

## Riding the Waves of Change: Challenges and Opportunities for Collaborative Marine Biodiversity Conservation among Muslim Nations

Mohammad Zaki Ahmad

The School of International Studies, University Utara Malaysia, Malaysia.

\* Corresponding Author E-mail: mohdzaki@uum.edu.my

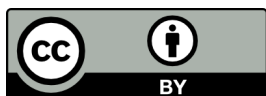
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20885/iconish.vol2.art11>

**Abstract:** This article emphasizes the imperative role of Muslim nations in protecting marine biodiversity, guided by the Quranic principle of environmental stewardship. Highlighting verses from Surah Al-A'raf and Surah Al-Qasas underscores Islam's advocacy for ecological preservation. The article outlines the extensive marine biodiversity within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) territories, noting that 43 out of 57 member countries have coastlines rich in diverse marine life. These nations face significant challenges such as financial constraints, political instability, and insufficient awareness, impacting their conservation efforts. Despite these obstacles, some OIC members have made commendable strides in marine protection, including establishing marine-protected areas and implementing fishing regulations. The article calls for enhanced collaboration within the OIC, proposing strategies such as financial support from affluent member states, capacity building, data sharing, and active participation in international legal frameworks. It also emphasizes the importance of public awareness and effective law enforcement. By leveraging their collective resources and expertise, OIC members can significantly contribute to global marine biodiversity conservation, ensuring sustainable use of marine resources for socio-economic prosperity and the well-being of future generations.

**Keywords:** Marine Biodiversity, Environmental Stewardship, OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation), Sustainable Conservation.

### 1. Introduction

Embedded within the sacred text of Quranic verses echoes a profound reminder: Humanity is responsible for protecting and preserving the natural environment. This divine teaching resonates with the duties of Muslims and all individuals to be mindful of their actions and to



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by the Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences, Universitas Islam Indonesia (FPSCS UII). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

abstain from causing harmful impacts on the environment, thereby affirming their God-given role as protectors of Earth's diverse yet delicate ecosystem. Surah Al-A'raf, verse 56, and Surah Al-Qasas, verse 77, are among numerous examples of verses in the Quran that testify to Islam's strong emphasis on protecting the environment, including marine biodiversity.

For those unfamiliar with the concept of marine biodiversity, it encompasses the diversity of life within the marine realm, including all creatures inhabiting the oceans and seas, ranging from the smallest microorganisms and plankton to fish, corals, and the world's largest animals - the blue whales.

The global community should share the duty to safeguard marine biological resources and the environment equally, regardless of pre-existing divisions of class, wealth, ethnicity, and religion. It should not be exclusively assigned to Western industrial countries. Instead, the responsibility to protect marine biodiversity and the environment also aptly extends to Muslim nations, including those within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). This coalition of mostly Muslim-majority countries can be crucial in safeguarding marine resources and habitats. It is essential to note that among the 57 OIC members, 43 are situated along coastlines adjacent to vast offshore maritime areas, emphasizing their significant role as custodians of our oceans.

Today, the challenges and opportunities for Muslim nations to collaborate in marine biodiversity conservation and protection have become far more critical as marine aquatic resources and the environment, imperative for ensuring the survival of humanity, are experiencing alarming decline and deterioration.

Moving forward, I will also briefly touch upon the strategies and measures to address some of the challenges that OIC-coastal States face in implementing sustainable, collaborative conservation, and protection of marine biodiversity.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the conference organizers for providing me with the platform to share my thoughts and knowledge with all of you. Special thanks to Muhammad Haizzat Syahril Mohd Shudi, my undergraduate research assistant, who has kindly assisted me in compiling the information to be used for my presentation.

## 2. Methods

The research method for this article focuses on a comprehensive literature review to examine collaborative marine biodiversity conservation among Muslim nations. This approach systematically involves gathering and analyzing existing knowledge from various sources to provide a thorough understanding of the topic.

The first step is to elucidate Quranic principles related to environmental stewardship, particularly highlighting verses from Surah Al-A'raf and Surah Al-Qasas, which underpin Islam's efforts toward ecological preservation. Additionally, data collection involves reviewing academic publications, reports, and case studies on marine biodiversity within the territories of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). This process includes identifying the current state of marine biodiversity, the threats it faces, and existing conservation measures.

The gathered data will be interpreted to produce conclusions regarding collaborative marine biodiversity conservation among Muslim countries (OIC Member states) and offer solutions for challenges faced by those countries in protecting marine biodiversity.

### **3. Results & Discussion**

#### **3.1 Importance of Protecting Marine Biodiversity**

The immense importance of oceans and seas to our natural environment and humanity cannot be overstated, thereby justifying the need to protect them. Covering a vast 70% of the Earth's surface, these marine aquatic realms are home to an astonishing variety of life, from the intricate ecosystems of seagrass, coral reefs, kelps, and mangrove forests to the often-overlooked tiny benthic species that roam the sea floors.

Sadly, a significant number of marine species and habitats are currently under grave threats, pushing them dangerously close to the brink of extinction. Some commercially important fish stocks are declining, and certain already endangered marine species, such as sharks, whales, and sea turtles, are facing increasing threats of extinction.

Beyond their ecological and biological richness, oceans and seas play a pivotal role as custodians of our planet's climate, acting as climate and temperature controllers. According to the Global Development Research Centre (GDRC) (n.d), the seas and oceans are the world's largest carbon sinks, with the capability of absorbing approximately 30-50% of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emitted into the atmosphere (as cited by Fergesen, 2022). They serve as carbon sequencers, absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and transforming it into oxygen.

The importance of oceans and seas also extends far beyond their scientific, biological, and ecological marvels. They are important contributors to our blue economy sectors, including fishing, aquaculture, marine biotechnology, and coastal tourism. Nearly 90% of global trade are transported via a vast network of shipping routes across the world oceans and seas.

#### **3.2 Benefits of Marine Resources and Environment to OIC's Coastal States**

It is undeniable that the sources of socio-economic prosperity for both governments and the millions of people living close to the sea of OIC member countries are derived from the invaluable maritime spaces and natural resources they contain. The maritime sectors continue to play a critical role as sources of livelihood, recreational activity, employment, and food security. These blue economy sectors are among the largest contributors to the revenue and foreign exchange earnings of some OIC member states.

The ocean and the sea also hold profound cultural and traditional significance to specific coastal communities of these countries. The surrounding ocean and sea are intertwined with their identity and well-being. A testament to this enduring connection can be seen in countries such as Indonesia, Oman, Maldives, and Malaysia, each boasting long and illustrious histories as seafaring nations.

As I have mentioned previously, 43 out of the 57 members of the OIC bordering maritime spaces, and all of them heavily depend on the adjacent oceans and seas for various benefits. Therefore, it is inevitable that OIC coastal States must support the global community's efforts to protect and conserve marine biodiversity.

### **3.3 Reasons Why OIC Members Must Protect Marine Biodiversity**

There are several reasons why OIC member States cannot excuse themselves from being an integral part of the global community's efforts to protect and conserve marine biodiversity and the environment.

The combined coastline lengths of 43 OIC countries amount to approximately 119,676 km. These coastal nations have claimed extensive maritime jurisdictional zones granted by the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1982). These zones encompass territorial seas, exclusive economic zones (EEZs), and continental shelves. The sheer magnitude of their combined EEZs alone is staggering, extending to 3,832,928 square kilometers. Within this vast maritime jurisdiction zone lies not only their jurisdiction over marine resources with the potential to generate tremendous economic benefits but also the obligation prescribed by UNCLOS 1982 to ensure the equitable and responsible utilization of these invaluable resources.

The vast surrounding seas bordering these coastal states are also home to a rich and diverse biodiversity of flora and fauna. For example, in the South China Sea, a semi-enclosed sea bordering countries inhabited by Muslim-dominated populations such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Brunei, the composition of tropical fish species alone is estimated to be more than 3,365 species and 263 families (Randall and Lim, 2000). Both Indonesia and Malaysia are ranked among the 17 Megadiverse Countries on the global stage. Arguably, the world's largest coral reef area is located in the Indo-Pacific region bordering Indonesia and Australia, making them collectively responsible for protecting the world's critical coral reef population.

### **3.4 With Great Power Comes with Great Responsibility**

Having authority over extensive maritime areas teeming with diverse marine life and habitats, the member countries of the OIC are duty-bound to protect these vital yet delicate ecosystems with global ecological, economic, and cultural significance. It comes as no surprise that OIC member countries have taken steps to protect and preserve marine ecosystems and habitats, both at the national and regional levels.

They have established marine protected areas (MPAs) along their coastlines and in oceanic regions within which they oversee. These MPAs include Marine Parks, No Take Fishing Zones, and Marine Sanctuaries. Their main objectives are to conserve fish species and populations, protect native vegetation like mangrove forests, shrubs, and palm trees, and preserve delicate habitats such as coral reefs and seagrass beds.

OIC member states have also implemented strong measures to regulate fishing activities. These measures include designating specific fishing zones for particular fishing gear and vessels, prohibiting destructive fishing methods, and establishing closed fishing seasons.

In the fight against marine pollution, particularly from land-based sources like agricultural runoff and industrial effluents, many OIC members have built wastewater treatment plants, installed river garbage traps, and imposed severe penalties on those found guilty of causing marine pollution.

OIC members have also collaborated with other flag states and international organizations like the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to combat marine pollution caused by shipping operations, such as unregulated waste dumping and oil release.

Recognizing the importance of education and awareness, OIC member states have initiated numerous programs in their respective countries to educate the public about the importance of preserving oceans and marine biodiversity.

OIC members have also placed a strong emphasis on marine scientific and technical research. Their goals are to gain a deeper understanding of the threats to marine biodiversity and to develop effective conservation strategies. They've established government-funded research institutes, often in partnership with local and regional universities or research institutes. Some OIC countries have generously shared their marine research findings and data with other nations through capacity-building programs and workshops.

Furthermore, many OIC countries are actively carrying out projects related to rehabilitating coastal vegetation and ecological areas, including mangrove reforestation, coral regeneration, and coastal sand dune restoration.

### **3.5 Current State of Marine Biodiversity**

Despite the efforts by the international community and Muslim nations to protect marine biodiversity, the reality on the ground shows troubling trends. The integrity and sustainability of our oceans and marine life are facing threats from harmful human activities and climate change. Fish stocks are declining in many major fishing grounds, such as the Mediterranean Sea, the Malacca Straits, and the Javanese Sea. Vast areas of marine habitats, such as coral reefs and seagrasses, have suffered damage and destruction from human activities and global warming.

Many human actions contribute to this ecosystem degradation problem, including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing practices, also known as IUU fishing. Examples of IUU fishing include fishing without licensing, unauthorized trans-shipment of fish at sea, fish bombing, and cyanide fishing. Among the OIC countries, Indonesia and Malaysia have faced substantial financial losses due to long-standing challenges of IUU fishing activities, with Indonesia losing up to 20 billion USD (Mubarok, 2019) and Malaysia experiencing 1.43 billion USD loss (Parameswaran, 2019).

Besides IUU fishing, marine pollution has become a common phenomenon, with extensive scientific evidence and reports confirming deteriorating water quality and marine habitats in regional seas. Common types of marine pollution include oil spills, total suspended solids (including plastics and Styrofoam), chemicals, and organic materials such as *E. coli*.

Another alarming phenomenon with negative impacts on marine ecosystems is global warming and climate change. Climate change is responsible for causing coral reefs to bleach and die, leading to the destruction of fishery habitats. Climate change harms communities in low-lying coastal areas that rely extensively on nearby marine resources for their lives, food, and jobs. Rising seas lead to more beach erosion and coastal floods, especially in small Muslim-majority island nations like the Maldives and Comoros.

### **3.6 Challenges Confronted by Muslim Nations in Marine Biodiversity Conservation**

Several challenges contribute to the ongoing degradation of marine biodiversity and the environment worldwide. Both mainstream media and scholarly literature have reported that many Muslim nations when compared to Western developed countries, are still lagging in terms of making progress in effectively protecting and conserving marine biodiversity. Nonetheless, despite these challenges, it is important to acknowledge that some Muslim countries have made commendable progress in marine biodiversity conservation.

One common challenge is the lack of financial resources and technical capacity. Many developing Muslim countries struggle with funding due to factors like low economic development, widespread poverty, and competing government priorities. Additionally, some countries lack the necessary expertise for sustainable marine resource management, including marine scientists, biologists, and fisheries managers.

Political instability in certain Muslim nations has also hampered conservation efforts. These countries are forced to prioritize addressing internal conflicts, consequently diverting resources and attention away from marine conservation efforts.

Lack of awareness and knowledge about the importance of marine ecosystem protection is another challenge. It can be challenging to gain public support for conservation measures when many people are unaware of the significant benefits they can bring.

Furthermore, some coastal communities in Muslim countries have long engaged in harmful traditional practices, such as dynamite fishing and bottom trawling, which can irreversibly damage marine biodiversity. The use of traditional yet harmful fish aggregating devices, such as *rumpon* and *payao*, raises concerns over the long-term sustainability of fish stocks, particularly juvenile stocks.

Conflicts between marine conservation and other multiple sea uses, such as shipping, tourism, and oil and gas extraction, create additional challenges in some Muslim countries. This creates a dilemma for the government in prioritizing whether to protect marine biodiversity and the environment at the expense of socio-economic benefits.

Lastly, ineffective law enforcement, including insufficient patrols, surveillance, and monitoring operations, poses difficulties. The vast maritime jurisdiction of these countries and limited resources exacerbate the problem. Existing national laws and regulations often fail to deter actors from exploiting marine resources without consequences.

### **3.7 Recommendations**

In addressing the above-mentioned challenges faced by Muslim nations in protecting marine biodiversity, the OIC is well-equipped to assist its developing member states. By collaborating, they can work together to safeguard marine biodiversity.

The OIC, particularly with funding from its affluent oil-rich members, can offer financial support to developing member countries for marine conservation efforts, including research, law enforcement, and capacity building.

One effective approach to enhancing collaborative marine biodiversity conservation is by improving the technical and institutional capabilities of Muslim-majority countries. This can include technical training programs, seminars, and consultation projects to develop a skilled workforce for managing technical and scientific aspects.

Creating a platform for sharing and disseminating scientific data is essential for informed decision-making. Access to valuable data collected by researchers from more advanced Muslim countries should be made available to those in need. Online data platforms like Global Fishing Watch allow various parties to access and share data.

To develop and strengthen the global legal and policy framework, the OIC can encourage its members to actively participate in international conferences and diplomatic negotiations related to formulating legal regimes for marine biodiversity protection. Moreover, ensuring compatibility between national laws and international laws is crucial. Hence, the OIC should encourage its member countries to ratify or accede to international agreements related to marine conservation, such as the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UNCLOS 1982.

The OIC, through its agencies like the Environment and Water Commission, and Information and Cultural Department, can also raise awareness about marine conservation among its member countries and the public through education, outreach, and media campaigns.

Regarding security and regional stability, the OIC can facilitate dialogue, diplomacy, and peacebuilding to mitigate conflicts and security risks that undermine conservation efforts while protecting the rights and interests of all parties involved.

Lastly, to address resource and funding shortages for maritime law enforcement, coordination among law enforcement agencies at the national and international levels is vital. Other regions have adopted such approach. The 1992 Niue Treaty on Cooperation in Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement in the South Pacific Region is one notable example. It enables member countries with more resources to conduct joint patrolling operations with smaller nations, enhancing regional maritime security and combating piracy and sea robbery (Aqorau, 2000).

## **4. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the protection and conservation of marine biodiversity are imperative for the sustainability of our planet and the well-being of humanity. In line with both the sacred teachings of the Quran and the scientific knowledge of oceans and seas, Muslim nations,

particularly those belonging to the OIC, hold a significant role in this global effort due to their extensive coastlines, rich marine biodiversity, and reliance on marine resources for socio-economic prosperity. Despite facing challenges such as financial constraints, political instability, and inadequate awareness, many Muslim nations have made progress in marine conservation efforts. Collaborative actions among OIC member states, supported by the organization's resources and initiatives, can enhance technical capabilities, promote data sharing, strengthen legal frameworks, raise awareness, and address enforcement issues. By working together with the global community, Muslim nations can play a pivotal and proactive role in safeguarding marine biodiversity and ensuring a sustainable and thriving marine environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

## References

- Aqorau, T. (2000). Illegal I Fishing and Fisheries Law Enforcement in Small Island Developing States: The Pacific Islands Experience. *The International Journal of Marine and Coastal Law*, 15(1), 37-63.
- Fergesen, J. (2022, October 14). Here's how The Ocean is Being Harnessed as a Climate Solution. *TIME*. <https://time.com/6213455/oceans-climate-solution-blue-carbon/>
- Mubarok, Z. (2019). Indonesia Legal Analysis of IUU Fishing and Transnational Organized Fisheries Crimes: Loopholes and Proposed Measures, *Indonesian Journal of International Law*, 17(1): 113-117. <https://doi.org/10.17304/ijil.vol17.1.780>
- Parameswaran, P. (2019, May 28). Malaysia's New Illegal Fishing Task Force in the Spotlight. *The Diplomat*. <https://thediplomat.com/2019/05/malaysias-new-illegal-fishing-task-force-in-the-spotlight/>
- Randall, E. & Lim, K. K. P., (2000). A checklist of the fishes of the South China Sea. *Raffles Bulletin Zoology*, Suppl. 8: 569-667.

## Digital Activism Strategy in the PhD Mama Indonesia Community: Multiplatform Empowerment for Mother-Student

Dian Dwi Anisa

Communication Science Department, Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences,  
Universitas Islam Indonesia

\* Corresponding Author E-mail: dian.dwi.anisa@uii.ac.id

<https://doi.org/10.20885/iconish.vol2.art12>

**Abstract:** Social movements have undergone a transformation into digital activism, leveraging new media, based on the internet. One such community harnessing internet-based media is the PhD Mama Indonesia community. Comprising Indonesian women, particularly those who are married and have children, this community serves as a platform for sharing experiences and challenges related to pursuing academic studies while fulfilling their maternal responsibilities. Use context analysis method, this research aims to examine the strategy of digital activism within the PhD Mama Indonesia community. The research follows a descriptive, qualitative approach, utilizing data collection methods such as observations, documentation from books, journal, research, and PhD Mama Indonesia posts. The findings of the study reveal that the activism initiated by the PhD Mama Indonesia community takes place across various platforms, ranging from websites and Instagram to YouTube. This community also use the logic of social media algorithms to increase its visibility and popularity such as choosing unique and specific account and community names; varied and consistent use of hashtags; and collaborate with influencers and experts to host live talk show on Instagram covering diverse topics, sharing educational content on Instagram. Not only that, the digital activism carried out by members can survive to this day because of the similarity of the ecosystem felt by student-mothers.

**Keywords:** digital activism, mother-student, PhD Mama Indonesia, the second shift

### 1. Introduction

Education plays an important role in someone's life. It also contributes a crucial part in the society by developing people's skills, personality, and thoughts (Sicam, 2021). This is reinforced



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by the Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences, Universitas Islam Indonesia (FPSCS UII). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

by one of the global goals of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) launched by United Nations. Also known as the Global Goals, SDGs is a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030, all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The SDGs are also designed to end discrimination against women and girls.<sup>1</sup>

One of the SDGs goals is quality education. It is written that this goal ensure that all girls and boys complete free primary and secondary schooling by 2030. It also aims to provide equal access to affordable vocational training, to eliminate wealth disparities, and universal access to quality higher education. And one of the goal target is by 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university.<sup>2</sup>

But in fact, not everyone can access education easily. Unfortunately, pursuing higher education for a mother is not a simple thing. Many things must be considered by women who already have married and have child or children. Just like working mothers, student mothers also have their own challenges because they have to negotiate with domestic tasks and college assignments. Moreover, domestic tasks such as housekeeping and childcare are considered duties inherent to women (Fakih, 2008).

Student-mothers need support from another, so they can finish all of their tasks. One of support can be obtained by student-mothers in the PhD Mama Indonesia community. On its website, it is written that this site is a means of sharing knowledge and experiences as well as the up and down of mothers who have or are currently pursuing doctoral education in various parts of the world.<sup>3</sup>

The community was initiated by Kanti Pertiwi, while she was studying at the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Business and Economics in 2017. Pertiwi is a mother of three and a lecturer at the Faculty of Economics, University of Indonesia. In an interview with Lily Yulianti Farid (2019), Pertiwi defined Mama PhD as a mother from Indonesia who is pursuing a doctoral degree abroad, accompanied by her husband and children.

At first, the community operated online through a WhatsApp group called Srikandi Indonesia. Pertiwi explains that the WhatsApp group is made up of PhD students who live in Melbourne's northern suburbs - mainly in Brunswick and Coburg. They use this messaging app to share experiences and discussions. Pertiwi then took the initiative to write about her life as a PhD student and her writing was published by the Australia Broadcasting Corporation. When she received positive feedback on her writing, the idea to write about other PhD students' stories was aroused. Right now, PhD Mama Indonesia use various platforms for supporting student-mothers, such as websites, YouTube, to various social media such as Facebook and Instagram (Farid, 2019).

