elements (Rokib & Sodik, 2017). Silke Wohrlab also sees the same thing; she believes that tattoos are not just seen as body accessories of individuals with tattoos. Tattoos are considered part of the subculture of certain groups. This is because individuals with tattoos have gone through extensive planning and endured the pain of getting a tattoo. Therefore, tattoos are no longer simply interpreted as small body accessories; they hold more value and are seen as an actualization of self-mastery (Wohrlab, Stahl, & Kappeler, 2007).

However, when tattoos are viewed from a religious interpretation and doctrine, the meaning of tattoos becomes singular, similar to how Hijrah Care perceives tattoos. Tattoos are considered negative symbols of prohibition that can disrupt the religious validity of an individual's worship. Hence, tattoos are seen as symbols that should be avoided and removed. This is why Hijrah Care has created the "Hijrah Hapus Tato Gratis" (Hijrah Remove Tattoo for Free) movement. This method serves as a bridge or path through which the hijrah movement can enter the process of repentance for individuals. This can be seen through various posts on Hijrah Care's Instagram account. In addition to organizing the movement for free tattoo removal, Hijrah Care also serves as a platform for those who want to deepen their religious knowledge or repent. Therefore, Hijrah Care also holds various religious studies.

In the author's observation, tattoo removal is not only a medical procedure provided to those who wish to repent by eliminating or erasing tattoos that are deemed to invalidate their religious standing, but the method of tattoo removal is also an arena for ideological competition within Hijrah Care. Ideological narratives are then constructed during the process of religious transformation or repentance for individuals who have participated in the Free Tattoo Removal Program.

Hijrah Care serves as a hijrah community that also produces religious discourse and narratives, which are then consumed by agents or individuals in need of spiritual guidance during the process of religious transformation or repentance. Tattoo removal serves as the initial step or entry point in constructing ideological discourse or narratives, as during the tattoo removal process, individuals are required to undergo repentance, memorize several verses from Surah ar-Rahman, and participate in religious study activities as a mandatory requirement for joining the Hijrah Care Free Tattoo Removal Program (Baban Gandapurnama, 2021).

Religious doctrines and narratives regarding the prohibition of tattoos have become one of the reasons why individuals choose to remove their tattoos and embark on a hijrah journey. From a cultural perspective, these religious doctrines shape the moral standards of the mainstream religious society, which tends to view tattoos skeptically. This condition has exerted sociocultural pressures on those with tattoos, both on a personal level (psychologically), such as mentality, guilt, and regret, as well as external pressures from the social environment, stigma, stereotypes, and religious doctrines.

This study aims to continue the research on the hijrah movement but with a specific focus on the Free Tattoo Removal Hijrah Movement. Within the academic realm, this research contributes to the discussion on the discourse of the hijrah movement, specifically regarding the symbolic identity of tattoos. Previous studies have often examined the discourse of the hijrah movement in terms of how a movement strives to change existing social practices that are deemed incompatible with the religious interpretations of the hijrah movement. Additionally, previous studies on the hijrah movement have focused more on its development and existence. This research

will explain how tattoos serve as a means of da'wah (religious outreach) for the Hijrah Care Community in reconstructing discourse and ideological narratives. The study will also explore the more personal aspects of participants in the free tattoo removal program, such as their reasons for choosing to embark on a hijrah journey, their reasons for removing tattoos, and how they perceive tattoos before and after their hijrah journey.

Method

This article presents a qualitative study with an ethnographic approach. The research was conducted from September 2021 to February 2022. The data for the study were collected through online interviews with the members of the Hijrah Care movement. There were a total of 4 informants, including Ustad Rifki, the founder of Hijrah Care, who is in his forties. Another informant, Deni, is a middle-aged man who has been assisting Ustad Rifki since the establishment of Hijrah Care and is involved in all of its programs. The last two informants are Ferry Aprianto and Arbi, who participated in the free tattoo removal program.

The author also collected data through observation of the Hijrah Care Instagram account and YouTube videos, aiming to strengthen the data analysis. The data was then gathered and classified into several categories. First, data were obtained from the founder and administrators of the Hijrah Care community. Second, data were obtained from participants who took part in the Free Tattoo Removal Program. And third, data was obtained through the internet, specifically from the social media accounts of Hijrah Care, such as YouTube and Instagram, as well as from various related videos.