---

<sup>1</sup><https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals/quality-education>

<sup>3</sup><https://phdmamaindonesia.com/>

Social media is a medium to build relationships and participate in a community or virtual-based organization group based on common interests, interests, and goals to be achieved including social movements. Social movements in the technological era are now transforming into digital activism by utilizing internet-based media (Putri et-al, 2022).

Rahmawan (2020) explained that the use of technology in relation to social goals can include community empowerment, innovation in the context of education, overcoming economic inequality, resolving human rights issues, and other social movements that help realize social justice, prosperity, and a healthy democratic climate.

The PhD Mama Indonesia community is one form of digital activism that use various internet-based media to spread its ideas and also support student-mothers who face various challenges in completing their tasks. This community tries to advocate student-mothers who are faced with public and domestic tasks carried by women.

For this reason, the researcher formulated the following research question: “What is the digital activism strategy carried out by the Mama Indonesia PhD community?”. Based on this research questions, this research aims to explore what digital activism strategies are carried out by the PhD Mama Indonesia community. This research is qualitative research with a case study method. In a case study method, the researcher’s task is to delve into phenomenon (case) in a specific time and activity and gathering detailed and in-depth information (Kusmarni, 2012)

The research data consists of posts by the PhD Mama Indonesia community on various platforms, especially Instagram and their website. These data will be elaborated upon with ideas proposed by Detta Rahmawan, Mahameruaji J. N., and Janitra P. A. in their article titled “Strategi Aktivisme Digital di Indonesia: Aksesibilitas, Visibilitas, Popularitas, dan Ekosistem Aktivisme” (2020).

Some related previous research include the research by Detta Rahmawan, Mahameruaji J. N., and Janitra P. A. titled “Strategi Aktivisme Digital di Indonesia: Aksesibilitas, Visibilitas, Popularitas, dan Ekosistem Aktivisme” (2020). This research focuses on digital activism not merely from the perspective of technological determinism. There are various factors underpin the practice of digital activism in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the author will use the ideas identified by Rahmawan et-al in examining how digital activism is carried out by the PhD Mama Indonesia team.

Additionally, there is research by Ismahani, F, Rijai, N. A., and Adzny, M. F. titled “Strategi Aktivisme Digital #MeToo Movement di Amerika Serikat.” This research focuses on the factors that sustain the #MeToo Movement, namely accessibility, visibility, popularity, and ecosystem. However, there are differences between the #MeToo campaign and PhD Mama Indonesia. The #MeToo movement was founded by survivor and activist Tarana Burke. They worked towards building a community of advocates determined to interrupt sexual violence wherever it happens. In 2017, the #MeToo hashtag went viral and brought global awareness to the magnitude of sexual violence. What began as local grassroots work had become a global movement. Meanwhile, the digital activism conducted by the PhD Mama Indonesia team remains at a national scale, specifically advocating for mothers pursuing or who have pursued higher education.

## 2. Literature Review

### Women as “Second Shift” Labour

Most women without children spend much more time than men on housework (Hochschild & Machung, 2012). And when they are having a child/children, they devote more time caring for both house and children. This situation is not much different when a woman also has a public role, such as working or going to school. Student mothers still have to juggle their work/study responsibilities while being burdened with more housework and childcare than men. Generally, women still carry out more housework than men, irrespective of their working hours or earnings, supporting normative arguments that emphasize the significance of domestic work in ‘doing gender’ (Lyonette & Crompton, 2015).

College students who are involved in early motherhood face several challenges because this dual role (parenting and studying) is not an easy task. They must balance their time as parents and as students. Combining motherhood and studies without prioritizing one activity over the other is a major dilemma for student mothers (Sicam, 2021).

The study conducted by Peggy Thoits in 1985 found that women’s multiple roles could trigger anxiety. Thoits examined 1,000 participants, including both men and women, and asked them how often they experienced twenty-three anxiety symptoms (such as dizziness and hallucinations) in the previous week. The study found that mothers who worked were the most likely to have experienced symptoms of anxiety (via Hochschild & Machung, 2012).

Student mothers face several challenges (Sicam, 2021). Firstly, they may face mistreatment from their student, who may tease them for no longer being single. Secondly, they encounter difficulty balancing their college coursework and their parenting tasks (Taukeni, 2014; Torres, 2020). In addition, student mothers face challenges when their baby getting sick (Torres, 2020), as well as feelings of homesickness (Torres, 2014), drowsiness, weakness, and lonely (Taukeni, 2014). These difficulties may have an impact on their academic achievements and performance.

In Sicam’s (2021) research, financial problem is also a significant challenge that student mother deal with. Due to their ongoing studies and the lack of a stable income, they are struggling out of budget and thinking how to provide for child/children’s needs and school expenses.

Women are more concerned than men about both public and household tasks. Whilst domestic responsibilities have been shared by their partners, women can still feel a sense of responsibility towards this work. Because of this, more women felt torn between one sense of urgency and another, between the need to soothe a child’s fear of being left at day care, and the need to show the boss she’s “serious” at work. More women than men questioned how good they were as parents (Hochschild, 2012).

### Empowering Women Through Digital Activism

Activism is usually the result of dissatisfaction with some aspect of life, particularly in relation to social justice. Activists engage in proactive measures during inadequate and

pressing conditions as a form of protest. Sometimes, the reason for becoming an activist is to do something for people who are impoverished or unfairly treated (Sinaga, 2023).

People's interest in technology has also influenced the practice of activism. Over the past decade, people around the globe have become increasingly aware of and interested in the expanding use of digital technologies, computers, mobile phones, and other Internet enabled devices, in the battle for social and political change (Sivitanides, 2011).

Social media, as one of the internet's offspring, can facilitate creating public spaces with effective public participation and connectivity. Individuals have more chances to participate in these unconstrained areas culturally and socially. Under particular circumstances, participation in social and cultural activities in social media can lead to political engagement (Lim, 2014).

According to Kaur (2020), digital activism utilizes information and communication technologies, as well as digital media, as primary platforms for freely expressing ideas. In recent years, women's empowerment activism has shifted into the digital realm, with feminists becoming more adept at fostering online movements and discussions. Consequently, numerous digital feminist campaigns have significantly improved the world. Online activists have realized the Internet's potential as a catalyst for social change. Women are leveraging technology as a means of empowerment by creating spaces, resources, and networks for organization (Sutton & Pollock, 2000)

Digital feminist activism represents an evolution of traditional feminist activism, introducing new tools and strategies for spreading awareness, disseminating information, and mobilizing supporters to achieve women's empowerment (Kaur, 2020). With the rise of movements like #MeToo, social media is providing women with a platform to voice their opinions and be heard.

The term "digital" in the context of digital activism is commonly understood to refer to the potential for speed, reliability, scale, and low cost offered by digital technology. While there has been ongoing debate about the terminology of digital activism, the expansion of reach and scope made possible by digitalisation allows for an array of activities and campaigns that make exclusive and comprehensive use of digital technologies and networks to fall under this label. Comprehensively, this encompasses all socio-political activism that employs digital network infrastructure, while exclusivity denotes the exclusion of other technological activism forms that are not linked to a digital network infrastructure (Joyce, 2010).

However, it is important to note that activism on social media is subject to limitations. According to Lim (2017), activism on social media is characteristically impulsive, vulnerable, and diverse. This implies that campaigns on social media can surface unpredictably and even spread rapidly, but also possess the risk of abrupt disappearance. The connectivity of issues in digital activism is frequently lacking cohesion, which means only select challenges may eventually garner substantial momentum.

Certain strategies are required for the growth, development, spread, and sustainability of a digital activism movement or organisation. Rahmawan et al. (2020) analysed a range of digital activism strategies in Indonesia. A comprehensive and exclusive strategy is required for

successful digital activism. The survival strategy pertains to accessibility, visibility, popularity, and the activism ecosystem, among other things.

The first three strategies are comprehensive strategies. This means that all campaign practices utilise digital infrastructure. Digital technology infrastructure is the combination of networks, code, application, and devices that make up the physical infrastructure of digital activism-is a starting point but not an ending point (Joyce, 2010).

Accessibility means how an organisation's campaign can be accessed by others. It requires interconnected devices that technically use binary codes to exchange information. It also requires a network for information to be distributed and known to each other. The existence of a digital technology infrastructure does not necessarily mean that digital activism will be viable. An organisation or social movement needs to take advantage of the way digital technology or digital algorithms work. So that people can see the existence of this digital activism. Therefore, another strategy that can be used is the concept of visibility. Visibility is a key concern for all producers who share content on social media platforms (Joyce, 2010).

In a similar way to the commercial practice of digital communication, digital activism also needs to be visible to others. As well as being visible, the practice of digital activism needs to be highly engaged to sustain its popularity. These commercial visibility strategies may include aligning with the publishing conventions of social media platforms, incorporating live events, working with existing social influencers, or large-scale campaigns that combine mass media with social media (Hutchinson, 2021).

The concept of visibility is closely related to popularity. On social media, the popularity of content is largely "calculated", measured, and evaluated by various available metrics. These metrics are mostly based on commercial value orientation. Popular content will be useful for the sustainability of the main income of social media, which is related to advertising revenue. Therefore, digital activists must realise from the beginning that the technology they use in the practice of activism is not designed for the public interest. With recommendation systems and algorithmic mechanisms, the most popular content on social media has a higher level of visibility (Rahamawan, 2020).

As mentioned by Joyce (2010), digital activism also needs to be exclusive, which means that its practices are not always connected to the digital network infrastructure. Being popular and having an audience is important. However, it is not the only thing that makes digital activism viable. Rodríguez, Ferron, & Shamas (2014), via Rahmawan, explain that activism that focuses too much on 'sophistication' and the role of technology risks ignoring various socio-political and historical factors related to the human being as an agency or active party in the practice of activism. This digital activism strategy is what is referred to as the digital activism ecosystem, where the audience as one of the key resources must continue to be properly managed.

Digital technology is one of the infrastructure of the digital activism environment. There are several ways to look at the digital activism ecosystem. The first way is offered by Joyce (2010) by looking at how contextual factors work through economic, social, and political contexts. Economic, social and political factors determine whether and how people make use of this infrastructure.

Economic factors relate to the ability of individuals to purchase and provide technology that supports the practice of digital activism. We cannot deny that somebody's economic situation also affects one's ability to access technology used in digital activism. For example, an individual who lives in an area with a good Internet network will find it easier to engage in digital activism. In addition, the individual also needs to have a computer with an adequate internet connection.

Social norms also influence how people use digital technologies for activism practices. There are expectations about the practices associated with digital activism. These expectations often differ according to the social group to which one belongs. They are based on characteristics such as age, gender, religion, education, ethnicity or socio-economic status (Joyce).

Political factors also affect activism. In democratic societies, where citizens have meaningful influence over the actions of their government, the political context of digital activism can be understood in terms of law and regulation. However, in determining the environment for digital activism, repressive and authoritarian governments do not limit themselves to legal channels. In these countries, even activists who have access to digital technologies find it difficult to use them because of government-imposed restrictions. (Sivitanides, 2011).

Digital ecosystems can also be examined in more detail with the concept of 'roots, routes, and routers' (Lim, 2018) to describe three main mechanisms that need to be considered in analyses of digital activism. Roots means tracing the roots of an issue to provide a broader context for analysing the communication and media of contemporary social movements. Routes involves mapping social movement pathways, tracing how communication and media are involved in these pathways and identifying key mechanisms at different points in the movement lifecycle. Routers as the final strategy relates to pathways, looking at the bridging roles of human and non-human, traditional and contemporary, digital and analogue, permanent and temporary in the creation and development of social movements.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### **Accessibility Strategies**

The first stage of digital activism strategy is accessibility. Accessibility is related to digital infrastructure. The infrastructure of digital activism is based on the digital network that can connect us not only to the center, but also link us to each other as well. And, when large numbers of citizens are able to more easily connect to one another, to send and receive original content, and to coordinate action, they are able to create effective political movements.

PhD Mama Indonesia Community was initiated by Kanti Pertiwi, while she was studying at the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Business and Economics in 2017. At first, the community operated online through a WhatsApp group called Srikandi Indonesia, whose members were a group of student mothers living in Melbourne's northern suburbs - mainly in Brunswick and Coburg. The forum was quite limited given the private nature of the messaging app (Farid, 2019).

The community's reach expanded with the creation of a website, [phdmamaindonesia.com](http://phdmamaindonesia.com). This website contains various information about the ups and downs of being a student-mother, tips on getting scholarships, strategies on getting supervisors, tips on parenting abroad, tips on finding cheap apartment, and information on critical social research.

The values and information related to the PhD Mama Indonesia community can also be seen through various social media. This community then uses various social media platforms, including a Facebook group created on 12 May 2016. This group was created as an open group without the need for administrator approval. This allows the audience to access and receive information directly. In addition, this community does not carry out any kind of advertising or sponsorship in this Facebook group. This group has 999 members and is liked by 928 users (17 September 2023). Secondly, PhD Mama Indonesia also has an Instagram account, which was created in April 2018. As of 17 September 2023, the number of its followers has reached more than 7912 followers and it has published 475 posts.

PhD Mama Indonesia also has a YouTube channel, which was created on 4 May 2019. This community's YouTube channel has 920 subscribers and has uploaded 83 videos with 20,152 views as of 17 September 2023. To maximise accessibility, this community connects all four media (website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) by linking related links on each platform.

## Visibility Strategies

Visibility is the level of visibility, clarity and how an activism has added value, uniqueness and other things that make it 'stand out from the crowd' (Hutchinson, 2019). Compared to the digital activism practices of other communities, the PhD Mama Indonesia community also uses different ways to make their visibility more prominent. This research focuses on visibility strategies that are specifically carried out on Instagram. This is because this platform has the largest number of followers compared to followers on other platforms.

The first way is to choose a community name that is also used as an account name. The name PhD Mama Indonesia is quite unique because the researchers did not find a similar community or account name. The name also has a specific target audience: a student who also a mother from Indonesia.

Visibility is also achieved by different hashtags. The hashtags fall into several categories. Some of them are used consistently from the beginning of this account. The categories of hashtags used include elements of the community itself such as [#phdmamaindonesia](#), [#jurnalphdmama](#); related to women's narratives and support for fellow women [#perempuanskolahlagi](#), [#perempuanberbagi](#), [#perempuanberdaya](#), [#experienceperempuan](#), [#womensupportwomen](#); related to educational institutions, especially where the founder of PhD Mama Indonesia works such as [#universitasindonesia](#); related to scholarships such as [#beasiswaipdp](#), [#ipdp](#), [#australiaawards](#), [#australiaawardsindonesia](#), [#fulbrightindonesia](#), [#beasiswadikti](#), [#beasiswakampus](#), [#tipsbeasiswa](#), and [#beasiswaramahibu](#); related to Indonesian female figures like [#KitaKartini](#); and related to other social movements such as [#educationforall](#), [#Empowerthefuture](#), [#BreaktheBias](#), [#InclusivityMatters](#).

Another strategy can be seen in several posts that received a lot of responses. One of them is a discussion session that was held with the Indonesia Feminist Instagram account, which has received more than 2,500 views. This cannot be separated from the fact that the Indonesia Feminist Instagram account has more than a hundred thousand followers. Moreover, the discussion is hosted by influencer Dea Safira. In her Instagram bio, Dea admit that she is a content creator who also dentist, author and women's rights activist.<sup>4</sup>

PhD Mama Indonesia hosts numerous discussions and invites scholars or experts from diverse institutions. The discussions cover a range of topics including Independent Women Without Blemish, Addressing Gender Stereotypes in Children, Interview Preparation Tips by LPDP Awardees, Crafting Emails to Prospective Supervisors, and Preparing CVs for PhD Studies in Australia and America. This discussion convened various experts, including scholarship awardees from different institutions, academics, diplomats, doctoral candidates, and psychologists. Undoubtedly, the involvement of this network of scholars and experts will enhance the potential engagement of the PhD Mama Indonesia community.

## Popularity Strategies

Several strategies have been implemented to raise awareness and enhance the prominence of this community. There are numerous highly engaging posts on Instagram, with several of them acquiring over 500 likes. The popularity of the PhD Mama Indonesia community requires a redefinition of its meaning. Initially, it was established for Indonesian mothers pursuing doctoral degrees abroad, accompanied by her husband and children. However, on Instagram, the community now identifies as a platform for women pursuing doctoral and masters studies, discussing both in international and domestic institutions. It is not exclusively for PhD students but welcomes other postgraduate scholars.

The account's popularity was demonstrated when volunteer vacancies were advertised by this community on February 10, and subsequently, on March 24, the community stated that it had accepted 128 volunteers. These individuals are located across 12 different countries and have a range of backgrounds and interests, including students, employees and housewives.

To increase the popularity of the practice of digital activism, the values underlying this community were also reported in various online media such as detik.com, jpnn.com, republika.co.id, and tribunnews.com. Unfortunately, all four media outlets published the exact same article using the title "PhD Mama di Australia dan Mitos Wanita Indonesia". This article contains the experience of Kanti Pertiwi, founder of the PhD Mama Indonesia community, as a student-mother in Australia. Pertiwi's experience was also published on the mamarantau.com blog. However, unlike the aforementioned four online media outlets, the article on this blog features a more casual language style.

Another media platform that has highlighted the PhD Mama Indonesia community is theconversation.com. The team's research findings on the difficulties faced by student mothers

---

<sup>4</sup><https://www.instagram.com/thedeasafira/>

are discussed in the published article. The article aims to provide practical solutions to the challenges faced by these student-mothers. The article titled “Kami Tawarkan Solusi untuk Jawab Tantangan Ibu yang menepuh Studi S2 dan S3” presents research findings based on a survey of 406 postgraduate student-mothers studying S2 and S3 programs.

## **Digital Activism Ecosystem Strategies**

The sustainability of the PhD Mama Community is influenced by numerous factors, in addition to utilising digital technology and its algorithms. In maintaining human resources as an agency in the practice of digital activism, the PhD Mama community held a series of discussions with various themes. The discussions also present people with diverse backgrounds. This movement is able to exist and reach a wide audience because of the shared experiences and challenges women face, including the double burden of public and domestic responsibilities such as childcare and housework. This shared experience allows them to unite and advocate themselves.

A study by the PhD Mama Indonesia team, published on [theconversation.com](https://theconversation.com), shows that student mothers face similar challenges. They must fulfil the role of being a student as well as the primary caregiver for their children as expected in society. This finding confirms Martina Dickson and Lilly Tennant’s research in the United Arab Emirates in 2017. The research titled “The Accommodation I Make is Turning a Blind Eye: Faculty Support for Student Mothers in Higher Education” found that female students with children face special challenges when it comes to higher education. The dual role of a mother and student adds complexity to their studies as they have to ensure their roles as parents, students, and even career women are balanced.

In addition to the research, the PhD Mama Indonesia community also proposed a collaborative project with Cipta Media Ekspresi, a grant for women cultural practitioners in all fields of art. According to the Cipta Media Kreasi website, the grant allows the recipients to utilise the fund for several purposes including creative development, studying, travelling, and supporting women’s creations or performances. The PhD Mama Indonesia Community Project is a book publishing project called “Jurnal PhD Mama” that tells the stories of Indonesian women completing their doctoral studies abroad, including in Australia, the Netherlands, the UK, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Singapore.

This book documents the journey of Indonesian women pursuing the highest level of education amidst cultural pressures, various challenges related to their roles as women, wives and mothers, far from the comfort of life in their homeland. In addition to being an inspiration for student-mothers, the book also targets husbands, parents, scholarship managers and universities, to provide their best support for the women. The book tells the story of the challenges of 40 Indonesian mother-students from various backgrounds in striving for education at the highest academic level, the doctoral level, categorised into five chapters.

Apart from publishing a book, this community also published a policy brief which was published on December 22, 2021. In its preparation, the Mama Indonesia PhD team used data collection techniques in the form of an online survey. About 406 respondents participated in

the survey which was held from October 20, 2021 to November 12, 2021. Respondents were Indonesian women who are currently undertaking or have completed postgraduate studies as well as those who aspire to pursue further studies.

This policy brief contains policy recommendations for several parties such as scholarship providers, destination campuses, and study destination countries to coordinate together to identify the unique needs of student-mothers during their studies, such as maternity leave, paternity leave, and parental leave; ensure student-mothers can get subsidies or fee waivers for childcare services; and ensure inclusive policies regarding access to childcare services and children's schools. The recommendations for scholarship providers are to consider the cost component for childcare services as part of the special allowance for student-mothers; and make affirmative policies in the form of special quotas for student mothers with more inclusive requirements, such as longer age limit requirements for women who experience career interruptions due to childcare duties.

There are also policy recommendations for the study destination campus, including providing adequate and affordable childcare services for student mothers in the campus area; and issuing a guideline or procedure that can be a reference regarding study program or university policies that are friendly to student mothers, such as maternity and paternity leave, lactation rooms, and children's playrooms.