Results and Discussion

Hijra Movement and Creative Da'wah The trend of the Hijra movement are often related to the creativity of the da'wah model with more contemporary packaging, adjusting the style of young people who are easy to reach, using the way of proselytizing more casually. The hijra movement has given birth to a model of proselytizing adapted to the language of young people, as well as using symbols identical to young people, this can be traced to the devices used for proselytizing, especially the most prominent is the clothing style of male preachers who tend to be casual. Religious activities in this hijra community are not only in mosques guided by clerics or ustad, but religious activities are increasingly widespread with a more modern, contemporary, packaging using a set of popular culture (Kuntowijoyo;2018).

Hasan mentioned that religious practices and discourses today are re-represented in a more modern, sophisticated, and contemporary way, using a more up-to-date set of digital technologies with a more creative approach. Religious narratives and discourses are no longer only in exclusive areas, such as surau, mosques, Islamic boarding schools, and other sacred places (Hasan, 2009). Religious discourses and narratives are spread across various digital platforms and mediated into digital religious practices (Birgit Meyer, 2013). If many previous studies mentioned that the emergence of digital

technology is considered to eliminate the authenticity of religion, but in many studies now it is precisely digital technology and religion are connected (Heidi A. Campbell, 2012), There is a process of negotiation between religion and the presence of technology, as well as how then religious communities frame technology so that it can be religiously accepted (Kluver & Cheong, 2007).

The hijrah movement often combines religious teachings that are deemed to adhere to Shariah principles (*kaffah*) with a contemporary delivery style that is modern yet Islamic and considered under Islamic law. Some examples of such practices include "Yuk Ngaji" (Let's Study Quran), Ustadz Roadshows (Preachers' Roadshows), Artis Dakwah Roadshows (Preaching by Artists), and various other variations of religious study events. These religious studies are presented in a more relaxed manner, adapting to the audience's style, particularly young individuals who may be new to or interested in learning about religion, and who aspire to become more pious. The names of these activities are created to be more contemporary, trendy, and in line with the preferences and styles of young people, using terms that are familiar to them.

In addition to its studies, the symbolism of the hijrah movement also follows current trends, with a fashion style that tends to be fashionable, in line with the evolving pop culture. The hijrah movement strives to integrate itself into its roots, adapting to something that young people find appealing, and in some cases, even becoming a part of what young people enjoy. It uses terms that are closer to the younger generation, such as "ngabuburide with Ustadz Hanan Attaki" (breaking the fast together with Ustadz Hanan Attaki), "futsal together, studying together, and consulting with Ustadz Adi Hidayat," and various activities that are geared towards engaging with young people.



Source: @kajianmusyawarah

Figure 1. The community study event organized by Hijrah Shift is called "Ngabuburide with Ustaz Hanan Attaki." It combines activities such as futsal and Quran study sessions with Ustaz Adi Hidayat

This phenomenon can be seen as hybridity. Evolvi, in his writing on hybridity, suggests that it is done by adapting or placing religious discourse within the mainstream

framework. In the context of the hijrah movement as described above, religious discourse is framed within the popular pop culture that is favored by young people. Furthermore, the emergence of advanced digital media has led to various variations of the hijrah movement, demanding the continuous creation of more creative and innovative preaching models, even if it means adapting to the trends and popular culture of young people to reach a wider audience or followers. However, as mentioned by Pauline and Evolvi, hybridity has created a process of negotiation between religion and modernity, so that they can continue to intersect (Evolvi, 2017).

On the one hand, young people want to be pious and religiously devout, but on the other hand, they also want to remain trendy and modern. The spiritual and modernity needs are then attempted to be fulfilled by various models of the hijrah movement, resulting in various variations of the hijrah movement that aim to bridge young people to become more pious or to undergo a transformative process called the hijrah, while the same time, they do not want to lose their sense of modernity (Kailani, 2012).

Looking at the above description related to the hijrah movement, it can be observed that there has been a change in the meaning and orientation of the hijrah itself. Hijrah, which is essentially a practice of personal spiritual experience (transcendence), has now become a communal religious practice of various groups. We can see the diversity and variations of the hijrah movement or its variations, which generally targets the youth segment. Some hijrah movements can be found, such as "The Shift Youth Hijrah Community" which seeks to embrace young people for repentance, most of whom come from a punk background or young people with lifestyles considered contrary to religious teachings (Nurmatari, 2015).

Hijrah Care: Preaching Path Through the Method of Free Tattoo Removal

Hijrah Care is a community that focuses on social and humanitarian activities. It aims to provide assistance and support to individuals who are seeking positive life changes. The community is dedicated to helping those in need and improving their quality of life through various programs and initiatives. One notable program organized by Hijrah Care is the "Free Tattoo Removal" program, which offers individuals the opportunity to have their tattoos removed at no cost. This program aims to support individuals who wish to transform their lives by removing visible tattoos that may hinder their personal or professional growth. Hijrah Care also utilizes social media platforms, such as YouTube and Instagram, to raise awareness about their activities and engage with a wider audience. Through these channels, they share inspiring stories, educational content, and updates on their programs, creating a supportive online community. The community's efforts are driven by a team of dedicated individuals who work together to make a positive impact on the lives of those they assist. By providing social support, guidance, and opportunities for personal growth, Hijrah Care aims to empower individuals to embrace positive changes and lead fulfilling lives.

The name Hijrah Care began to gain public exposure in 2019 when it was invited to a television show on Trans 7 called "Hitam Putih" (Black and White). During that episode, "Hitam Putih" highlighted a da'wah movement that focused on providing free tattoo removal, and it featured the founder of Hijrah Care, Rifki, and participants who were part of the Free Tattoo Removal Program (Trans7 Official, 2019). Hijrah Care was founded by Rifki, who has a background in religious education from one of the Islamic universities in Bandung. He used to be a religious teacher for several years, but later chose a different path, which involved establishing a community and a movement called Hijrah Care (Rifki Saiful, 2021).

The initial idea for the establishment of Hijrah Care came from an initiator named Dr. Kiki, a dermatologist, and Ustaz Rifki's friend named Zaki. The concept of providing free tattoo removal emerged from observing individuals, such as punk youth and street children, who had tattoos on their bodies.

"In the beginning, there was a person named Bang Zaki and a dermatologist named Dr. Kiki who initiated it. They both cared about the punk youth in Pulogadung. Initially, it was created for the punk youth who had embraced a new path, known as "Punk Muslim and Berani Hijrah Baik". They were concerned about this group, but the interest from the wider community, not just the punk youth, was also there, as they wanted their tattoos removed. Eventually, we launched a campaign intending to expand it nationally in the future "(Rifki Saiful, 2021).

Hijrah Care does not work alone in the tattoo removal program. Several other Hijrah communities also support the tattoo removal program, and they collaborate in activities or programs related to tattoo removal. Some of the communities that have been involved in tattoo removal activities are Sahabat Hijrah, Kodas (Community for Da'wah and Social Services), Aliansi Aktivis (Activists Alliance), and Masyarakat Muslim Tasikmalaya (Tasikmalaya Muslim Society). According to Ustaz Rifki, this collaborative approach is an effort to reach a wider network and audience.



Source: @sahati_official

Figure 2. Displays the poster of the free tattoo removal event in Tasikmalaya, in collaboration with Sahabat Hijrah, Kodas, and the Aliansi Aktivis dan Masyarakat Muslim Tasikmalaya (Tasikmalaya Activists and Muslim Community Alliance)

In essence, Hijrah Care is a hijrah community that uses tattoo removal as a medium for da'wah (Islamic propagation) and spiritual transformation for Muslims seeking repentance. This concept can be illustrated through several requirements for participating in the free tattoo removal program. Participants who wish to join the program must memorize Surah Ar-Rahman in exchange for the tattoo removal. Additionally, participants must sincerely repent and actively engage in study sessions at Hijrah Care, as well as undergo a series of tattoo removal procedures until completion (Trans7 Official, 2019).

The Free Tattoo Removal program is not just a volunteer activity without any particular motive. In the paragraph above, it has been explained that one of the requirements for participating in the tattoo removal program is to memorize Surah Ar-Rahman as a tattoo removal barter, those participants who take part in the Free Tattoo Removal Program are also required to follow religious guidance (repentance). In this context, the ideological doctrine is one of the motives of Hijrah Care to hold a Free Tattoo Removal Program.