## **4. Conclusions**

Social movements have undergone a transformation into digital activism, leveraging new media, based on the internet. One such community harnessing internet-based media is the PhD Mama Indonesia community. The practice of digital activism in this community can exist and survive because it uses comprehensive and exclusive strategies. Comprehensive strategies can be seen in the accessibility, visibility, and popularity of activism practices that utilize digital technology infrastructure and optimize how social media works. Meanwhile, the exclusive strategy carried out by this group is to create an ecosystem that is able to strengthen the capacity of human resources as an agency in the practice of digital activism.

The PhD Mama Indonesia community has utilized the four principles mentioned above to disseminate ideas and advocate for mother-student groups. To maximize accessibility, this community interlinks all four media platforms (website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) by providing related links on each platform. In terms of visibility, the community employs a specific name to reach its target audience, which includes both mothers and students. They use specific hashtags, collaborate with influencers, scholars, and experts. To enhance popularity, the community use strategies to broaden their target audience, not only focusing on mother-students but also on women aspiring to pursue higher education. Additionally, they recruit volunteers and collaborate with various online media, both within Indonesia and internationally, to promote their movement. From an ecosystem perspective, the PhD Mama Indonesia community maintains it by regularly conducting discussions with speakers from diverse backgrounds. The community also undertakes research that culminates in the creation of policy briefs advocating for mother-students.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Communication Science Departement, UII, for their unwavering support and provision of resources throughout the course of this research. The research facilities and infrastructure by Communication Science Departement have played a significant role in the successful completion of this study.

## References

- Aldossari, M., & Chaudhry, S. (2021). Women and burnout in the context of a pandemic. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28(2), 826-834. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12567>
- Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics. *Information, communication & society*, 15(5), 739-768. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2012.670661>
- Dickson, M., & Tennant, L. (2018). 'The accommodation I make is turning a blind eye': faculty support for student mothers in higher education. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 40(1), 76-97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2017.1392296>
- Dickson, M., & Tennant, L. (2018). 'The accommodation I make is turning a blind eye': faculty support for student mothers in higher education. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 40(1), 76-97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2017.1392296>
- Farid, L. Y. (2019). Interview with Kanti Pertiwi, Founder of PhD Mama Indonesia. *Migration, Mobility, & Displacement*, 4(1), 119-121. <https://doi.org/10.18357/mmd41201918974>
- George, J. J., & Leidner, D. E. (2019). From clicktivism to hacktivism: Understanding digital activism. *Information and Organization*, 29(3), 100249. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoandorg.2019.04.001>
- Goal 4 Quality Education. Retrieved 7 September, 2023 from <https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals/quality-education>
- Hochschild, A., & Machung, A. (2012). *The second shift: Working families and the revolution at home*. Penguin.
- Hutchinson, J. (2021). Micro-platformization for digital activism on social media. *Information, Communication & Society*, 24(1), 35-51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2019.1629612>
- Ismahani, F, Rijai, N. A, Adzny, M. F. (2023). Strategi Aktivisme Digital #MeToo Movement di Amerika Serikat. *Ganaya: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora* 6 (1)
- Jati, W. R. (2016). Cyberspace, internet, dan ruang publik baru: Aktivisme online politik kelas menengah Indonesia. *Jurnal Pemikiran Sosiologi*, 3(1), 25-35. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jps.v3i1.23524>
- Joyce, M. C. (2010). *Digital activism decoded: The new mechanics of change*. IDEA.
- Kaur, G. (2020). Digital Activism As A Tool of Women Empowerment: An Analysis. National Center for Human Rights and Subaltern Studies, National University of Study & Research in Law, Ranchi.
- Kusmarni, Y. (2012). Studi kasus. *UGM Jurnal Edu UGM Press*, 2.
- Lim, M. (2017). Klik yang tak memantik: aktivisme media sosial di Indonesia. *Jurnal Komunikasi Indonesia*, 35-50. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7454/jki.v3i1.7846>

- Lim, M. (2018). Roots, routes, and routers: Communications and media of contemporary social movements. *Journalism & Communication Monographs*, 20(2), 92-136. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1522637918770419>
- Lyonette, C., & Crompton, R. (2015). Sharing the load? Partners' relative earnings and the division of domestic labour. *Work, employment and society*, 29(1), 23-40. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017014523661>
- Manalang, D. C., Liongson, P. A., & Bayubay, E. N. T. (2015). The lived experiences of college student mothers in managing their dual roles: an exploratory study. *DataCite, Angeles City*.
- Mansour, F. (2008). Analisis Gender dan Transformasi Sosial. Yogyakarta: INSISTPress.
- Oktaviani, Fitri Hariana, Kanti Pertiwi, Nayunda Andhika Sari (2023, September 7). Riset Kami Tawarkan Solusi untuk Jawab Tantangan Ibu yang Menempuh Studi S2 dan S3. <https://theconversation.com/riset-kami-tawarkan-solusi-untuk-jawab-tantangan-ibu-yang-menempuh-studi-s2-dan-s3-176467>
- Pertiwi, Kanti (2023, September 17). Being a PhD Mama. <https://mamarantau.com/2017/09/17/being-a-phd-mama/>
- Pertiwi, Kanti (2023, September 17). PhD Mama di Australia dan Mitos Wanita Indonesia. <https://news.detik.com/abc-australia/d-3002610/phd-mama-di-australia-dan-mitos-wanita-indonesia>
- Pertiwi, Kanti (2023, September 17). PhD Mama di Australia dan Mitos Wanita Indonesia. <https://m.jpnn.com/news/phd-mama-di-australia-dan-mitos-wanita-indonesia>
- Pertiwi, Kanti (2023, September 17). PhD Mama di Australia dan Mitos Wanita Indonesia. <https://internasional.republika.co.id/berita/internasional/abc-australia-network/15/08/27/ntpu32-phd-mama-di-australia-dan-mitos-wanita-indonesia?>
- Pertiwi, Kanti (2023, September 17). PhD Mama di Australia dan Mitos Wanita Indonesia. <https://www.tribunnews.com/australia-plus/2015/08/27/phd-mama-di-australia-dan-mitos-wanita-indonesia>
- Putri, I. R., & Pratiwi, E. (2022). Aktivisme digital dan pemanfaatan media baru sebagai pendekatan pemberdayaan masyarakat atas isu lingkungan. *Bricolage: Jurnal Magister Ilmu Komunikasi*, 8(2), 231-246. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30813/bricolage.v8i2.3303>
- Rahmawan, D., Mahameruaji, J. N., & Janitra, P. A. (2020). Strategi aktivisme digital di Indonesia: aksesibilitas, visibilitas, popularitas dan ekosistem aktivisme. *Jurnal Manajemen Komunikasi*, 4(2), 123-144.
- Sicam, E. B., Umawid, M. D., Colot, J. D., Dagdag, J. D., & Handrianto, C. (2021). Phenomenology of parenting while schooling among filipino college student mothers in the province. *Kolokium*, 9(2), 80-94.
- Sinaga, Marsen. (2023). Aktivisme itu Candu. Studio Tanya dan Toba Initiatives
- Sivitanides, M., & Shah, V. (2011). The era of digital activism. In *Conference for Information Systems Applied Research* (Vol. 4, No. 1842, pp. 01-08).
- Sutton, J., & Pollock, S. (2000). Online activism for women's rights. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 3(5), 699-706.
- Taukeni, S. (2014). The main challenges student mothers experience to manage their dual roles. *International Journal of Advances in Psychology*, 3(3), 94-98. doi: 10.14355/ijap.2014.0303.04

Torres, R. M. V., Sangala, L. J. T., San Jose, A. E., & Mortos, A. R. (2020). Untold stories of student-mothers' academic journey: A phenomenology. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 6(4), 158-169.

What are the Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved September 7, 2023 from <https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals>

Zald, M. N., & Ash, R. (1966). Social movement organizations: Growth, decay and change. *Social forces*, 44(3), 327-341. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/44.3.327>

<https://ciptamedia.org/ciptamediaekspresi/tentang-ekspresi> retrieved September 17, 2023

<https://ciptamedia.org/hibahcme/949> retrieved September 17, 2023

<https://ebooks.gramedia.com/id/buku/jurnal-ph-d-mama> retrieved September 5, 2023

<https://phdmamaindonesia.com/retrieved> September 2, 2023

[https://www.instagram.com/p/CqJ\\_w-FSufR/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/CqJ_w-FSufR/?img_index=1)

<https://www.instagram.com/thedeasafira/>

## Role of Social Entrepreneur Companions at the Early Days of Muhammad Prophethood

Radikal Yuda Utama\*

College of Business and Economics, Australian National University, Australia

\* Corresponding Author E-mail: [yudautama123@gmail.com](mailto:yudautama123@gmail.com)

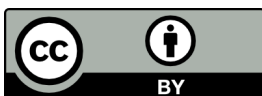
<https://doi.org/10.20885/iconish.vol2.art13>

**Abstract:** This research explores the role of social entrepreneur companions (SEC) in supporting the mission of Muhammad and establishing the early Muslim community. The term SEC refers to the early companions who had backgrounds in entrepreneurship, trade, or business, for instance Khadijah, Abu Bakr, Uthman, Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf, and Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah. Additionally, this study identifies the key principles adopted by these SECs in allocating and distributing their resources. The research also examines the long-term impact of the social investments made by these companions up to the present day. To address these research questions, a literature review methodology was employed. The study finds that the SECs provided two major forms of support to Muhammad: financial and psychological. Five key principles guided the SECs in managing their resources: (1) prioritizing the establishment of the early Muslim community, (2) innovation and adaptability, (3) sustainability and long-term vision, (4) social value creation, and (5) ethical leadership and role modeling.

**Keywords:** Muhammad, early companions, social entrepreneurship

### 1. Introduction

Social entrepreneurship in Islam is, in fact, like the lifeblood of the body—inseparable and essential. This study explores the social enterprise practices carried out by the companions of Prophet Muhammad during the early years of his prophethood, specifically the 10 years in Mecca and the 13 years in Medina. The study focuses on the roles of Khadijah, Abu Bakr, Uthman, Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf, and Talhah bin Ubaydullah, who are historically recognized as successful merchants in Mecca and among the earliest converts to Islam (Al-Awlaqi, 2019; Ibn Kathir, 1983; Khalid, 2005; Safiur-Rahman, 1979). We uncover remarkable lessons from



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by the Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences, Universitas Islam Indonesia (FPSCS UII). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

these figures, who were known as successful entrepreneurs in Mecca and later allocated their resources and business outcomes to address social and spiritual issues for the early Muslim community. Consequently, the authors introduce the term “social entrepreneur-companions (SEC)” to describe the companions of Prophet Muhammad who were entrepreneurs and utilized their resources to tackle social challenges.

Despite the difficulty in defining a clear and unified definition of social entrepreneurship (Chalmers, 2020; Ebrashi, 2013; Praszkie & Nowak, 2012; Salaff et al., 2011; Wiguna & Manzilati, 2014), there is a consensus in the research community that social entrepreneurship is fundamentally composed of two main elements: entrepreneurship and social impact. While the practice of social entrepreneurship is not new, the term itself gained prominence through Bill Drayton, who founded Ashoka in 1980, an organization that supports social entrepreneurs worldwide. Drayton highlighted the concept of individuals using innovative solutions to tackle social issues, which played a significant role in popularizing the term “social entrepreneurship” (Praszkie & Nowak, 2012; Wiguna & Manzilati, 2014).

Muhammad was born in Mecca in 571 CE and was appointed as the Messenger of God at the age of 40. Many years before his prophethood, Muhammad was already known for his exemplary character and trustworthiness. The people of Quraysh even bestowed upon him the title of “Al-Amin” (the most trustworthy) (Ibn Kathir, 1983; Safiur-Rahman, 1979). For instance, when the Quraysh were in dispute over who should have the honor of placing the Black Stone (Hajar al-Aswad) back in its position during the reconstruction of the Kaaba, they sought Muhammad’s assistance, recognizing him as the most honest person in Mecca (Ibn Kathir, 1983). From a young age, Muhammad refrained from idol worship, which was common in his community, and he never engaged in any wrongdoing. On the contrary, he was widely known for his helpful nature and integrity.

Muhammad had been exposed to entrepreneurial activities from a young age. He accompanied his uncle on trading (using a merchant caravan) journeys to Syria, in which the uncle met Bahira (Ibn Ishaq, 1955) and managed small businesses in his community, such as herding sheep and goats. Eventually, Muhammad’s entrepreneurial skills caught the attention of Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, a successful entrepreneur in the region. What set Muhammad apart was not only his business acumen but also his reputation for honesty, honourable character, and trustworthiness. Mentioned by Ibn Ishaq (1955), Muhammad, when he brought Khadija’s property and goods to Syria, he sold it and it amounted to double or thereabouts (Ibn Ishaq, 1955).

After the apostle received the first revelation in the month of Ramadhan, amongst those who support him during that difficult times were entrepreneurs, such as Khadijah, the Prophet’s most beloved wife, and Abu Bakr, the Prophet’s closest companion. It is interesting that in his lifetime, the Prophet was always surrounded by entrepreneurs. Therefore, this article seeks to explore the following research questions: (1) How did the prophecy of Muhammad receive support from social entrepreneurs in the early time? (2) What were the social entrepreneurship practices of the companions of Muhammad, and what social problems did they address? (3) What was the impact of the social investments made by the Prophet’s companions?

## 2. Literature review

The study of social problems has its roots in Hart's (1923) research, and the definition of social problems has largely remained consistent since then. Hart (1923) defines a social problem as "a challenge that impacts or has the potential to impact a large number of people in a similar manner, making it most effectively addressed through collective measures rather than treating each individual case in isolation. Such problems require coordinated or organized human efforts." Social problems could be variety for examples, poverty and unemployment, health-related challenges such as living conditions and access to healthcare, political concerns like immigration and civil rights, socio-psychological issues including racism and gender inequality, educational problems such as access to education, and environmental challenges like climate change (Hart, 1923).

In this section, the discussion on the role of social entrepreneur-companions (SEC) will be linked with three key concepts: entrepreneurship, social issues, and Islam. Social entrepreneurship has become a prominent research area since the 20th century, particularly as persistent social problems continue to surface in various societies. This study will initially explore topics closely aligned with the concept of social enterprise within the framework of Islamic faith.

### 2.1 Social entrepreneurship and spirituality

The discussion of Social Entrepreneur-Companions (SEC) cannot be separated from aspects of spirituality and faith, as faith is the primary driving factor that motivates SEC to provide remarkable support for Muhammad's mission. The relationship between social enterprise and spirituality has been widely discussed since the 2000s. Regarding the concepts of religiosity and spirituality, a study by Zinnbauer and Pargament (2005) suggests that spirituality is a broader concept than religiosity.

Spirituality, as an abstract concept within an individual, is not visible but plays a crucial role in shaping one's mindset and personality, including influencing how one perceives social problems (Hobson, 2014; Sloan et al., 1999; Wuri et al., 2019).

All religious beliefs encourage their followers to engage in solving social problems. For example, Christianity emphasizes the importance of charity, social justice, and caring for the marginalized, as evident in the New Testament's teachings on loving one's neighbor and aiding the poor (Hiebert, 2022). Judaism includes the concept of "Tikkun Olam" (repairing the world), although this principle often contrasts with the realities of supremacy and Zionism, which cause harm contrary to the concept's intent. A significant example is the events of October 7th, where the actions of Zionism and the apartheid nation of Israel resulted in over 70,000 casualties, including the deaths of 40,000 people, half of whom were children. These actions have created severe social problems, such as poverty, food shortages, the destruction of healthcare facilities, trauma, and more. Nevertheless, the pure teachings of Judaism uphold values that encourage followers to address social issues (Klug, 2020).

In Hinduism, the concept of Dharma (duty/righteousness) plays a similar role, while Buddhism emphasizes compassion (Karuna) and loving-kindness (Metta), urging followers to alleviate suffering in the world, which includes addressing social problems.

Moreover, Islam, known as the “religion of mercy to all creation” (rahmatan lil alamin), emphasizes that it is a blessing not just for humans, but also for animals, plants, and everything on Earth. There is no doubt that every religion and spiritual belief encourages its followers to do good for humanity. Addressing social problems within society is an integral part of an individual’s spirituality.

## 2.2 Social entrepreneurship from Islamic perspective

Sahasranamam and Nandakumar (2020) summarize various definitions of social entrepreneurship from different studies, highlighting key aspects such as addressing unmet social needs that are overlooked by commercial enterprises, driving social change through innovative strategies, fulfilling unaddressed needs, creating social value through market-based solutions, combining a social mission with the characteristics of commercial businesses, and innovatively pursuing opportunities to catalyze social change and meet social needs. Functionally, social enterprises differ from commercial enterprises in their mission, performance metrics, opportunity recognition, time perspective, and organizational structure (Sahasranamam and Nandakumar, 2020). Although definitions of social entrepreneurship are varied and sometimes inconsistent, research typically identifies two core components, i.e., social and entrepreneurial elements (Sahasranamam and Nandakumar, 2020; Zhang and Swanson, 2014).

The concept of entrepreneurship in Islam can be linked to the teachings of the Quran, which encourages entrepreneurial activities. For instance, the Quran states: “On earth will be your dwelling place and your means of livelihood for a time” (Qur’an 2:36); “...to men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn. But ask Allah of His bounty, for Allah has full knowledge of all things” (Qur’an 4:32); “It is We [Allah] who have placed you with authority on earth, and provided you therein with means for the fulfillment of your life...” (Qur’an 7:10); “We have made the night and the day... that you may seek bounty from your Lord...” (Qur’an 17:12). These verses can be interpreted as divine encouragement for entrepreneurial endeavors, signifying Allah’s Taala guidance for humankind (Uba Ibrahim, 2019).

Additionally, there are numerous prophetic teachings (hadith) that emphasize the value of self-employment and the virtues of being an honest and trustworthy entrepreneur. For example, the Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, “A trustworthy, honest, and truthful businessman will be with the martyrs on the Day of Resurrection” (Ibn Majah, 2007). Furthermore, as narrated in Sahih Bukhari no.286, the Prophet emphasized the importance of earning one’s livelihood through honest work: “No one has ever eaten a better meal than that which one has earned by working with their own hands. The Prophet of Allah, David, used to eat from the earnings of his manual labor” (Al-Bukhari, 1997).

According to a hadith reported by Tirmidhi (no. 1130), “A truthful and trustworthy trader will be resurrected with the Prophets, the righteous, and the martyrs” (At-Tirmidhi, 2007).

Another hadith states, “Allah shows mercy to a person who is kind when he sells, when he buys, and when he makes a claim” (Al-Bukhari, 1997). These teachings illustrate that Islam places a significant emphasis on contributing to economic growth through productive work, as opposed to the idle lifestyle that negatively impacts society today (Uba Ibrahim, 2019).

Islam encourages Muslims to earn their livelihood through entrepreneurial activities, as reflected in the primary sources of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad himself was introduced to entrepreneurial activities from a young age by his uncle, Abu Talib, and grew up as an entrepreneur with distinct qualities that set him apart during his youth (Uba Ibrahim, 2019).

Social entrepreneurship in Islam is deeply embedded in the faith’s core principles, which highlight ethical behavior, social justice, community welfare, and the fair distribution of resources. This concept involves applying entrepreneurial skills and business expertise to address social issues and enhance the well-being of the community, all in accordance with Islamic teachings.

### 2.3 Key Elements of Social Entrepreneurship in Islam

The concept of social entrepreneurship in Islam extends beyond the conventional understanding of social enterprises. In conventional social entrepreneurship, the primary focus is often on community responsibility, which is just one of several key components. In Islamic social entrepreneurship, the following elements are significant:

- **Responsibility Towards Community (Maslaha):** Islamic social entrepreneurship emphasizes the creation of social value and addressing community needs, thereby contributing to societal well-being and prosperity. Social enterprises in this framework address diverse social issues such as poverty, health, disability, environmental concerns, and unemployment (Taman, 2014).
- **Maqasid al-Shariah (Objectives of Islamic Law):** A fundamental element in the Islamic view is the achievement of Maqasid al-Shariah, which represents the broader objectives of Islamic law. These objectives include the protection and preservation of essential aspects of human life, including religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. Islamic social enterprises aim to fulfill these goals by providing essential services and enhancing community welfare (Taman, 2014).
- **Ethical Business Practices:** Another key element of Islamic entrepreneurship is the adherence to ethical business practices. This involves conducting entrepreneurial activities in accordance with principles such as honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and avoiding harm to others. Entrepreneurs are expected to operate with integrity, ensuring that their actions benefit society and do not exploit or deceive others. Therefore, even if a social enterprise appears highly successful in addressing a social issue, such as environmental concerns, it does not meet the core criteria of Islamic social entrepreneurship if it engages in unfair practices or causes harm to others (Rice, 1999).
- **Zakat (Almsgiving):** Another important element is zakat, a concept extensively discussed in Islamic literature. Zakat, one of the Five Pillars of Islam, mandates that Muslims allocate a portion of their wealth to those in need. This practice fosters wealth redistribution and supports the development of social enterprises aimed at combating poverty and reducing social inequality (Kahf, 1999).