Ustaz Rifki the founder of Hijrah Care said that the tattoo removal program is a youth path to emigrate, the purpose of holding the Remove Tattoo program is as a way of proselytizing, or religious shia. In this context, ideological cultivation is the main motive for holding the Free Tattoo Removal program.

"Remove the tattoo as a tool, or washilah as a proselytizing penetration tool"(Rifki, personal communication, Mei 2021).

Removing tattoos in the context of Hijrah Care is not the only requirement to follow or join the Hijrah Care community, the main motives are ideological, proselytizing, broadcasting religion, or conducting religious studies. Removing tattoos is only a tool to attract people to be interested in religious studies at Hijrah Care. Hijrah Care offers its proselytizing motto with the term "solutive da'wah", through a clump root approach. People who have experienced a stalemate due to rejection or skeptical views of mainstream society, in this case, Hijrah Care seek to accommodate and accommodate the process of repentance or hijra (Arbi, personal communication, 2021).

In addition to building religious community branding, proselytizing or religious Shia, Hijrah Care's efforts do not only focus on one aspect, namely the religious aspect but there are efforts to develop a religious-based economic approach. The religious-based economic concept developed by Hijrah Care broadly has similarities with other Hijra communities, namely building product branding with Islamic symbols. The impression of a person who has emigrated is to apply a more Islamic lifestyle to every aspect of it, with the impression of following the sunnah as the fundamental basis. In addition, the symbols and identities worn must also be more Islamic, such as Muslim women's clothing, hijab for example. This hijra trend has certainly given rise to a new market for religious groups who want to implement an Islamic lifestyle by wearing attributes or fashions that characterize Islamic symbols (Lyansari, 2019).

Free Tattoo Removal Program and Efforts to Build an Ideological Discourse

Returning to the context of free tattoo removal, Hijrah Care has its perspective or paradigm in perceiving and interpreting tattoos. In this regard, Hijrah Care relies on the legitimacy of religious understanding to provide its views on tattoos. For example, Ustaz Rifki, the founder of Hijrah Care, firmly voices his opposition to tattoos. On several occasions, he has stated that tattoos are a decline of civilization experienced by Muslims in general. According to him, tattoos in Islam are prohibited based on established legal principles. Ustaz Rifki cites a hadith of the Prophet that emphasizes the prohibition of altering and harming God's creation, particularly in the context of the human body. He considers tattoos to fall under both categories, as they involve altering God's creation and causing harm to the body (Lyansari, 2019).

In this context, Hijrah Care strives to maintain its legitimacy regarding the prohibition of tattoos and the method of providing free tattoo removal. This progressive response aims to strengthen the justification that Hijrah Care has narrated, which is the prohibition of getting tattoos, thereby creating a desire among individuals with tattoos to have them removed. This pattern is typically accompanied by religious justifications and citations of religious texts as a basis for judging tattoos (Rifki Saiful, 2021).

The negative stigma attached to tattoos in mainstream Muslim society is utilized as a pathway in the narrative of tattoo prohibition. Hijrah Care has already established a fundamental basis and gained support from the mainstream Muslim society's stigma. Alongside religious justifications, Hijrah Care must uphold this legitimacy to ensure that tattoos continue to be regarded as a negative sentiment that should be eliminated. For instance, when this established understanding is challenged, Hijrah Care will defend it with various religious justifications and principles of Islamic jurisprudence. This situation is depicted in one of the YouTube videos showing Habib delivering a sermon and receiving a question from the congregation about the ruling on tattoo removal. Habib's argumentation leads to the conclusion that removing tattoos is prohibited or forbidden based on the argument of self-harm (Rifki Saiful, 2021).

Such a narrative undoubtedly disrupts the discourse on tattoo removal that has been constructed thus far. Here, an ideological competition arises, and Hijrah Care must uphold its ideology to ensure that the segment of free tattoo removal remains undisturbed and continues to exist in the public sphere. Tattoos must be viewed with negative sentiment and stigma, and they should be removed. In this context, Hijrah Care becomes a symbol of public moral identity, focusing on narrating the issue of the prohibition of tattoos. The religious discourse then governs the application of public moral standards, in which tattoos are interpreted as symbols that contradict religious teachings rather than being seen as art or something similar. Therefore, tattoos are considered a threat to the moral order of society within the mainstream religious community, leading to the formation of stigma in society with religious justifications. This stereotype or stigma then makes individuals with tattoos feel discriminated against

because their actions are seen as immoral, ultimately pressuring them to choose to remove their tattoos (Nieuwkerk, 2018).