- **Waqf (Endowment):** Waqf refers to an Islamic philanthropic practice where assets are donated or endowed for religious or charitable purposes, with the benefits directed toward community welfare. Historically, waqf has been utilized to finance educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and social services, thus reflecting the principles of social entrepreneurship (Abbasi, 2012; Abdullah, 2018).
- **Sadaqah (Voluntary Charity):** Sadaqah refers to voluntary charity given out of compassion, love, friendship, or generosity. Unlike zakat, which is compulsory, sadaqah is discretionary and can be utilized to support a range of social causes, including the development and operation of social enterprises (Bonner et al., 2003; Kahf, 1999).
- **Tawheed (Unity and Oneness):** The concept of Tawheed emphasizes the interconnectedness of all aspects of life, advocating that economic activities should enhance societal harmony and balance. Social entrepreneurs in Islam are driven to establish ventures that embody this principle of unity and contribute to the collective well-being (Choudhury, 1983).

### 3. Method

This section details the research design and methodology employed to conduct a comprehensive literature review aimed at addressing the research questions. The methodology encompasses the procedures for gathering, selecting, analyzing, and synthesizing relevant literature to effectively respond to the research questions.

#### 3.1 Research design

The research employs a literature review methodology to consolidate existing knowledge and discern patterns, gaps, and insights regarding the intersection of social enterprises and Islamic principles. This study also examines historical literature from authoritative sources, including texts written in Arabic, such as *hadith* collections, *seerah* (biographical accounts of the Prophet Muhammad), and Islamic history books.

#### 3.2 Objectives

The objectives of this study are to explore and investigate the following research questions:

1. How did social entrepreneur companions around the prophet contribute to establishing the foundations of muslim community in its early days?
2. What were the key principles employed by social entrepreneur companion in the allocation and distribution of resources?
3. How the impact of the social investments made by the social entrepreneur companions?

#### 3.3 Literature search strategy

**Databases Used:** The literature search was conducted across a range of academic and scholarly databases, including but not limited to Google Scholar, JSTOR, PubMed, ProQuest, and specialized journals focusing on Islamic studies and social entrepreneurship. **Keywords and Search Terms:** A combination of keywords was employed to retrieve relevant literature. These keywords include: "Social enterprise," "Social entrepreneurship in Islam," "Zakat," "Waqf,"

“Islamic business ethics,” “Case studies in Islamic social enterprises,” “Khadijah,” “Abu Bakr,” “Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf,” “Talhah ibn Ubaydullah,” and “Uthman ibn Affan.

### **3.4 Method of analysis**

To explore the role of the social-entrepreneur companions of Muhammad in the development of Islam in the early period, I used the literature review method combined with historical research method by investigating existing sources. Then I followed several stages analyse the existing literature as follows. First, source Collection and Evaluation. Gather primary sources such as hadith collections, biographies (Seerah), early Islamic histories, and other relevant documents. Evaluate these sources for authenticity and relevance. Second, contextual Analysis. Examine the historical, social, and political contexts of the early Islamic period to understand the environment in which the companions operated. Third, thematic Analysis. Identify and analyze recurring themes or roles associated with the companions. This might include their contributions to social, economic, and political aspects of early Islamic society. Fourth, synthesis. Integrate findings to provide a comprehensive overview of how the companions influenced the early development of Islam.

## **4. Result and Discussion**

The results of the analysis conducted in this research will be discussed in several sub-sections, first the role of social entrepreneurs around Muhammad in supporting the establishment of the foundation of the Muslim community in the early days. Second, the key principles carried out by the prophet Muhammad in the process of resource allocation and distribution. Third, the impact of social investment carried out by companions of the prophet until present.

### **4.1 Key roles of social entrepreneurs in the early days of Islam.**

The threats and pressures faced by Muhammad from the Quraysh in the early days of his da'wah were extraordinary. Various attempts to hinder Muhammad's mission were carried out in various ways, from negotiations to assassination attempts (Safiur-Rahman, 1979). Support from those closest to Muhammad was very important at this time. Financial and psychological support for came from businessmen such as Khadijah and Abu Bakr (Ibn Ishaq, 1955; Ibn Kathir, 1983). As mentioned by Ibn Ishaq (1955) and other sirah books, Abu Bakr not only provided financial support, but also provided great psychological support by inviting another successful entrepreneur, Uthman bin Affan, to follow in the footsteps of the Prophet. In fact, the first eight people to convert to Islam were also brought by Abu Bakr (Ibn Ishaq, 1955), including Uthman, Talhah, dan Abdur-Rahman (Ibn Ishaq, 1955; Ibn Kathir, 1983; Safiur-Rahman, 1979).

The concept of social entrepreneurship, as we understand it today, refers to individuals or organisations who develop, fund, and implement solutions to social, cultural, or environmental problems using entrepreneurial principles (Defourny and Nyssens, 2010). They are characterized by their ability to innovate, their inventiveness, and their dedication to creating social value. The early Companions certainly used their resources to create new social value among the people

of Mecca. There is no dispute that the support from those closest to him as I mentioned earlier had a profound impact on Muhammad’s psychology, as mentioned in the main books of the Prophet’s life such as Ibn Ishaq (1955), Ibn Kathir (1983), Lings (1983), and Safiur-Rahman (1979).

In general, there were two main roles of the Companions around Muhammad: Psychological support and financial and wealth support. Both forms of support were very significant amidst the pressure exerted by the Quraysh on Muhammad. The Quraysh did everything they could to stop Muhammad. The pressures faced by Muhammad and his Companions are summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Forms of threats/challenges in the early days of Islam

Forms of threats/ challenges	Action	Descriptions
Social and economic persecution	Boycott	The Quraysh imposed a severe economic and social boycott on the Prophet’s clan, Banu Hashim, and Banu Muttalib, cutting them off from trade and social interactions. This lasted for three years and caused significant suffering, including hunger and deprivation.
	Excommunication	Early converts to Islam, especially those from lower social strata or those without tribal protection, were ostracized. They were often cut off from their families and community support systems.
Physical Abuse and Torture	Torture of Converts	Many early Muslims, particularly those who were slaves or lacked tribal protection, were subjected to brutal torture. Bilal ibn Rabah, for example, was laid on the burning desert sand with a heavy stone on his chest to force him to renounce Islam.
	Beatings and Assaults	The Prophet himself was often subjected to physical assaults. On one occasion, while he was praying at the Kaaba, Uqba ibn Abi Mu’ayt threw the entrails of a sacrificed camel on his back.
Psychological and Verbal Abuse	Mockery and Insults	The Quraysh mocked the Prophet, calling him a madman, a poet, and a sorcerer. They tried to undermine his message by spreading false rumors and lies about him.
	Attempts to Humiliate	They would often try to publicly humiliate the Prophet by disrupting his gatherings and creating disturbances whenever he preached.
Attempts on His Life	Assassination Plots	As the Prophet’s influence grew, the Quraysh attempted to assassinate him. The most notable plot was during the night of the Hijra (migration) to Medina, where they planned to kill him in his sleep. However, he managed to escape with the help of divine guidance.

Political Pressure	Pressuring Tribal Leaders	The Quraysh exerted pressure on tribal leaders to not support or protect Muhammad and his followers. This made it difficult for him to gain any substantial political or social foothold in Mecca.
Attempts to Bribe and Negotiate	Bribery	They offered him wealth, power, and marriage alliances in exchange for abandoning his mission, but he refused all such offers.
	Negotiations	They tried to negotiate with his uncle, Abu Talib, asking him to restrain Muhammad from preaching or to hand him over to them.

---

Source: all abovementioned points summarised from various sources (Haykal, n.d.; Ibn Ishaq, 1955; Ibn Kathir, 1983; Khalid, 2005; Lings, 1983; Safiur-Rahman, 1979)

## 4.2 Key principles of social entrepreneurial activities adopted by SEC

The companions of the prophet put the mission of overcoming social and religious problems as part of their personal lives. This social mission is not only part of the business mission or company mission, but also becomes their daily mission. The results of their entrepreneurial activities are allocated to achieve their social goals. The practices they do are then known by experts as the concept of social entrepreneurship. The consensus of experts as discussed by Sahasranamam and Nandakumar (2020) states that apart from the various definitions of social entrepreneurship, there are two main components in defining SE, namely social elements and entrepreneurial elements. Other studies such as Dees (2001) say that among the unique abilities of social entrepreneurs is the ability to recognize complex social problems and try to solve these problems with their vision, work, and activities. They seek fresh opportunities and generate positive impacts by using leadership and management methods (Dees, 2001).

In Islam, the basic principle in viewing worldly affairs, especially career, business, and enterprise, is that they are not separate from religious affairs. In Islam, there is no separation between faith and work as in today's modern society which places faith as a personal matter (Hamid and Saari, 2011; Muhamed et al., 2018; Wolf, 1951). In this section, I will outline the themes that emerge from the literature analysis of the principles held by the Prophet Muhammad's companions in carrying out their entrepreneurial activities.

### 4.2.1 Support for the Early Muslim Community

Similar to the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in modern business, the companions of Muhammad integrated their business missions with a commitment to the welfare of the Muslim community, rather than focusing solely on personal gain. Companions such as Khadijah, Abu Bakr, Uthman, Abdur-Rahman, and Talhah provided substantial financial support (Ibn Ishaq, 1955). They held a strong belief that their "investments" would yield significant "returns" in the future. Despite Muhammad's nascent status and lack of power within the Quraysh society at that time, these companions remained steadfast in their support and contributions to the early Islamic mission.

Khadijah exemplifies exceptional support for the early Islamic faith. She keenly identified the need to support the nascent religion and its adherents. Her primary objective was to assist Prophet Muhammad in fulfilling his mission, which aimed to address social injustices, promote ethical conduct, and enhance the community's overall well-being. This support was particularly crucial during periods of economic and social ostracism imposed by the Quraysh tribe (Safiur-Rahman, 1979). According to Safiur-Rahman (1979), the Quraysh pagans convened at a location known as Wadi al-Muhassab, where they formed a confederation against the Banu Hashim and Banu al-Muttalib tribes. This coalition resolved to halt all business interactions and social contact with Muhammad and his supporters, maintaining this stance until Muhammad was either killed or surrendered to them (Safiur-Rahman, 1979). During these trying times, Khadijah leveraged her influence through her nephew, Hakeem bin Hizam, to supply flour to Muhammad's supporters. Although Hakeem bin Hizam was a prominent ally of the Quraysh pagans, Khadijah's influence surpassed his.

Khadijah also utilized her wealth to support the propagation of Islam. This involved aiding early converts, many of whom endured persecution and adversity. Her financial contributions were crucial in sustaining these individuals, allowing them to concentrate on advancing the new faith without being preoccupied with their immediate needs. If a nation has both a founding father and mother, Khadijah is often regarded as the founding mother of the Islamic community. As Imam adh-Dhahabi remarked, "Khadijah, the mother of the Believers, was the first to believe in the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and to affirm them before anyone else" (adh-Dhahabi, 1996).

Another notable supporter was Abu Bakr, the next individual to embrace Muhammad's message. According to Hadith reports recorded by Bukhari (no. 3656) and Muslim (no. 2383), the Prophet Muhammad stated, "If I were to take a friend other than my Lord, I would have taken Abu Bakr as my friend, but he is my brother and companion. Allah has made me His friend" (Al-Bukhari, 1997; Muslim, 2007). Abu Bakr was renowned for his exceptional generosity and financial support to the early Muslim community. He used his resources to support the Prophet Muhammad and early Muslims, many of whom were oppressed and in dire need. Abu Bakr also worked to bridge social gaps and eliminate class distinctions, emphasizing welfare and equality within the community. For example, he purchased and freed numerous slaves who had converted to Islam and were being persecuted, such as Bilal ibn Rabah. In accordance with Muhammad's teachings, Abu Bakr believed that the most virtuous individuals were those who exhibited the greatest piety toward Allah.

Another early companion who provided substantial support to the early Muslim community was Talhah. Talhah received substantial wealth from Hadramaut, specifically a valley in Yemen valued at 700,000 dirhams (equivalent to approximately Rp 35 billion today). His wife suggested that this wealth be distributed among the poor and needy. Talhah agreed with his wife's recommendation and distributed all of his wealth, leaving nothing remaining (Ibn Kathir, 1983; Khalid, 2005). Numerous other sources attest to Talhah's generosity towards Islam. He once sold land for 700,000 dirhams and, feeling unsettled that the funds had not yet been donated, promptly distributed the money at dawn to the poor, orphans, and those in need.

## **Supporting the Hijrah**

After two to three years, large numbers of people began to embrace Islam. The Prophet Muhammad began to publicly disseminate the message of God as instructed. As stated in the Quran, “Proclaim what you have been ordered and turn aside from the polytheists” (Quran, 15:94), and again, “Warn your family and your nearest relatives, and lower to them the wing of humility” (Quran, 26:214), and “Say, ‘I am a plain warner’” (Quran, 15:8-9).

The Quraysh tribe grew increasingly agitated by the Prophet and his followers. They incited opposition against him, labeling him a liar, insulting him, and accusing him of being a poet, a sorcerer, a diviner, or possessed by jinn (Ibn Ishaq, 1955).

The Hijra to Medina represents a pivotal turning point in the development of Islamic civilization. The pressure and threats from the Quraysh in Mecca had become increasingly dire, with their objective being to eradicate Muhammad and all his followers. Abu Bakr accompanied Muhammad through many significant moments, with the Hijra being one of the most notable. This event is commemorated in the Quran: “If you do not aid him (Muhammad), then know that Allah has already aided him when the disbelievers drove him out of Mecca, and he was one of two when they were in the cave, and he said to his companion, ‘Do not grieve, indeed Allah is with us’” (Quran, 9:40).

### **4.2.2 Innovation and adaptability**

The innovation and adaptability principles demonstrated by the early companions in their entrepreneurial activities can be categorized into two forms:

#### **Supporting New Ideas**

Khadijah’s immediate acceptance of Islam and her support for Prophet Muhammad’s revelations were pioneering for her time. Imam Adh-Dhahabi highlights this by stating, “Khadijah, the mother of the Believers, was the first to believe in the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and to affirm them before anyone else” (adh-Dhahabi, 1996). Her readiness to embrace and promote a radically new social and religious order illustrates a forward-thinking mindset, which is essential for any social entrepreneur.

Among the male companions, Abu Bakr exemplifies this principle. During the event of Isra and Mi’raj, when Muhammad’s report of his miraculous night journey from Mecca to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Palestine and back was met with widespread scepticism and disbelief, Abu Bakr stood firm in support and validation of Muhammad’s experience. While many people abandoned Muhammad and questioned his sanity, Abu Bakr unreservedly supported and confirmed the event (Ibn Ishaq, 1955; Lings, 1983; Safiur-Rahman, 1979).

#### **Encouragement of Trade and Commerce**

Abu Bakr actively promoted trade and economic activities that benefited the community, fostering an environment conducive to the growth of social and economic initiatives. Similarly, Uthman, known for his success as a merchant, supported trade and economic endeavors, significantly contributing to the economic stability of the Muslim state. Uthman played a pivotal role in enhancing the economic prosperity of the Muslim community through his involvement

in trade and commerce. Additionally, Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf, upon migrating to Medina, established a new marketplace known as the Market of the Ansar. This market subsequently became a central hub for trade among Muslims (As-Sallabee, 2007).

### **4.2.3 Social Value Creation**

The contributions of Khadijah, Abu Bakr, Talhah, and Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf in generating social value within the early Muslim community can be viewed as a form of social entrepreneurship. Their business profits and resources were redirected towards societal improvement.

#### **Building Community Resilience**

Social value is a principle that emphasizes the comprehensive well-being of both present and future generations (Ormiston & Seymour, 2011). This principle was prominently reflected in the significant efforts made by the early companions. Khadijah's contributions, for instance, were instrumental in creating a supportive community capable of withstanding external pressures and thriving despite substantial challenges (Bahri & Batoebara, 2020; Riyadi et al., 2021). This community-centric approach exemplifies social enterprises, which strive to achieve social value in addition to financial sustainability. Khadijah's support was crucial in ensuring that the early Muslim community remained resilient and continued to develop, underscoring her role in fostering enduring social impact.

#### **Promotion of Education and Knowledge**

Abu Bakr was a staunch advocate for education and knowledge, recognizing their critical role in societal advancement. He supported scholars and the dissemination of Islamic teachings, understanding that knowledge was a fundamental driver of social and economic progress (As-Sallabee, 2007.; Ibn Ishaq, 1955; Safiur-Rahman, 1979). Khadijah, a respected member of the Quraysh and a successful businesswoman, played a crucial role in supporting the Prophet Muhammad and his followers in their pursuit of learning the Quran and applying its teachings. Her social standing provided credibility and a degree of protection, which helped mitigate some of the early opposition and hostility faced by the Prophet and his followers. Khadijah's strategic use of her resources—whether financial, material, or social—was vital in advancing the Prophet's mission, particularly his early efforts to educate people about the oneness of God and to discourage idol worship.

#### **Investment in Social Welfare**

Abu Bakr demonstrated extraordinary commitment to the Prophet's mission by relinquishing all his wealth. His actions went beyond personal generosity; he invested in the welfare of the community, ensuring that resources were allocated to those in need. As narrated by Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him), "The Prophet Muhammad commanded us to give charity, and we complied. I hoped to surpass Abu Bakr, so I brought half of my wealth. The Prophet asked, 'What have you left for your family?' I replied, 'The same amount.' Then Abu Bakr arrived with all his wealth. The Prophet asked him, 'What have you left for your family?' Abu Bakr answered, 'I have left for them Allah and His Messenger.' Umar said, 'By Allah, I will never be able to surpass Abu Bakr'" (At-Tirmidhi, 2007).

Another notable figure in charitable efforts was Talhah bin Ubaydullah. Renowned for his exceptional generosity and one of the ten promised Paradise, Talhah dedicated a significant portion of his wealth to support the Prophet and the Muslim community. His continuous acts of charity earned him the title “Talhah the Generous.” For instance, Talhah settled debts for those around him, including paying off an 80,000-dirham debt for ‘Ubaid bin Ma’mar and a 10,000-dirham debt for a man from his tribe. Additionally, Talhah purchased a well for the community’s water needs and provided animals for their consumption (Cizakca, 2000; Hamid & Saari, 2011; Khalid, 2005).

#### **4.2.4 Sustainability and long-term vision**

##### **Long-Term Support**

The early companions of Muhammad played a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of his mission. Given the immense pressure exerted by the Quraysh on anyone who followed Muhammad, the mission could have easily been derailed. For instance, Bilal ibn Rabah was subjected to severe torture, with a heavy stone placed on his chest under the scorching midday sun, and he was tied up with ropes. Similarly, Ammar, his father Yasir, and his mother Sumayyah faced brutal persecution. Yasir succumbed to the torture, while Sumayyah was killed when Abu Jahl, a prominent figure among the Quraysh, impaled her with a spear through her private parts (Ibn Ishaq, 1955; Ibn Kathir, 1983; Safiur-Rahman, 1979).

Amidst the severe persecution faced by Muhammad and his followers, Khadijah’s unwavering support persisted until her death, playing a critical role in maintaining the continuity of the early Muslim mission. Her long-term vision and commitment to the cause exemplify the qualities essential for successful social enterprises. Khadijah’s contributions laid the foundation for the future growth of Islam, highlighting a sustainable approach to social change that extended well beyond her lifetime.

Abu Bakr also made significant contributions by donating most of his wealth to support the Muslim community, including financing the migration (Hijrah) to Medina. During the Tabuk expedition, he demonstrated his unwavering commitment to Islam by donating all his wealth. When asked what he had left for his family, he responded, “Allah and His Messenger” (As-Sallabee, 2007; Ibn Kathir, 1983).

Uthman, the third caliph, was a prosperous merchant who also spent generously in the cause of Islam. He is renowned for purchasing the well of Rumah and donating it to the Muslims when water was scarce in Medina. Uthman further financed the expansion of the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina and equipped the army during the challenging times of the Tabuk expedition. During this expedition, Uthman provided 300 camels and 1,000 dinars. His contributions were so substantial that the Prophet remarked, “Nothing will harm Uthman after what he did today” (As-Sallabi, 2007).

##### **Supporting the Islamic State**

Abdur Rahman ibn Awf played a crucial role in supporting the nascent Islamic state, particularly during times of war and crisis. During the Battle of Tabuk, Abdur-Rahman donated

a significant portion of his wealth to equip the Muslim army. This support was vital in ensuring the Muslim community could defend itself and thrive. He provided substantial support to the Muhajirun (migrants from Mecca) who arrived in Medina, helping them to settle and integrate into the new community. Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf was one of the wealthiest companions who spent generously in charity. He was known for his support of the Muslim community through his wealth, freeing many slaves, and financing military expeditions. He was among the ten promised Paradise and used his wealth to support various charitable causes. During the expedition of Tabuk, Abdur-Rahman donated 200 ounces of gold. He also provided half of his wealth to the Muslim community on multiple occasions (Ibn Ishaq, 1955; Ibn Kathir, 1983).

### **Building Institutions and Infrastructure**

Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf's contributions extended beyond immediate aid to the community; he played a significant role in building and supporting key institutions within the early Islamic state. His efforts in establishing and promoting fair trade practices were instrumental in developing marketplaces that became central to the economic life of the community. Additionally, Abdur-Rahman supported the construction and maintenance of mosques and other religious institutions, which helped foster a sense of community and spiritual growth.

Similarly, Uthman ibn Affan was renowned for his immense wealth and generosity, consistently using his resources to support the Muslim community in times of need. One of his most notable contributions was the purchase of the well of Rumah in Medina. Initially owned by a Jewish man who charged exorbitant prices for water, Uthman purchased the well and made its water freely available to all Muslims, ensuring access to this essential resource. During the Battle of Tabuk, Uthman provided significant financial support by equipping a large portion of the Muslim army with the necessary supplies, further demonstrating his deep commitment to the welfare and security of the community (Safiur-Rahman, 1979).

### **4.2.5 Ethical Leadership and role modeling**

Many of the early companions of Prophet Muhammad were distinguished by their strong character and leadership qualities. Abu Bakr, for instance, was widely recognized for his immense generosity, consistently supporting the community by freeing slaves, aiding the poor, and funding various communal needs. Uthman ibn Affan was also renowned for his charitable actions and economic contributions to the Muslim community, notably purchasing and donating a well in Medina for public use and equipping the army for the Battle of Tabuk (As-Sallabi, 2007). Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf, known for his business acumen, frequently used his wealth to support the needy, finance community projects, and contribute to the overall welfare of the Muslim community.

Umar ibn al-Khattab implemented numerous social reforms, establishing public welfare systems that provided stipends for the poor, orphans, and widows. His governance was characterized by a strong focus on justice, social equity, and community development, embodying a commitment to what can be seen as early forms of social entrepreneurship. Additionally, Talhah ibn Ubaydullah was known for his generosity, often paying off the debts of those around him.

These companions exhibited qualities and engaged in activities that closely align with the modern concept of social entrepreneurship. Their actions in addressing social issues during the early period of Islam highlight two key themes: first, their ability to manage crises effectively, and second, their commitment to maintaining ethical business practices.

### **Crisis Management and Leadership**

Uthman's leadership during times of crisis was crucial in maintaining the stability and resilience of the Muslim community. Throughout his caliphate, Uthman encountered multiple rebellions and internal conflicts. Although his methods of handling these crises were sometimes met with criticism, his primary objective was to preserve peace and order within the Muslim state (As-Sallabi, 2007; as-Sibaa'ie, 2003).

Similarly, Abu Bakr's leadership was marked by his adherence to principles of ethical governance and his deep commitment to the well-being of the community, reflecting the essence of social entrepreneurship. During his caliphate, Abu Bakr faced significant challenges, including the Ridda Wars (Wars of Apostasy). His strategic and inclusive approach was instrumental in stabilizing and unifying the Muslim community. He prioritized the provision of essential public services such as security, justice, and welfare programs, ensuring that the community's basic needs were met (As-Sallabee, 2007.; Ibn Ishaq, 1955).

Another companion who played a key role in the governance of the Muslim community was Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf. As a member of the Shura council appointed by Caliph Umar ibn Al-Khattab to select the next caliph, Abdur-Rahman held a highly respected status and demonstrated significant leadership within the community. When the Jewish community monopolized the economy in Medina, Abdur-Rahman took the initiative to establish a Muslim marketplace, known as the Ansar market. His leadership and personal conduct set a standard for ethical leadership, emphasizing values such as integrity, honesty, and social responsibility.

### **Ethical Business Practices**

All the early companions who engaged in business were known for their honesty and integrity, reflecting the principles of ethical commerce. This included the Prophet Muhammad himself, who was famously referred to as "Al-Amin," meaning the trustworthy. They never engaged in fraudulent transactions, manipulated weights and measures, misrepresented the quality of goods, or sold substandard products. For example, Khadijah was renowned for her ethical business practices, which are fundamental principles of social entrepreneurship. She conducted her business with integrity, ensuring fair treatment of her employees and partners. As a role model, Khadijah's actions and ethical stance provided a template for future Muslim entrepreneurs and leaders, highlighting the importance of aligning business practices with broader social and ethical values. Similarly, Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf was also known for his honesty as a merchant. His business practices consistently prioritized quality and integrity, earning him a reputation as a "crazy rich" figure in Mecca due to his success and ethical conduct.

### 4.3 Social Investment Return by the early companion

The early companions who invested their wealth and resources in the establishment of Islamic civilization made what can be considered the most valuable investment from an Islamic perspective. In Islam, the highest form of investment is one made sincerely in the path of Allah. This concept is exemplified in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 261, which states: “The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] that sprouts seven ears; in every ear are a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.” (Quran, 2:261).

Islam encourages its followers to make investments that continue to yield benefits even after their death, known as sadaqah jariyah. This concept is further supported by a hadith in Sahih Muslim: “When a person dies, their deeds come to an end except for three things: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, or a righteous child who prays for them.” (Hartog et al., 2010; Muslim, 2007). Examples of sadaqah jariyah include endowments (waqf), building mosques, schools (madrasahs), providing access to clean water, digging wells, planting trees whose fruits are shared, and other projects that provide continuous benefit to society.

Another hadith emphasizes that those who inspire others to do good deeds will receive the same reward as those who follow their example. This underscores the immense rewards likely earned by the early companions who provided moral, psychological, and financial support to the establishment of Islamic civilization. From a small group of followers in the early days, the number of Muslims has grown to approximately 2.02 billion globally as of 2024.

Entrepreneurs like Khadijah, Abu Bakr, Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf, Uthman, and Talhah, who invested their resources to address social issues within the early Muslim community, have left a profound legacy. Even though they did not live to see the full impact of their contributions, the fruits of their efforts are evident today in the significant social and spiritual returns that have been realized.

Recent studies have developed various methods to measure the social return on investments (SROI). One such method, developed in 1996 by the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund (REDF), is used to assess the social impact generated by social enterprises. SROI essentially monetizes social impacts relative to the initial investment, thereby distinguishing “social return” from conventional private (profit-based) returns (Crisan-Mitra & Szilágyi, 2010; Li et al., 2019) (Crisan-Mitra & Szilágyi, 2010; Li et al., 2019).

With the number of Muslims growing to over 2 billion (Pew Research Center, 2011), Islam has become the fastest-growing faith in the world. Islamic civilization developed rapidly, with its foundations solidly established during the 23 years from when Muhammad began his prophethood in 610 CE until his death in 632 CE.

The achievements of the Muslim community today are a direct result of the significant contributions made by those closest to Muhammad, such as Khadijah, Abu Bakr, Uthman, Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf, and Talhah, all of whom were entrepreneurs. When Muhammad began his mission to promote monotheism (Tawheed), these individuals provided essential financial support at a time when the Quraysh tribe largely abandoned or opposed him (Khalid, 2005;

Pew Research Center, 2011). Their dedication and willingness to invest their wealth in support of Muhammad's mission played a critical role in addressing the spiritual and social challenges of Meccan society, laying the groundwork for a thriving Islamic civilization.

## 5. Conclusion

This study identifies two critical roles played by the social-entrepreneur companions (SEC) who embraced Islam during its earliest days: financial support and psychological support. The financial support provided by these companions included funding for the Prophet's logistics and livelihood, freeing slaves, building essential infrastructure such as wells and mosques, financing the migration (Hijrah), funding military campaigns, and supporting the spread of Islam through various means. In terms of psychological support, these companions offered unwavering trust and loyalty to the Prophet Muhammad, standing by him in the face of threats, persecution, assassination attempts, and other challenges.

There are at least five key principles that guided the entrepreneurial activities of these SECs in supporting the Prophet's mission: prioritizing the establishment of the Muslim community, demonstrating innovation and adaptability in the face of an unstable business and trade environment due to Quraysh hostility, social value creation, focusing on sustainability and a long-term vision, and exemplifying ethical leadership and role modeling. The impact of the social investments made by the Prophet's early companions, who were entrepreneurs, is evident today. From a handful of followers, the Muslim population has grown to approximately 2 billion, with adherents of Islam found in every corner of the world. Islamic civilization is now projected to become the largest in terms of population within the coming decades.

## References

- Abbasi, M. Z. (2012). The classical Islamic law of Waqf: A concise introduction. *Arab Law Quarterly*, 26(2), 121–153. <https://doi.org/10.1163/157302512X629124>
- Abdullah, M. (2018). Waqf, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and maqasid al-shariah. *International Journal of Social Economics*, 45(1), 158–172. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSE-10-2016-0295>
- adh-Dhahabi, S. ad-D. (1996). *Siyar A'lam A-Nubala*. Resalah Publishers.
- Al-Awlaqi, A. (2019). *The Life of Muhammad*. Self-Publishing.
- Al-Bukhari. (1997). *Shahih Al-Bukhari* (Dr. M. M. Khan, Ed.). Darussalam Publishing.
- As-Sallabee, A. M. M. (n.d.). *The Biography of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq*.
- As-Sallabi, A. M. (2007). *The Biography of 'Uthman ibn 'Affan Dhun-Noorayn*. Darussalam.
- as-Sibaa'ie, M. (2003). *The Life of Prophet Muhammad: Highlights and Lesson*. International Islamic Publishing House.
- At-Tirmidhi, I. H. A. E. M. I. E. (2007). *Jami' At-Tirmidhi*. Darussalam Publishing.
- Bahri, S., & Batoebara, M. U. (2020). The Position and Participation of Khadijah in Developing Da'wah in Islam at the First Period. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute (BIRCI-Journal) : Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(1), 287–295. <https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v3i1.745>

- Bonner, M., Ener, M., & Singer, S. (2003). Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts. In *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (Issue 4). State University of New York Press.
- Chalmers, D. (2020). Social Entrepreneurship's Solutionism Problem. *Journal of Management Studies*, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12676>
- Choudhury, M. A. (1983). Principles of Islamic Economics. In *Studies* (Vol. 19, Issue 1).
- Cizakca, M. (2000). *A History of Philanthropic Foundations: The Islamic World from The Seventh Century to The Present* (8th ed.). Bogazici University Press.
- Crisan-Mitra, C., & Szilágyi, E. (2010). Social Return on Investment: The Case of MIKÓ IMRE college for Advances Studies. *Managerial Challenges of the Contemporary Society*, 10(1).
- Dees, J. G. (2001). The Meaning of "Social Entrepreneurship." 1–5. [https://centers.fuqua.duke.edu/case/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2015/03/Article\\_Deas\\_MeaningofSocialEntrepreneurship\\_2001.pdf](https://centers.fuqua.duke.edu/case/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2015/03/Article_Deas_MeaningofSocialEntrepreneurship_2001.pdf)
- Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2010). Conceptions of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship in Europe and the United States: Convergences and divergences. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 1(1), 32–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420670903442053>
- Ebrashi, R. El. (2013). Social entrepreneurship theory and sustainable social impact. *Social Responsibility Journal*, 9(2), 188–209. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SRJ-07-2011-0013>
- Hamid, S. A., & Saari, C. Z. (2011). Reconstructing Entrepreneur's Development Based on al-Qur'an And al-Hadith Article in. In *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282365285>
- Hart, H. (1923). What is a Social Problem? In *American Journal of Sociology* (Vol. 29, Issue 3). <https://about.jstor.org/terms>
- Hartog, J., Van Praag, M., & Van Der Sluis, J. (2010). If You Are So Smart, Why Aren't You an Entrepreneur? Returns to Cognitive and Social Ability: Entrepreneurs Versus Employees. *Journal of Economics and Management Strategy*, 19(4), 947–989. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1530-9134.2010.00274.x>
- Haykal, M. H. (n.d.). *The Life of Muhammad* (Allah's peace and blessing be upon him).
- Hiebert, D. (2022). The Recurring Christian Debate about Social Justice: A Critical Theoretical Overview. *Journal of Sociology and Christianity*, 12(1). <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359875585>
- Hobson, S. (2014). Religion and spirituality. In *The Cambridge Companion to Modernist Culture*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781107278882.004>
- Ibn Ishaq. (1955). *The Life of Muhammad*. Oxford University Press.
- Ibn Kathir. (1983). *The Life of The Prophet Muhammad - Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya*. The Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilisation.
- Ibn Majah, M. B. Y. (2007). *Sunan Ibn Majah* (Abu Khaliyl & Huda Khattab, Eds.; Translated Edition). Darussalam Publishing.
- Kahf, M. (1999). *The Early Islamic Public Revenue System: Lesson and Implication*. Islamic Development Bank.
- Khalid, K. M. (2005). *Men Around the Messenger*. Dar al-Kotob al-Ilmiyyah.
- Klug, B. (2020). Judaism and Catholicism: The Common Ground of Social Justice. *The Downside Review*, 138(4), 143–151. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0012580620974280>

- Li, C., Xu, Y., Gill, A., Haider, Z. A., & Wang, Y. (2019). Religious beliefs, socially responsible investment, and cost of debt: Evidence from entrepreneurial firms in India. *Emerging Markets Review*, 38, 102–114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ememar.2018.12.001>
- Lings, M. (1983). *Muhammad: His Life Based on The Earliest Sources*. Inner Traditions. [www.islamicbulletin.com](http://www.islamicbulletin.com)
- Muhamed, N. A., Iqmal, M., Kamaruddin, H., & Nasruddin, S. (2018). Positioning Islamic social enterprise (ISE). *Journal of Emerging Economies and Islamic Research*, 6(3). [www.jeeir.com](http://www.jeeir.com)  
[www.jeeir.comhttps://ssrn.com/abstract=3280109](https://ssrn.com/abstract=3280109)
- Muslim, I. A. H. M. I. al-H. (2007). *Shahih Muslim* (H. A. T. Z. Ali Za'i, N. al-Khattab, & Abu Khaliyl, Eds.). Darussalam Publishing. [www.darussalam.com](http://www.darussalam.com)
- Ormiston, J., & Seymour, R. (2011). Understanding Value Creation in Social Entrepreneurship: The Importance of Aligning Mission, Strategy and Impact Measurement. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 2(2), 125–150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2011.606331>
- Pew Research Center. (2011). *The Future of the Global Muslim Population*. [www.pewforum.org](http://www.pewforum.org)
- Praszkiel, R., & Nowak, A. (2012). *Social entrepreneurship: Theory and practice*. In Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139049467>
- Rice, G. (1999). Islamic Ethics and the Implications for Business. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 18, 345–358.
- Riyadi, A., Saerozi, S., & Savitri, F. M. (2021). Women and the Da'wah Movement: Historical Analysis of the Khadijah RA's Role in the Time of Rasulullah Saw. *Ilmu Dakwah: Academic Journal for Homiletic Studies*, 15(1), 43–62. <https://doi.org/10.15575/idajhs.v15i1.9346>
- Safiur-Rahman, A.-M. (1979). *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar) Memoirs of the Noble Prophet*. Darussalam.
- Sahasranamam, S., & Nandakumar, M. K. (2020). Individual capital and social entrepreneurship: Role of formal institutions. *Journal of Business Research*, 107, 104–117. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.09.005>
- Salaff, J. W., Greve, A., Siu-Lun, W., & Ping, L. X. L. (2011). Ethnic Entrepreneurship, Social Networks, and the Enclave. In *Approaching Transnationalisms*. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-9220-8\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-9220-8_4)
- Sloan, R. P., Bagiella, E., & Powell, T. (1999). Religion, spirituality, and medicine. In *Lancet*. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(98\)07376-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(98)07376-0)
- Taman, S. (2014). An Introduction to Islamic Law. *European Journal of Law Reform*, 16(2).
- Uba Ibrahim, B. (2019). ECONOMIC POLICIES DURING THE PROPHETIC ERA AND ITS RELEVANCE TO CONTEMPORARY MUSLIMS. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342765865>
- Wiguna, A. B., & Manzilati, A. (2014). Social Entrepreneurship and Socio-entrepreneurship: A Study with Economic and Social Perspective. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.02.411>
- Wolf, E. R. (1951). The Social Organization of Mecca and the Origins of Islam. In *Source: Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* (Vol. 7, Issue 4). Winter. <https://about.jstor.org/terms>

- Wuri, W. W., Andriani, P., & Utama, R. Y. (2019). DOES SPIRITUALITY GIVE AN IMPACT TO WELL-BEING OF ENTREPRENEUR? *Jurnal Ekonomi & Studi Pembangunan*, 20(2). <https://doi.org/10.18196/jesp.20.2.5026>
- Zhang, D. Di, & Swanson, L. A. (2014). Linking Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainability. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 5(2), 175–191. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2014.880503>
- Zinnbauer, B. J., & Pargament, K. I. (2005). Religiousness and Spirituality. In *Handbook of The Psychology Of Religion And Spirituality*.

## The Role of Islamic Media in Promoting Zakat: A Comparative Study of Audience Perception in India and Indonesia

Kamaljeet Kaur

University Institute of Media Studies,  
Chandigarh University, Mohali Punjab, India

Ibnu Darmawan\*

Department of Communication, Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences,  
Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia

\* Corresponding Author Email: [ibnu.darmawan@uii.ac.id](mailto:ibnu.darmawan@uii.ac.id)

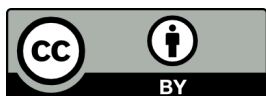
<https://doi.org/10.20885/iconish.vol2.art14>

**Abstract:** Zakat, one of the five pillars of Islam, mandates charitable giving for community welfare. Islamic media plays a crucial role in promoting Zakat awareness and encouraging its practice. This study examines audience perceptions of Islamic media's effectiveness in promoting Zakat in India and Indonesia. Through surveys of 100 respondents in each country, representing Malerkotla, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and Surabaya, the research explores how Islamic media influences Zakat knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Findings from this comparative analysis will contribute to understanding the impact of Islamic media on Zakat promotion and provide insights for enhancing its effectiveness.

**Keywords:** zakat, media, social media, islam, digitalization, India, Indonesia

### 1. Introduction

India and Indonesia, both multi-religious countries, have significant Muslim populations. According to a report by Al Jazeera (2024), 14.09% of India's population is Muslim, while Islam constitutes 87.08% of Indonesia's population based on data from the Indonesian Ministry of Home Affairs 2024. Both countries share a common Islamic tradition that includes the practice of



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by the Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences, Universitas Islam Indonesia (FPSCS UII). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Zakat. Zakat, It is one of the five pillars of Islam. The term is derived from Arabic Zakah means to give or charity. According to Rahmat and Nurzaman (2019), once a Muslim's wealth exceeds the nisab, they are required to calculate and pay the Zakat amount based on the prescribed rates for different types of assets. It is a religious duty of every Muslim to donate 2.5% of his/her income. There are two major types of Zakat i.e. zakat-al-mal and zakat-al-fitr. Zakat al-Mal is related with wealth while Zakat al—Fitr is related with food. Out of wealth 2.5% must be donated to needy and out of food the dates and grains should be distributed among the needy before the final prayer of Eid. As per Holy Quran 8 types of people can receive Zakat i.e. the poor, the needy, collectors of zakat, softening the hearts, slaves, those in debt, in the path of Allah and the traveler.

The Quran prominently features the concept of Zakat, referencing it in over thirty instances and emphasizing its significance in Islamic teachings. Verses such as Surah Al-Hajj 22:40-41 highlight the positive consequences of Zakat, including divine assistance and protection from wrongdoing. The Quran also underscores Zakat's role in attaining spiritual fulfillment and divine favor, as exemplified in Surah Al-Baqarah 2:110. Furthermore, verses in Surah Mary 18:31 and Surah Luqman 31:4 reinforce the importance of Zakat and the potential negative consequences of neglecting this Islamic obligation.

Historically, Zakat has served as a powerful tool in Islamic finance, demonstrably reducing poverty and empowering communities. Its implementation during the Prophet Muhammad's era and the early caliphates, as documented by Arif (2017) and Y. Aziz et al. (2020), generated remarkable success. Zakat not only enabled the poor to participate in economic activities but also contributed directly to infrastructure development. This historical evidence underscores Zakat's potential for social and economic progress. In Indonesia, despite being the world's largest Muslim country, Zakat collection remains far below its estimated capacity (Puskas BAZNAS, 2020). This shortfall can be attributed, in part, to a low level of Zakat literacy, as noted by Beik (2019).