The moral standards that have been established in society regarding tattoos provide an opportunity for Hijrah Care to create a platform for the hijrah movement and facilitate the process of repentance. Additionally, another substantial effort of the Free Tattoo Removal Hijrah Movement is to build an ideological discourse through the avenue of tattoo removal. Tattoo removal becomes the pathway for Hijrah Care's preaching in constructing an ideological discourse. This can be observed through activities related to religious studies such as *Liqo* (study circle), *Halaqoh* (Islamic discussion circle), and *Tahsin Class* (Quran recitation class), coupled with the requirement for participants in the tattoo removal program to attend every study session organized by Hijrah Care. This aligns with the description above that Free Tattoo Removal serves as a means of penetrating the da'wah of Hijrah Care.

Removing Tattoos and the Path of Repentance for Hijrah Youth

Tattoos in the mainstream frame of religious society, especially Islam, have a stigma or image that is not good or tends to be negative, therefore Hijrah Care through the way of removing tattoos bridges the process of repentance of a person to emigrate. This chapter will elaborate more deeply on the data from interviews of those who have done free tattoo removal at Hijrah Care, why they do tattoo removal, the motivation for removing tattoos, the aspects that influence tattoo removal, and the relationship between tattoo removal and religious (Islamic) legal discourse on tattoos.

The perceptions of tattoos among participants of tattoo removal at Hijrah Care tend to vary; they have different perceptions and interpretations of tattoos as well, ranging from their motivations for getting tattooed to their motivations for removing tattoos. However, if we were to draw a general conclusion, the normative discourse of religion becomes one of the reasons why tattoos should be removed by those who have tattooed their bodies. Nevertheless, based on the data from interviewed participants, they unanimously agree that tattoos in their past are considered a dark period or a phase of delinquency. In the context of post-conversion, tattoos are only seen as negative symbols, representing a negative identity. Some go to the extreme and question, "What is the benefit of having a tattoo? There is none at all" (Arbi, personal communication, 2021).

The reasons why tattoos should be removed can be categorized into two fundamental typologies based on the interview data with tattoo removal participants. The first typology is social reasons, while the second typology is religious doctrine. From a social perspective, particularly within mainstream religious communities, tattoos are generally viewed as negative symbols or symbols of delinquency. This perception has created a strong stigma that gives rise to sentiments and skeptical attitudes. Before removing their tattoos, individuals often experience skeptical attitudes from their

religious social environment, and in some cases, it even reaches the level of religious legal justifications.

“At that time, I was praying when suddenly someone approached me and abruptly said that my prayer was not valid because of my tattoo”.(Arbi, personal communication, 2021).

The social stigma is one of the reasons why tattoos should be removed, and this condition is further reinforced by the opinion of Ustaz Rifki, the founder of Hijrah Care. He believes that he wants to protect tattooed individuals from the negative social stigma associated with tattoos (The Bright Sight Show, 2021). This condition aligns with what (Kéri & Sleiman, 2017), (Van Nieuwkerk, 2021) mentioned about individuals undergoing spiritual changes or conversion due to pressure, discrimination, or social exclusion within mainstream religious communities in a cultural context (where they are viewed skeptically). Moreover, the high pressure from the environment in the form of stereotypes, stigma, and religious doctrine becomes one of the triggers for why they choose the path of tattoo removal (repentance).

From an ethical perspective, those who remove tattoos consider the process of repentance as a sacred journey. Therefore, tattoos, which are regarded as negative symbols, are deemed unsuitable or create a sense of discomfort if one still has them during the process of repentance. The perception of tattoos becomes highly complex. In the realm of religious social contexts, individuals face direct or indirect pressure that generates stigma and stereotypes, reducing the interpretation of tattoos to a singular meaning, namely a symbol of delinquency. In this context, we can observe how those who are undergoing a spiritual transformation strive to demonstrate a symbolic contrast. Tattoos from their past are considered negative symbols, and they make an effort to reject these symbols so as not to carry them into their new identity as individuals who have embraced repentance. This condition serves as an attempt to avoid the impression that one has embraced repentance but still possesses tattoos. The process of tattoo removal can also be seen as a rejection of one's past commitments (Arbi, personal communication, 2021).