To fully realize the potential of Zakat and foster a deeper understanding of its significance, it is imperative to explore the role of media in raising awareness and enhancing Zakat literacy. By effectively navigating the media landscape, we can empower individuals with knowledge about Zakat, thereby encouraging greater participation and maximizing its impact. This is particularly crucial in countries like Indonesia and India, which have the largest Muslim populations in the world. A comparative analysis of media roles and their effectiveness in these countries can provide valuable insights for enhancing Zakat awareness and promoting its practice on a broader scale.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 The Impact of Zakat on Poverty Reduction**

Zakat, a cornerstone of Islamic faith, offers significant potential for social and economic development beyond its spiritual significance. As a mandatory charitable contribution, Zakat can be a powerful catalyst for positive change. When its funds are strategically allocated to

productive initiatives, create a ripple effect, and positively influence various aspects of society. From poverty alleviation to community empowerment, Zakat has the potential to make a lasting impact on individuals and communities (Bayraktar & Sencal, 2022). According to Osman et al. (2020), effective Zakat distribution, particularly through micro-business management, can empower beneficiaries with a sustainable source of income.

Furthermore, Mawardi et al. (2022) stated zakat empowerment programs and business assistance initiatives have a positive impact on the growth of mustahik businesses, ultimately benefiting their well-being. These programs provide valuable support and resources that enable mustahik to develop and expand their entrepreneurial ventures, leading to improved economic outcomes.

When effectively implemented, Zakat can alleviate poverty, create sustainable livelihoods, and foster community cohesion. Additionally, Zakat operates as a system for income redistribution, social protection, economic stimulation, and also plays a significant role in the overall well-being of mustahik (Rahmat & Nurzaman, 2019; Yardımcıoğlu, 2019; Yakasai, 2021; Hisan, 2022). By strengthening Zakat institutions and fostering a conducive environment, Zakat can be more effectively utilized to address global challenges and promote positive change (Pratama, 2023).

## **2.2 Utilizing Technology to Enhance Zakat Promotion**

In this digital age, technology has revolutionized the way we connect, communicate, and conduct our daily lives. This transformation extends to the realm of charitable giving, including Zakat, a pillar of Islam. By leveraging digital platforms and tools, Zakat institutions can reach a wider audience, streamline processes, and enhance transparency, ultimately fostering greater engagement and participation from the community in this important Islamic practice (Maisyarah, et al., 2024). To broaden their reach, Zakat management institutions should implement a digital marketing strategy aligned with Sharia principles to enhance their reach and promote Zakat literacy.

Studies by Afiyana et al. (2019) have revealed that Zakat literacy plays a significant role in influencing individuals' decisions to pay Zakat. This suggests that enhancing Zakat literacy is a crucial step in promoting Zakat donations. Zakat literacy encompasses an individual's knowledge, understanding, and practical skills related to Zakat, including the ability to calculate Zakat obligations and access relevant information (Kasri & Yuniar, 2021).

Furthermore, Abdullah et al. (2023) emphasize social media's potential to enhance transparency, accountability, and public awareness regarding Zakat. These factors contribute to building trust and confidence in Zakat institutions, ultimately leading to increased donations and support. Additionally, the Zakat management institutions should improve their social media content to make it more engaging and informative, thereby increasing accessibility to Zakat-related information (Utami, et al., 2020; Ilham, et al., 2024).

In contrast to the findings of other studies, Al Anshory et al. (2020) observed that Zakat campaigns in Indonesia often lack a strong and distinctive message that can effectively change attitudes or behaviors. Despite BAZNAS' efforts to promote Zakat through specific

and general messages, there was no clear message that could directly trigger awareness and motivate individuals to donate through institutions. However, effective messaging is crucial for successful Zakat campaigns. The study revealed by Nasution et al. (2023) stated that both informational and transformational messages significantly influenced individuals' decisions to pay Zakat through institutions. This highlights the importance of crafting compelling content that effectively communicates the benefits of Zakat and inspires action.

### 3. Method

To gather data for this research, a survey was conducted using Google Forms. Given the substantial Muslim populations in India and Indonesia, these two countries were strategically chosen as the primary focus. A sample size of 100 respondents from each country was carefully selected to ensure a representative representation of the Muslim communities in both nations. This approach allowed for a comprehensive comparison of audience perceptions regarding the role of Islamic media in promoting Zakat across these diverse geographical and cultural contexts.

The survey participants were limited to residents of specific cities in India and Indonesia: Malerkotla, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and Surabaya. This focused the research on urban areas with significant Muslim populations, enabling a more targeted analysis of audience perceptions within these regions. Furthermore, the age restriction of 18 to 40 years ensured that the survey captured the perspectives of a relatively young and active demographic, likely to be more engaged with social media and other digital platforms.

### 4. Results and Discussion

To ensure a representative sample of respondents, 100 individuals were surveyed in each country. This approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of audience perceptions across different age groups and religious demographics in India and Indonesia.

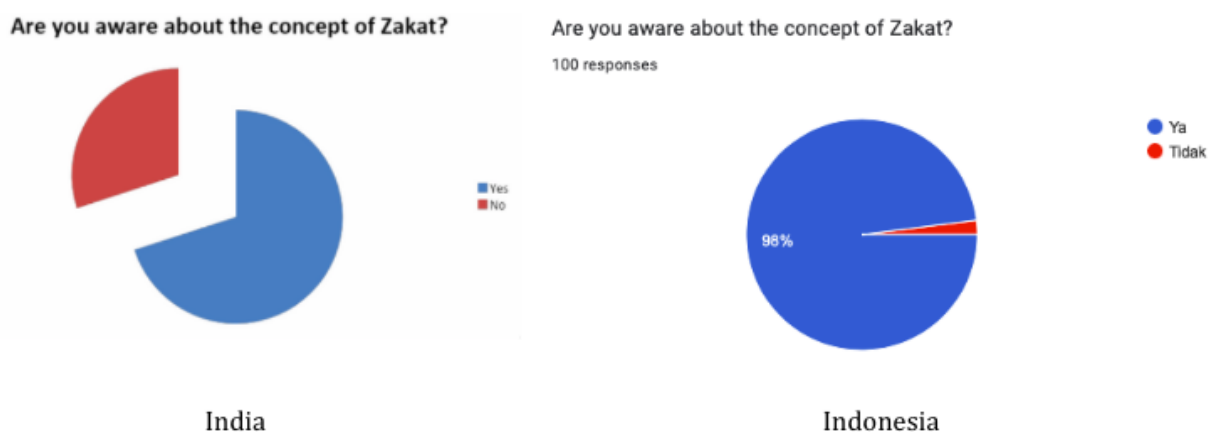
In India, the demographic breakdown was as follows: 30% of respondents belonged to the 18-25 age group, 45% to the 26-33 age group, and 25% to the 34-40 age group. This age distribution provided insights into the perspectives of various age segments within the Indian population. While Indonesia exhibited a slightly different demographic profile. 66% of Indonesian respondents were aged 18-25, 24% were aged 26-33, and 10% were aged 34-40. This suggests a younger demographic composition among the Indonesian respondents.

Beyond age, religious demographics also varied between the two countries. India's population is more diverse, with 60% identifying as Muslim, followed by Sikhism (29%), Hinduism (10%), and Christianity (1%). In contrast, Indonesia has a predominantly Muslim population, with 74% identifying as Muslim. The remaining respondents in Indonesia were primarily Christian (11%), Hindu (6%), Buddhist (5%), and Catholic (4%). These distinct religious demographics highlight the potential influence of cultural and religious factors on audience perceptions and understanding of Zakat. Understanding these differences is essential for developing targeted messaging and strategies to promote Zakat effectively in both countries.

## 4.1 The Understanding of Zakat

Zakat awareness levels exhibited a striking contrast between India and Indonesia. In India, a considerable segment of respondents (70%) demonstrated knowledge of Zakat, while a smaller group (30%) remained unaware. This indicates a notable gap in Zakat awareness within the Indian population. In contrast, Indonesia showcased a significantly higher level of Zakat awareness, with a vast majority (98%) of respondents familiar with the concept and only a small minority (2%) expressing unfamiliarity. This disparity underscores a profound difference in Zakat understanding between India and Indonesia.

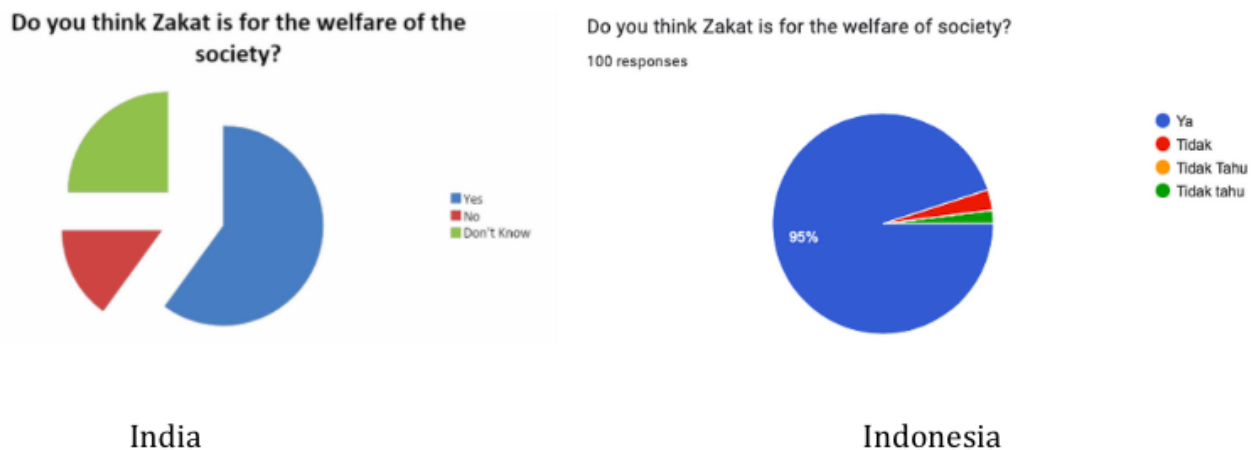
Table 1. Zakat awareness levels



Several factors may contribute to this disparity in Zakat awareness. Cultural, religious, and socioeconomic factors could play a significant role in shaping public perceptions of Zakat. In India, with its diverse religious landscape, Zakat may be less prominent in the public consciousness compared to Indonesia, where Islam is the dominant religion. Additionally, socioeconomic factors, such as education level and income, influence Zakat awareness and contributions. Individuals with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to pay Zakat. This suggests that targeted strategies focusing on these factors can enhance Zakat collection efforts (Durohman, et al., 2023).

Furthermore, perceptions regarding Zakat's purpose exhibited a notable disparity between India and Indonesia. In India, a majority of respondents (60%) recognized Zakat's role in promoting societal welfare, while a smaller group (15%) disagreed. However, 25% of Indian respondents expressed uncertainty, indicating a lack of clarity regarding Zakat's intended benefits. While Indonesia demonstrated a significantly higher level of consensus regarding Zakat's purpose. A substantial majority (95%) of Indonesian respondents affirmed Zakat's role in advancing societal well-being. Only a small minority (3%) disagreed, and 2% expressed uncertainty. This data underscores a marked difference in the perceived benefits of Zakat between the two countries.

**Table 2.** Perceptions regarding Zakat’s purpose



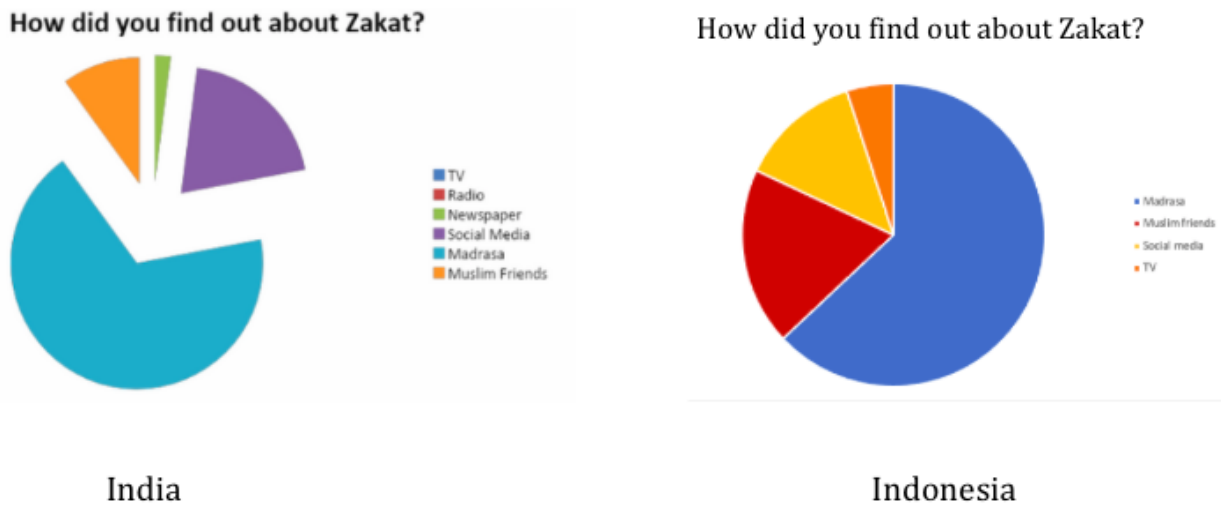
However, it can be concluded that a majority of respondents from both countries acknowledged the significance of Zakat in fostering societal well-being. As Pratama (2023) stated that beyond poverty reduction, Zakat offers solutions to various societal issues. Promoting awareness of Zakat can foster community participation and unlock its full potential.

## 4.2 The Role of Media

To effectively evaluate the impact of media on promoting Zakat, it is essential to understand the media consumption habits of the target audience. By examining how respondents engage with different media platforms and content, researchers can gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of various media channels in conveying Zakat messages.

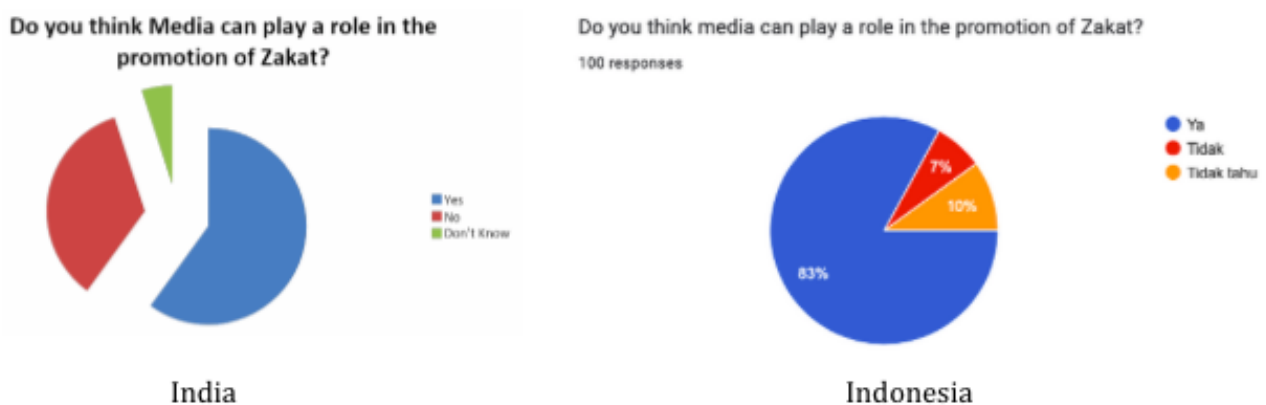
According to data analysis, the primary source of Zakat awareness exhibited notable differences between India and Indonesia. In India, a significant majority (68%) of respondents acquired knowledge of Zakat through Madrasas, traditional Islamic schools. Social media played a secondary role, with 20% of respondents learning about Zakat through online platforms. Newspapers and Muslim friends accounted for smaller percentages, at 2% and 10%, respectively. Indonesia demonstrated a slightly different pattern of Zakat awareness sources. Madrasas remained the primary source of information for 63% of respondents, followed by Muslim friends at 19%. Social media and television contributed to a lesser extent, with 13% and 5% respectively.

**Table 3.** The primary source of Zakat awareness



In addition, perceptions of the media’s role in promoting Zakat differed significantly between India and Indonesia. While a majority of Indian respondents (60%) recognized the media’s importance, a significant portion (35%) saw no impact. In contrast, Indonesia exhibited a stronger belief in the media’s effectiveness, with 83% recognizing its vital role. This data highlights a marked difference in the perceived influence of the media on Zakat promotion between the two countries. Several factors may contribute to this disparity. India’s diverse media landscape and varying levels of religious education might influence media’s effectiveness compared to Indonesia, where Islamic media is more prevalent. Additionally, the specific types of media consumed and their content could influence perceptions of the media’s role in promoting Zakat.

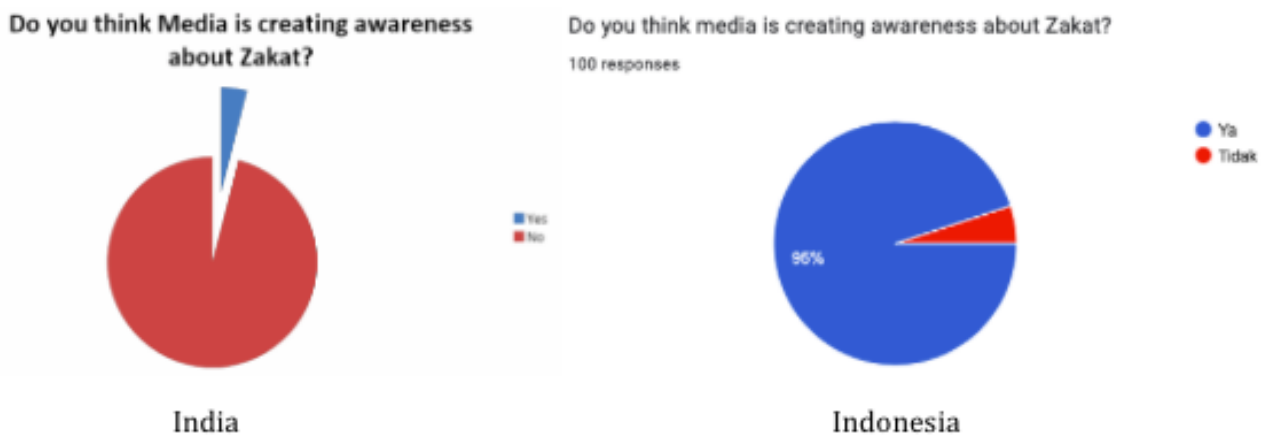
**Table 4.** Media’s role in promoting Zakat



Most Indian respondents also mentioned that Zakat can impact the social development of the society if the media will promote it. Few described that the media educates the people so the media can make people aware of the importance of Zakat. Others mentioned that Media Coverage can inculcate transparency amongst Zakat Institutions. Several believe that Zakat can teach empathy and sympathy to the society so the media should promote it. The majority

of Indonesian respondents believed that the media, regardless of its specific Islamic focus, could effectively reach a wider audience and promote Zakat awareness. They emphasized the media's ability to enhance public understanding of Zakat and guide individuals towards digital platforms dedicated to Zakat distribution. This suggests a positive perception of the media's role in promoting Zakat among Indonesian respondents.

**Table 5.** Media's role in creating awareness about Zakat



A significant disparity emerged in the perceptions of respondents from India and Indonesia regarding the media's role in creating awareness about Zakat. In India, a staggering 96% of respondents believed that the media was not effective in creating awareness. The remaining 4% who felt that the media was indeed promoting Zakat attributed this to the efforts of Islamic media outlets or specific social media content that highlighted the concept of charity. This suggests a limited understanding and reach of Zakat promotion through mainstream media in India.

In contrast, Indonesia presented a more optimistic outlook. A substantial 95% of Indonesian respondents affirmed the importance of the media in creating awareness about Zakat. They expressed confidence in the media's ability to reach all segments of society, provided they had adequate access. Moreover, many believed that media coverage of Zakat would intensify during the month of Ramadan, thereby increasing its visibility among the general public, including non-Muslims. This indicates a higher level of awareness and appreciation for the media's role in promoting Zakat within the Indonesian context.

While based on the findings that Zakat awareness sources differ significantly between India and Indonesia, with a notable reliance on traditional sources like Madrasas in both countries, it is evident that a multifaceted approach is needed to leverage media effectively for Zakat promotion. To enhance Zakat literacy and promote Zakat payments through official institutions, stakeholders need to intensify educational efforts. This involves implementing various educational programs to increase awareness of basic Zakat knowledge (Kasri & Sosianti, 2023).

Although social media may not have been the primary source of Zakat information for respondents in either India or Indonesia, its potential influence should not be overlooked. To effectively promote Zakat, a multifaceted approach that combines both online and offline media is essential. By leveraging various channels, including social media, traditional media, and

community-based initiatives, Zakat awareness can be significantly increased, reaching a wider audience and encouraging greater participation. According to Kailani and Slama (2020), social media can be a valuable tool for engaging with Islamic practices, but it should not overshadow the importance of traditional methods.

However, Nasution et al. (2023) emphasize the significance of effective communication and messaging strategies in utilizing social media to promote Zakat. Social media is a valuable tool for promoting and encouraging Zakat donations. By implementing appropriate strategies and oversight, social media can be a powerful catalyst for positive change in the realm of Islamic philanthropy (Ramli et al., 2023).

## 5. Conclusions

This research focused on understanding Zakat awareness and the role of media in promoting Zakat in India and Indonesia. The findings revealed notable differences between the two countries. According to Zakat Awareness, India demonstrated a lower level of Zakat awareness compared to Indonesia. This disparity may be attributed to factors such as cultural diversity, religious landscape, and socioeconomic conditions. In Indonesia, with Islam as the dominant religion, Zakat awareness is likely more prevalent and integrated into daily life. While both countries recognized Zakat's role in promoting societal well-being, Indonesia exhibited a stronger consensus on this matter. This suggests that cultural, religious, and social factors may influence how people perceive and value Zakat.

In order to fully understand the impact of media on Zakat promotion, it is essential to examine how respondents consume different media platforms and content. The study revealed that the sources of Zakat information varied between India and Indonesia, suggesting that targeted media strategies can effectively raise awareness and encourage participation. A notable finding from the research is that the majority of Indonesian respondents believed media, regardless of its specific Islamic focus, could effectively reach a wider audience and promote Zakat awareness. This suggests that a diverse range of media platforms can be utilized to effectively disseminate Zakat information and encourage participation.

Future research could delve deeper into specific media platforms and Zakat-related content consumed in each country. Additionally, analyzing the influence of religious institutions and educational systems on Zakat awareness in both countries can provide valuable insights. By understanding these factors, policymakers and community leaders can develop more effective strategies to promote Zakat and encourage greater participation in both countries.

## References

- Afiyana, I. F., Nugroho, L., Fitrijanti, T., & Sukmadilaga, C. (2019). Tantangan Pengelolaan Dana Zakat Di Indonesia Dan Literasi Zakat. *Akuntabel*, 16(2), 222-229.
- Al Anshory, Ali & Saputra, Muhammad & Adhiningsih, Siti & Zaenal, Muhammad. (2020). An Overview of Zakat Campaign in Indonesia: Case Study of BAZNAS.

- Bayraktar, Ö., & Sencal, H. (2022). Evaluation Of Zakat As A Public Finance Instrument. *International Journal of Public Finance*, 7(2), 429-446.
- Durohman, H., Sutisna, F. A., & Anugrah, M. Y. (2023). Socio-Economic Determinants Of Individual Muslim Zakat Payment Behavior In Indonesia. *Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies*, 4(2), 67-15. <https://doi.org/10.47700/jiefes.v4i2.6715>
- Hisan, D. G., Farchatunnisa, H., & Zaenal, M. H. (2022). The Role Of Zakat In Poverty Alleviation In Indonesia. Paper presented at the 6th Indonesian Conference of Zakat (ICONZ), Semarang, Indonesia.
- Ilham, M., Idrus, A., N., & Kartika, R. (2024). The Influence of Transparency and Social Media on Zakat Payment Intentions in LAZISMU Central. *Indonesian Conference of Zakat - Proceedings*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37706/iconz.2023.604>
- Kasri, R., & Sosiarti, M. (2023). Determinants Of The Intention To Pay Zakat Online: The Case Of Indonesia. *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance*. 9. 10.21098/jimf.v9i2.1664.
- Maisyarah, Anisa & Hamzah, Muhammad. (2024). Zakat Distribution Management: A Systematic Literature Review. *Suhuf*. 36. 95-108. 10.23917/suhuf.v36i1.4357.
- Mawardi, Imron & Widiastuti, Tika & Al Mustofa, Muhammad & Hakimi, Fifi. (2022). Analyzing the impact of productive zakat on the welfare of zakat recipients. *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*. 14. 10.1108/JIABR-05-2021-0145.
- Nasution, Juliana; Nurhayati, Nurhayati; Marliyah, Marliyah. (2023). Campaigning Zakat on Social Media: The Role of Message Strategies in the Decision to Pay Zakat. *Jurnal ASPIKOM*, [S.l.], v. 8, n. 1, p. 53-66, Jan. 2023. ISSN 2548-8309.
- Osman, M.F., Suib, S. and Md Noor, N.H. (2020). The Function OfThe Zakat Funds Continuance Modal Insan In Their Sustainable In Islamic Pedagogy. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, Vol. 7 No. 6, pp. 526-530.
- Pratama, Siectio. (2023). The Role of Zakat in Alleviating Multidimensional Poverty. *International Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance (IJIEF)*. 6. 10.18196/ijief.v6i1.17006.
- Ramli, S. S., & Abd Muin, M. A. (2023). The Role of Social Media (Sosmed) in Promoting Islamic Social Entrepreneurship (ISE) and Encouraging Zakat Donations. *International Journal of Zakat and Islamic Philanthropy*, 5(1),1-8.
- Utami, Pertiwi & Suryanto, Tulus & Nasor, M. & Ghofur, Ruslan. (2020). The Effect Digitalization Zakat Payment Against Potential of Zakat Acceptance in National Amil Zakat Agency. *IQTISHADIA*. 13. 216. 10.21043/iqtishadia.v13i2.7809.
- Yakasai, Musa & Jibrin, Munubiyah & Zanna, Lawan. (2021). The Role Of Zakat On Addressing Poverty Reduction In Yobe State. *Innovare Journal of Social Sciences*. 22-26. 10.22159/ijss.2021.v9i5.42614.
- Yardımcıoğlu, Fatih & Altintas, Nurullah & gümüş, niyazi. (2019). The Role of Zakat Potential in Reducing Poverty in Turkey.

## Former K-Pop Fandom, Instagram, and Digital Dakwah Communication: A Content Analysis of the @xkwavers Account

Alifya Aisya Ilham

Subhan Afifi\*

Department of Communication, Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences,  
Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia

\* Corresponding Author E-mail: [subhan.afifi@uii.ac.id](mailto:subhan.afifi@uii.ac.id)

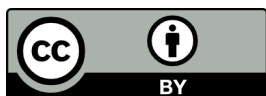
<https://doi.org/10.20885/iconish.vol2.art15>

**Abstract:** This study employs a comprehensive content analysis to examine the dynamics of digital da'wah communication through the Instagram account @xkwavers, which is focused on delivering Islamic teachings to former K-Pop enthusiasts. The research investigates how @xkwavers strategically blends Islamic messages with entertainment to engage a predominantly adolescent audience. By utilizing Instagram's interactive features, the account addresses potential conflicts between K-Pop culture and Islamic values, particularly within the Indonesian context. A substantial portion of the analyzed content is centered on educational programs designed to enhance followers' understanding of Islamic principles. The analysis covers multiple units of analysis, including post formats, types of Instagram content, likes, comments, video views, content categories, educational programs, and entertainment elements. This study positions @xkwavers as a pioneering model of digital da'wah, specifically targeting teenagers influenced by K-Pop culture. By integrating entertainment with spiritual guidance, @xkwavers effectively navigates the challenges and opportunities of contemporary digital da'wah communication. The research contributes to the broader academic discourse by highlighting the pivotal role social media plays in engaging younger generations in da'wah efforts.

**Keywords:** k-pop fandom, instagram, digital dakwah, dakwah communication

### 1. Introduction

The Korean Wave, or Hallyu, initially gained prominence in East Asia and later achieved global acclaim, notably in Indonesia. This cultural phenomenon has captivated a broad audience, from



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by the Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences, Universitas Islam Indonesia (FPSCS UII). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

teenagers to adults. The term 'Hallyu' was popularized when South Korea began distributing its music internationally. Its influence was evident when the Korean TV drama "What is Love All About" was broadcast in China due to high demand. Hallyu offers a diverse portfolio, from TV dramas and music to video games and food. It has significantly influenced Indonesian television, with K-dramas becoming a popular alternative. The introduction of K-dramas in Indonesia was marked by the success of "Winter Sonata". K-pop music has also played a pivotal role in promoting the Korean wave in Indonesia, with numerous concerts held in the country. The rise of the internet and social media has further facilitated Hallyu's spread, enabling easy access to diverse content. Fans have bridged language barriers by offering translation services for K-dramas and K-pop music. This accessibility has deepened appreciation for South Korean culture, leading to the term "K-Popers" for enthusiasts. Many of these fans spend hours on social media seeking information about their favorite K-pop idols (Rinata & Dewi, 2019).

On the other hand, religion has also spread widely through the rise of the Internet. Social media, in particular, has transformed traditional discussions and dissemination of religion into new digital methods and means of communication. Islam has benefited from these changes, where innovation and adaptability have given birth to a new trend: digital da'wah communication. This innovative approach utilizes digital tools, predominantly social media platforms, to propagate Islamic teachings, making them more accessible and relatable to the younger generation. Since the majority of Indonesians are Muslims, while also complimented by the high interest of Indonesians to use social media, this birth of digital dakwah thus developed quickly, reaching branches of society across generations; starting from the formal fields and spanning into entertainment's realm (Pramana, 2023).

However, the simultaneous rise of both K-Pop and Islam led to another phenomenon in the social media of Indonesians. Among the youth, there's an intersection of entertainment and religious beliefs that would be inevitable. Eventually, the rise of digital dakwah clashes with K-Pop culture, which led to mixed interactions between them. On some occasions, Muslims view K-Pop as incompatible, a dichotomy where only one out of two could be taken, either choosing Islam or K-Pop, blatantly labeling K-Pop as destructive elements for the Islamic faith. Interestingly, other Muslims in Indonesia have also shown surprising reactions, where they still consume K-Pop content without reducing their piousness in Islam (Mulya, 2021).

This fact has been researched by Yoon (2019), who highlights the notable religious devotion of young Indonesians, a contrast to the declining youth participation in religious institutions globally. Despite the westernized and capitalist commercial values portrayed in K-pop, which starkly differ from Islamic principles, it has gained substantial popularity among Indonesian youth, 90% of whom are Muslims. This popularity is not due to a lack of religiosity, as might be assumed considering the global trend of youth distancing from religious institutions; rather, the young population in Indonesia demonstrates strong adherence to their faith. This is evidenced by their daily practices such as performing the obligatory five daily prayers, with many engaging in additional religious activities including extra fasting and studying the Quran. This deep-rooted religious commitment exists alongside a high consumption of K-pop content,

showcasing a complex interplay of modern entertainment and traditional religious adherence among Indonesian youth.

One of the social media platforms that has been widely used by Muslims and K-Poppers alike is Instagram. With its visual-centric approach, it offers a unique medium to convey messages, be it through images, videos, or text. It's not just a platform for personal sharing; it has evolved into a space where beliefs, ideas, and ideologies are discussed and shared (Rinata & Dewi, 2019). In this context, the account @xkwavers stands out. Initiated by Fuad Naim, who once was a K-Pop fan, this account seeks to bridge the gap between Islamic teachings and K-Pop culture, ensuring that Muslim fans of K-Pop receive balanced and informed perspectives. Accounts like @xkwavers play a pivotal role in this scenario. They not only entertain but also provide spiritual guidance, ensuring that Muslim K-Pop fans have a platform that caters to both their entertainment and spiritual needs (Rahmasari & Shaleh, 2022; Rafidatikna & Amrullah, 2022; Rosmalina & Zulfikar, 2019).

The phenomenon of former K-Pop fandoms on Instagram presents a compelling context for studying digital dakwah communication. Dakwah, which means to call, invite, or summon, is a significant concept in Islam. The Qur'an emphasizes the duty of dakwah for Muslims in numerous verses, including Surah Ali-Imran, verse 110, where Allah Ta'ala states: "You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah."

According to As-Sa'di (2012), Muslims are distinguished as the best nation due to their excellence in counsel, teaching, guidance, and enjoining right while forbidding wrong. This combines the perfection of the soul with faith in Allah and the fulfillment of all rights of faith. The importance of dakwah is further highlighted in Surah Al-Fussilat, verse 33: "And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, 'Indeed, I am of the Muslims.'" Prophet Muhammad's hadiths also emphasize the virtues of calling others to good and preventing evil, with one stating: "Whoever guides someone to goodness will have a reward like one who did it" (Hadith narrated by Muslim).

Dakwah is inherently a communication process, involving the transmission of messages of goodness by a da'i (conveyor) to the mad'u (recipient) to promote good (amar ma'ruf) and prevent evil (nahi mungkar) using various media. Effective dakwah requires understanding the target audience, designing relevant messages, and choosing appropriate media channels. From an Islamic perspective, communication not only focuses on message design and interpretation but also on the moral and ethical responsibilities of the sender and receiver, as guided by the Qur'an and Hadith (Yusoff, 2016).

The Qur'an outlines several ethical principles for communication applicable to dakwah, including ethics for the communicator, message receiver, and the message itself, along with guidelines for interpersonal communication (Afifi & Suparno, 2023). It also identifies various forms of verbal communication that serve as ethical guidelines (Afifi et al., 2023; Afifi & Kurniawan, 2021). Hadiths further provide guidance on communication ethics relevant to dakwah (Afifi & Setiawan, 2021).

Advancements in communication technology enable interactions beyond face-to-face encounters, extending to virtual spaces through social media. Social media significantly benefits dakwah activities, requiring da'is to be creative and flexible to ensure their messages are effectively received (Omar & Geraldine, 2015). Strategic digital dakwah communication is crucial in the information technology era, serving as a resilience effort during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic (Afifi, 2022).

The essence of this study revolves around the analysis of contents employed by @xkwavers. In this study, the dakwah that is being conceived by @xkwavers is divided into two primary forms of communication: commitment-based, which is more binding due to restrictions only to specific audiences through paywalls, and non-commitment-based, which is more open to consumption of its content engagement by viewers without prerequisite requirements. The distinction between both type of communication forms dictates how the contents are consumed by the audiences, reflecting their dependency towards the contents provided. This dependency is a vital factor in understanding the impact of @xkwavers to its audiences, which is essential for an understanding of effective dakwah communication as implemented by the account. Hence, this research aims to provide the understanding of the digital dakwah communication as conveyed by @xkwavers, especially in the context of young individuals influenced by global phenomena like K-Pop. It is hoped that the significance of this study will provide insights that could be instrumental for similar platforms that utilize communication specified on dakwah on Instagram. Additionally, it is also expected that the findings in this study will act as foundation for future research that incorporates content analysis as its methods.

## 2. Method

This research employed a quantitative content analysis method. Quantitative content analysis is a method used to systematically categorize and record features of text, visuals, or audio for analysis. Common in communication studies, the core of this method is coding, where specific features in a text are identified and noted based on predefined instructions. For effective content analysis, it's crucial to segment texts accurately, choose the right sample, ensure consistent coding across researchers, and have a representative coding scheme (Coe & Scacco, 2017). This method allows for objective and systematic identification of specific characteristics within the text, making it possible to draw inferences and make generalizations about the content.

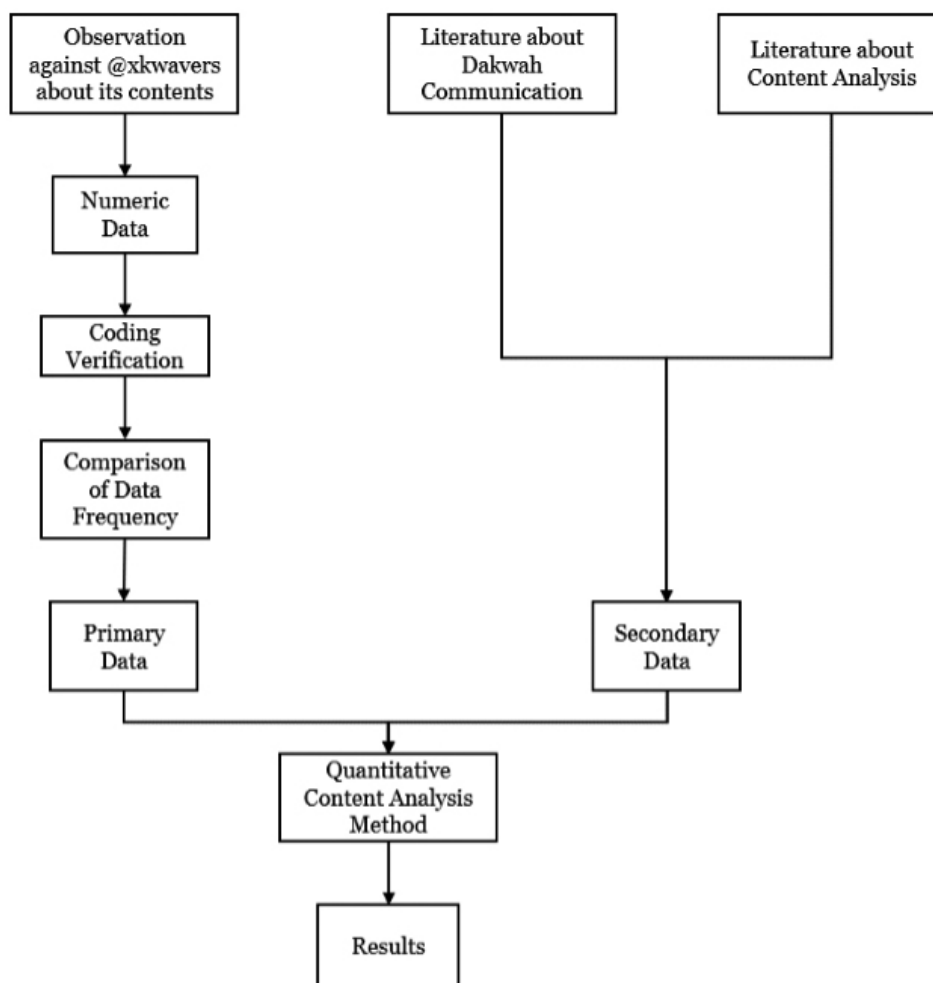


Figure 1. Methodology Flowchart

The primary focus of this study was the posts on the Instagram account @xkwavers. The data consisted of units of analysis and categorization, including media format types, Instagram post formats, number of likes, comments, views, content types, dakwah post types, educational program types, and entertainment content types. The sampling began with the first post dated 31 August 2018, chosen to enhance the accuracy of the collected data. Secondary data was sourced from books, scientific journals, the internet, and other complementary research materials.

## 2.1 Data Collection and Analysis

Before data collection, the unit of analysis was determined. According to Krippendorff (2019), the unit of analysis is something observed, recorded, and considered as data, separated according to its boundaries, and then analyzed. In this research, clear boundaries were set, focusing on the dakwah communication used in the @xkwavers account using various categorizations. The recording unit is part of content recording, calculation, and analysis. This research used a thematic recording unit, which simply discusses what the “text talks about.” Through the recording unit, researchers can read news, photos, and videos, evaluate them, and then fill them into a prepared assessment sheet (coding sheet).

Data collection was done in Surakarta over 7 months, from March 21, 2022, to October 31, 2022. The data source for this research came from primary and secondary data. Primary data included data obtained directly from the source, such as photo and video posts from the @xkwavers Instagram account. Secondary data was sourced from books, journals, news articles, and various other references.

Data analysis involved using content analysis by creating a coding sheet based on predetermined categorization. The coding sheet is a tool used to measure and count aspects of its media content. This sheet contains aspects that the researcher wants to analyze. The stages in data analysis included categorizing the @xkwavers Instagram account posts, grouping the categorized data into a coding sheet, displaying it in a frequency distribution table, describing and analyzing the frequency table with the created categorization, and then formulating the problem to achieve the research objective.

## 2.2 Coding Verification

To ensure objectivity and reliability in the coding process, the researcher was assisted by a coder who observed and analyzed the object and material separately. The aim was to achieve consensus and a shared goal, thereby enhancing the research’s reliability (Nili et al., 2020). To do so, Holsti’s formula for intercoder reliability is employed in this study. Being a variation of the Percent Agreement, Holsti’s method provides a quantitative measure of the degree of agreement between the two coders (Lombard et al., 2002; Nili et al., 2020), which should be suitable for this study, as this research incorporates two coders in practice. The formula provides a quantitative measure of the degree of agreement between coders, maintaining the integrity and validity of the research findings (Holsti & Parker, 1969). The characteristics in selecting a coder included understanding the basics of communication science, studying matters related to social media, especially Instagram, and having specific knowledge to translate data from the @xkwavers account.

**Table 1.** Percentage Holsti Approval Formula (Holsti & Parker, 1969)

Equation	Description
$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2 (M)}{N1 + N2}$	Where: N = Total number of categories counted by the coder M = Number of categories approved by the coder

In this study, the reliability ranged between 0 and 1, where 0 meant no agreement by all coders and 1 meant full agreement by coders (Holsti & Parker, 1969). The result of every agreement (>0) is then cumulated, where the total of agreement by each coder will represent M, which later is divided by the N. The calculation will reflect the intercoder reliability. Since the Holsti formula has no general agreement for its minimum reliability tolerance limit (Nili et al., 2020), this study will use 0.7 or 70% as the minimum reliability tolerance limit. If the calculation result shows a number above 0.7, the measuring instrument is considered reliable. However, when the calculation result is below 0.7, it means the measuring instrument (coding sheet) is not reliable.