The second typology that serves as a fundamental reason for tattoo removal is the perspective of religious justification or religious doctrine. Religious justification becomes one of the fundamental reasons for tattoo removal, as religious doctrine indirectly exerts pressure to remove tattoos and choose the path of repentance or conversion. This condition provides an understanding of why religious doctrine is a strong justification for directing individuals to remove tattoos. From the standpoint of mainstream legal perspectives within the general Islamic community, tattoos are considered prohibited based on religious evidence and interpretations. From this perspective, there is no legal tolerance that permits tattoos, making the legal stance on tattoos singular and prohibited (Rokib & Sodiq, 2017).

“Before I had my tattoo removed, I searched for studies regarding tattoos and their associated laws through online platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. Through these studies, I gained more confidence in my decision to remove the tattoo”.(Arbi, personal communication, 2021).

Those who intend to remove tattoos have previously engaged in lengthy planning, researching religious studies and evidence found through the internet. It is through the search for religious rulings through various religious studies that they obtain legitimacy to undergo the process of tattoo removal.

Conclusion

This article explores the model of the hijrah movement in Indonesia, which encompasses various genres targeting young people through creative and modern methods of da'wah, tailored to their distinct styles. However, this article specifically focuses on examining Hijrah Care's Free Tattoo Removal Movement. The Hijrah Care movement bridges the process of repentance through the approach of free tattoo removal, which serves not only as a medical procedure but also as a means of da'wah for the Hijrah Care community. This situation can be illustrated by the requirements set for participating in the Free Tattoo Removal Program, which obligates participants to memorize Surah *ar-Rahman* in exchange for tattoo removal. Additionally, participants are required to engage in a series of religious activities organized by Hijrah Care, including religious studies.

One of the goals behind the establishment of Hijrah Care and the Free Tattoo Removal Program is to serve as a tool for da'wah penetration, as stated by Ustaz Rifki, the founder of Hijrah Care. It can be emphasized that the essence of the Free Tattoo Removal Program lies in its motive for da'wah or the construction of an ideological discourse built through the participants of tattoo removal and the general public. Reflecting on its program name, namely the Free Tattoo Removal Program, Hijrah Care's perception of tattoos is constructed with a skeptical narrative against tattoo prohibition. Tattoos are viewed as a form of societal decline and a violation of human nature, and this narrative continues to be propagated in the public sphere.

Participants of tattoo removal agree that one of the motivations to remove their tattoos is the result of listening to religious studies on the internet. They engage in internal dialectics, along with experiencing pressure from mainstream religious society. The social environment exerts a negative stigma and prohibition towards tattoos. Tattoo removal thus becomes their initial step towards repentance (hijrah), followed by a deeper understanding of religious teachings through participating in Hijrah Care's religious studies and various online sources.

A fundamental change in perception and meaning towards tattoos occurs after embracing hijrah. Previously, tattoos were seen as art and a form of personal and group representation. However, post-hijrah, their perception and understanding of tattoos

undergo a significant transformation. Tattoos are no longer regarded as art but rather associated with negative sentiments, and in some cases, even despised. This article also examines the changes that occur after tattoo removal and hijrah, exemplified by Ferry Aprianto, who undergoes a profound transformation. He symbolically practices various aspects considered as-Sunnah, such as wearing *cingkrang* pants, growing a beard, donning Islamic robes (*gamis*), and adopting mainstream Arabic language conventions like *ana*, *antum*, *akhi*, *ikhwan*, and *akhwat*, influenced by the exemplary conduct of esteemed religious figures.

Lastly, the findings derived from the presented data indicate a fundamental shift in perspective and perception concerning the past, as well as the perspective on specific symbols and identities among tattoo removal participants. Religious doctrines and the societal stigma prevalent in mainstream culture exert pressure, leading to a shift in the perception of tattoos from art to a skeptical stance.

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