**Table 2. Coding Verification Result**

Unit of Analysis	N1	N2	M	Intercoder Reliability
Media Format	422	422	370	0.87
Type of Post Format	422	422	422	1
Number of Likes	422	422	415	1
Number of Comments	422	422	397	0.94
Number of Views	155	155	145	0.93
Type of Post	422	422	411	0.97
Type of Dakwah Post	191	191	151	0.79
Type of Educational Program	422	422	411	0.97
Entertainment Program	56	56	47	0.85

Description. N1: Writer as the first coder, N2: Second coder, M: Number of categories approved by both coders.

From the coding results, it can be seen that for each of unit of analysis, the @xkwavers Instagram account's post received a value above 0.7 or 70%. This indicates that the measuring tool used is reliable and not just a coincidence.

## 2.3 Unit of Analysis

In this study, the primary data source for the unit of analysis is the photo and video posts uploaded by the Instagram account @xkwavers, totaling 422 posts. This data is organized into tables, from which conclusions are drawn in percentage form. The tables are structured based on various distinct parameter references to ensure a comprehensive conclusion. Here are the details of each unit of analysis used:

**Table 3. Unit of Analysis**

Unit of Analysis	Description
Post Format	Refers to the format users employ to upload content. Can be photos, a combination of photos and sound, videos, or a mix of photos and videos.
Type of Post Format	Pertains to the specific type of post uploaded by Instagram users. Posts are categorized into two main types: feeds and reels.
Number of Likes	On Instagram, 'likes' serve as a form of assessment given by users to a particular post. Content that garners many likes is considered appealing.
Number of Comments	Comments are a feature provided by Instagram allowing users to leave feedback on a post. One measure of an account's success is the volume of comments it receives.
Number of Views	Views let us know how many times a video post has been seen by other accounts.

---

Content-Type	Categorization indicates the variety of content uploaded by @xkwavers. Classifies content types into seven units: educational programs, dakwah, business promotions, entertainment, motivation, donations, and templates.
Type of Educational Program	A sub-category of the dakwah content type. Divided into several parts: language classes, deep religious classes, and skill classes.
Type of Entertainment Content	A sub-category of content type. Categorized into four parts: confession content, challenge content, humorous memes, and comics.

---

The data analysis based on the number of posts involves counting the total posts that have communication elements with specific parameter indicators. Through this post count, a percentage of data is derived, showcasing the majority and minority data comparisons.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Overview of @xkwavers Account

Over four years, from August 31, 2018, to August 31, 2022, a total of 422 posts were published on this account. As of August 29, 2022, the account has 75k followers and followed 55 accounts. Founded by Fuad Naim, a former enthusiast of Korean trends and the author of “Pernah Tenggelam”, the account is dedicated to the propagation of dakwah. Its vision and mission revolve around conveying dakwah by embracing without striking, providing solutions without cursing, and addressing the ‘Halu’ in ‘Hallyu’. The primary objective is to align dakwah with modern trends, focusing especially on the youth who are enthusiasts of Korean trends. The majority of these followers are teenagers aged between 10-24, who display typical characteristics of K-Pop fans and are known for their loyalty in purchasing K-Pop related items. The account actively engages its audience with initiatives like the Trainee Award, weekly Q&A sessions, and giveaways. It also encourages philanthropic activities, such as open donations for the residents of Mount Semeru.

Visually, the account’s profile picture features the “Xk” logo accompanied by the words “xtraordinary” and “Korean wavers”. The bio reads, “A warm and happy place for X-TRAORDINARY KOREAN WAVES -I AM YOU BUT EXTRA-”, and also gives a nod to its subsidiary account, @xk.merch. The linked website, xkwavers.id, offers registration to the @xkwavers school, and connects to other social media platforms.

#### 3.2 Quantitative Content Analysis

The uploaded posts by @xkwavers are diverse. Therefore, the coding system used for this category is thematic test coding. The thematic coding for the content analysis will consist of predefined units as follows:

### 3.2.1 Format of Posts

Table 4. Unit Analysis of Media Format

Categorization	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Photo	217	51%
Photo & Sound	1	0.2%
Video	168	40%
Photo & Video	36	9%
Total	422	100%

The primary format is photos, which are static images, either colored or monochrome, representing an object or situation at a given time. For instance, posts from June 21, 2022, titled “Belajar Apa Saja Di X-School 2022”, and April 17, 2021, titled “Perniagaan Paling Menguntungkan Pelengkap Ramadhan” are examples of the photo category. The next category, a combination of photos and sound, is a new feature commercialized by Instagram in 2021. An example of this format is the post from June 15, 2022, titled “Discount for X-school Alumni”. Videos, on the other hand, capture and process moving images. Examples include posts from June 28, 2022, titled “Perkara Tiket” and September 19, 2021, titled “Be A Trainee”. The last category combines photos and videos, as seen in posts from March 20, 2022, titled “@xkwaver Present, We Are Coming Back Again” and April 17, 2022, titled “A Day With Khanza”.

### 3.2.2 Type of Instagram Posts

Table 5. Unit Analysis of Post Types

Categorization	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Feeds	270	64%
Reels	152	36%
Total	422	100%

From the table, it's evident that @xkwavers is more active in posting feeds than reels. This strategy could potentially be rooted in a desire to provide more substantial and detailed content that feeds allow for, as opposed to the brief, often fleeting nature of reels. Feeds offer a more structured and expansive canvas to articulate the nuanced messages of dakwah, facilitating deeper engagement with the audience through comprehensive posts that can encompass various forms of media including photos, texts, and videos. Moreover, the preference for feeds over reels might be indicative of the account's adherence to a more traditional form of Instagram engagement.

### 3.2.3 Number of Likes per Post

**Table 6.** Unit Analysis of Likes

Categorization	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
<2000	138	33%
2001-4000	150	36%
4001-6000	87	21%
6001-8000	36	9%
8001-10,000	7	0.2%
>10,000	4	0.1%
Total	422	100%

From the various posts, there’s a noticeable shift in @xkwavers’ dakwah strategy over the years. Initially, they adopted a rigid approach, portraying K-pop as forbidden. However, they evolved to embrace K-pop, as seen in the “Role Player” post from October 9, 2019, which depicted a woman consuming harmful elements, garnering 5,763 likes. In contrast, the post titled “When Jungkook Said” from June 18, 2022, used Jungkook’s desire to pursue a solo career as a dakwah medium, amassing 3,414 likes. The narrative posed reflective questions about self-improvement.

However, there was a decline in content frequency around mid-2021 to mid-2022, which might explain the reduced likes. Posts with likes ranging from 4,001-6,000, primarily from 2018-2020, were more consistent in engagement. Posts within the 6,001-10,000 and above brackets followed a similar pattern, with certain posts experiencing significant spikes. For instance, the “Special To Do List On Friday” post from October 21, 2021, encouraged followers to practice Friday Sunnahs and received 3,977 likes. In comparison, “The Powerful Hour On Friday” post from September 3, 2021, discussing the best prayer time on Fridays, garnered a whopping 32,988 likes. The engagement behavior of @xkwavers’ followers, as gauged by likes, is unpredictable. Some posts become favorites, while others with similar narratives might receive fewer likes than their predecessors.

### 3.2.4 Number of Comments per Post

**Table 7.** Unit Analysis of Comments

Categorization	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
<20	140	33%
21-40	84	20%
41-60	68	16%
61-80	45	11%
81-100	23	5%
>100	62	15%
Total	422	100%

Based on the above table, the most frequent comment count falls under the first category, with less than 20 comments, accounting for 33% of total posts. These are primarily recent posts from mid-2021 to September 2022. Posts with fewer engagements include donation drives, religious learning classes, Quranic verse quotes, and other miscellaneous content. However, it's worth noting that the religious learning or x-school posts typically serve as reminders for upcoming program registrations. Posts with comment counts ranging from 21-40 make up 20% of the total, and they are mostly related to X-School or religious learning class registrations. Other categories, such as those in the 41-60, 61-80, and 81-100 ranges, are predominantly filled with entertainment content like comics, challenges, and memes. Meanwhile, posts with over 100 comments cover a diverse range of unpredictable content, from dakwah to entertainment or discussions about X-School.

However, these highly commented posts only constitute 15% of the total. The researcher believes this variability is due to Instagram's ever-changing algorithm, which occasionally boosts certain posts' visibility. Generally, engaging topics include trending issues like LGBT, controversies surrounding a K-pop idol, or simply personal reflections.

### 3.2.5 Number of Video Watch per Post

**Table 8.** Unit Analysis of Views

Categorization	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
<5000	26	17%
5001-10,000	32	21%
10,001-15,000	28	18%
15,001-20,000	27	17%
20,001-25,000	19	12%
>25,000	23	15%
Total	155	100%

The data indicates that the video category with the most views falls within the 5,001-10,000 range, with a frequency of 32 posts or 21%. This range predominantly features promotional videos for @xkwavers' religious deepening classes, designed to captivate the audience. This is closely followed by the 10,001-15,000 range, with 28 posts or 18%, mainly filled with @xkwavers class promotions and dakwah posts. The 15,001-20,000 and <5,000 ranges have similar frequencies, with 26 and 27 posts respectively, each accounting for 17% of total posts. Upon observation, the <5,000 range mainly consists of class and business promotions, while the 15,001-20,000 range features entertainment and dakwah activities. Thus, the identical 17% percentage for these different post types can be considered coincidental. Posts in the 20,000-25,000 and >25,000 ranges are mostly recent uploads from this year, irrespective of whether they contain dakwah programs, entertainment education, or other content. This suggests a noticeable increase in the view count for @xkwavers' video posts.

### 3.2.6 Categories of Post

**Table 9.** Unit Analysis of Post Categories

Categorization	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Educational Program	104	25%
Dakwah	191	45%
Business Promotion	13	3%
Entertainment	56	13%
Motivation	41	10%
Donation	10	2%
Template	7	2%
Total	422	100%

The data reveals that the dakwah (Islamic preaching) category has the highest post frequency, with 191 posts, accounting for 45% of the 422 total posts. Within this category, a shift in @xkwavers' dakwah strategy on Instagram is evident. For instance, a post from June 25, 2019, titled "After Watching Korean Drama," suggests that one can't remain unaffected by the content they consume, implying that such content might lead them away from the righteousness of Islam. Contrastingly, a post from June 12, 2022, titled "What an Exo-L Says About X-School," showcases a video of a teenager stating that @xkwavers' X-School program doesn't prohibit watching Korean dramas or listening to its music. Instead, it guides fans towards more beneficial activities for their future. While the former post overtly rejects K-pop, the latter subtly encourages followers to prioritize Islam over K-pop by suggesting more constructive activities than merely watching dramas.

Following the dakwah category, educational programs account for 104 posts or 25% of the total uploads. This indicates that besides influencing followers through posts, @xkwavers also aims to shape character by conducting classes discussing Islamic teachings. Such classes are deemed more effective. Adopting a school-like teaching method but with a more engaging approach, participants pay a registration fee to access these time-bound classes.

Most of the 104 posts serve as reminders for followers to register for the upcoming season. Entertainment content comes next with 56 posts, making up 13% of the total. While not extensive, this category significantly shapes @xkwavers' image as a K-Pop-friendly dakwah account. An example is the November 5, 2021 post titled "Happiness is Simple," featuring a humorous meme with a Korean artist's face. Motivational content, with 41 posts or 10% of the total, offers encouragement for followers to pursue knowledge and transition towards a better path. Lastly, smaller frequency categories include business promotions at 3%, donations at 2%, and templates at 2%.

Additionally, for the business promotion, it also serves merchandise enthusiasts. Items ranging from tumblers to keychains, all branded with the @xkwavers logo and caricatures, are available for purchase on the @xk.merc Instagram account.

### 3.2.7 Educational Programs

Table 10. Unit Analysis of Educational Programs

Categorization	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Language Class	2	2%
Religious Deepening	83	80%
Skill Class	19	18%
Total	104	100%

The Education program, which was named X-School by @xkwavers, consists of 10 sessions, each lasting approximately 2 hours. In the “Why Why Why” session, they delve into the fundamental questions humans often ponder about existence and purpose. This is followed by the “Answer” segment which provides insights into these questions. “Dalla Dalla”, translating to ‘different’, focuses on understanding Allah through His unique attributes. The “Superhuman” session discusses the life of Prophet Muhammad SAW, while “Antidote” addresses the concept of destiny. Participants then explore world history through an Islamic perspective in “Panorama”, learn about effortless love in “Easy”, and delve into the essence of happiness in “Happiness”. The “Last Piece” encourages viewing the past as a valuable teacher, and the concluding “After School” session helps chart out the next steps for personal goals (Rafidatikna & Amrullah, 2022).

The educational content delivered by @xkwavers through X-School is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings and principles. One of the foundational lessons emphasized by them is the importance of intention behind every action. They advocate that every deed, regardless of its nature, is judged based on the underlying intention. This aligns with the Islamic belief that actions are but by intention, and every man shall have only that which he intended. Furthermore, @xkwavers underscores the proactive approach towards seeking God’s guidance. Instead of passively waiting for divine intervention, they encourage followers to actively seek God’s guidance in their daily lives, emphasizing that guidance is a proactive pursuit rather than a passive expectation (Rosmalina & Zulfikar, 2019).

The concept of Ukhuwwah Islamiyyah, or Islamic brotherhood, is also a central theme in their teachings. They promote love and unity among Muslims, emphasizing the bonds that should exist within the Ummah. This love, however, is balanced with the reminder that love for God’s creations should never surpass the love for God Himself. It’s a call to ensure that our affection for worldly matters and beings does not overshadow our devotion and love for the Almighty (Rosmalina & Zulfikar, 2019). Lastly, the communication approach of @xkwavers is notably gentle and constructive. They adopt a principle of embracing without confrontation, offering solutions without resorting to mockery and guiding followers from “halu” (a term often used in Indonesian pop culture to describe delusional fans) towards understanding “Hallyu” (the Korean wave) in a more grounded and Islamic perspective. This approach not only makes their message more palatable but also ensures that it resonates deeply with their target audience, particularly those who are fans of K-pop and Korean culture.

In complement to its primary educational offerings, the initiative by @xkwavers extends its reach into the realm of language proficiency. Recognizing the global significance and spiritual importance of Arabic, they provide online lessons, making it accessible to a wider audience. This not only aids in understanding the Quran and Hadith in their original form but also bridges cultural gaps. On the other hand, acknowledging the growing influence of Korean culture, especially among the youth, they offer Korean language sessions. However, these sessions are exclusive to Jakarta, possibly catering to the dense population of K-pop enthusiasts in the region.

### 3.2.8 Entertainment Content

**Table 11.** Unit Analysis of Entertainment Content

Categorization	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Comic	22	39%
Confession	10	18%
Challenge	8	14%
Humorous Meme	16	29%
Total	56	100%

The table above reveals that within the entertainment content analysis unit, comics have the highest post frequency, accounting for 39% of the total posts. Based on the researcher’s observations, this is influenced by the audience’s strong interest in comic content, as evidenced by an average of around 4,000 likes per comic post. For instance, a post from July 7, 2020, titled “I Love Oppa,” received 4,332 likes, while another from July 18, 2021, titled “Don’t Miss It,” garnered 5,755 likes. Following comics, humorous meme content has been posted 16 times, making up 29% of the total posts. Notably, such meme-related posts began to be actively uploaded from mid-2021. Content categories like personal stories and challenges have a relatively smaller share, with only 18% and 14% respectively. This trend aligns with the meme content, as both personal stories and challenges also started to be frequently uploaded in 2021.

### 3.3 Commitment and Impact of X-School

This study derives a distinction between commitment-based communication and non-commitment-based communication from the posts of @xkwavers. Commitment-based posts serve a dual purpose: they not only disseminate information but also aim to elicit a tangible response or action from the audience. These posts are strategically designed to encourage materialistic contributions or active participation from the followers towards @xkwavers. For instance, when the account promotes its Education Program, Business ventures, or calls for Donations, it’s seeking a direct commitment from its audience, be it in the form of enrollment, purchase, or financial support.

On the other hand, non-commitment-based posts primarily focus on the transmission of messages without expecting a direct materialistic or enrollment-based response. These posts are crafted to engage, inform, inspire, or entertain the audience. When @xkwavers shares Dakwah messages, provides Entertainment content, motivates its followers, or uses Templates,

it's aiming to foster a deeper connection, spread knowledge, or simply brighten the follower's day. Such posts reinforce the account's mission and values, strengthening the bond between @xkwavers and its audience without necessarily seeking a direct commitment.

According to Lu & Lin (2022), there is psychological proof that usage of social media leads to dependency on it. As audiences increasingly engage with @xkwavers, their dependency on the platform intensifies. This engagement is characterized by active interaction where users not only consume content but also contribute to the platform's ecosystem, fostering a sense of belonging. The strength of this bond is further amplified when the media platform effectively caters to its audience's needs and preferences, making it indispensable. This dependency arises from the audience's intrinsic desires to fulfill various needs, ranging from seeking information, and indulging in entertainment, to managing their mood with resonating content. Beyond content consumption, @xkwavers also offers spaces for audiences to interact and share perspectives, leading to the formation of virtual communities. These communities, bound by shared interests and values, further solidify user commitment and dependency on the platform, highlighting its dual role in content delivery and fostering social connections.

Particularly regarding the Education Program offered by @xkwavers, it has arguably fostered a sense of dependency among its audience, as evidenced by the engagement of 1100 participants in the X-School in 2022. It must be acknowledged that this program has entrance fees, which are tiered into basic, extra, and VIP levels priced at IDR 99,000, IDR 150,000, and IDR 189,000 respectively, that enhance the argumentation that dependency occurs in its followers.

The decision to enroll in an Education Program, such as X-School, is also clear proof of the commitment of the audiences towards @xkwavers. This commitment is further underscored by the impressive number of participants in 2022, with over 1,100 members, all of whom are above the age of 13. Demonstrating its commitment to accessibility and inclusivity, X-School has taken commendable steps in 2022 by offering total fee waivers to as many as 700 junior and high school students. This generous initiative not only facilitates broader participation but also underscores the program's dedication to fostering Islamic understanding among the younger generation, regardless of their financial circumstances. Additionally, these fee waivers could also be understood as an indication that X-School is being proactive in obtaining its students, showing that the commitment shown by the audiences is nurtured through dakwah communication commenced by @xkwavers, and not merely a coincidence.

The data from @xkwavers' Instagram posts paints a compelling narrative about the account's approach to dakwah communication. A significant 24.6% of the posts, which translates to 104 out of 422, are dedicated to the "education program." This is a substantial portion, especially when compared to other categories, except for the Dakwah category which holds a 45% share. Such a high percentage for the education program indicates a pronounced interest from the audience in enrolling in X-School. The data suggests that @xkwavers has adeptly harnessed commitment-based communication to foster a deeper connection with its audience. By

offering content that resonates with their followers, they have successfully bound them into a commitment-based interaction. This strategy not only amplifies the dakwah communication but also ensures that the audience is actively engaged and invested in the platform's offerings.

As for the impact, previous research which was conducted by Rafidatikna & Amrullah (2022) has shown that X-School provides a solid impact on its participants. Participants of the X-School, based on the Kurikulum X-School 2021, undergo a structured curriculum designed around the teachings of renowned scholars, presented straightforwardly and engagingly for easy comprehension. Notably, the X-School program influences the Understanding of Islam by 42.1% (Rafidatikna & Amrullah, 2022). The remaining 57.9% is influenced by several reasons, and when broken down, none of these individual reasons surpass the 42.1% impact. Furthermore, the combined 57.9% has no relation to this study and thus will not be considered further.

The research findings demonstrate the implementation of digital da'wah communication by the administrators of the @xkwavers account, targeting former K-Pop fandoms through Instagram. The various contents on this account illustrate that the conveyed messages focus not only on design and content but also on moral and ethical responsibilities as guided by the Qur'an and Hadith (Yusoff, 2016). This includes adhering to communication ethics found in the Qur'an and Hadith (Afifi & Kurniawan, 2021; Afifi & Setiawan, 2021). Additionally, the research indicates that the use of social media in da'wah communication is based on the suitability of the audience's characteristics, particularly K-Pop fandoms, who are closely associated with social media. Social media significantly benefits da'wah activities, requiring da'is to be creative and flexible to ensure their messages are effectively received and adaptable to various situations (Omar & Geraldine, 2015; Afifi, 2022).

## 4. Conclusions

In conclusion, @xkwavers stands out as a pioneering digital platform aimed at promoting Islamic teachings among former K-Pop enthusiasts. By seamlessly integrating religious content with entertainment and promotional material, the platform has carved a distinct niche in the digital da'wah landscape. This study, using multiple units of analysis—including post formats, types of Instagram content, likes, comments, video views, content categories, educational programs, and entertainment elements—illustrates innovative approaches to engaging this specific audience. The high levels of user interaction indicate a growing dependency on @xkwavers for digital content, highlighting its influence within this community. Additionally, the platform's impact extends beyond passive engagement, actively encouraging deeper involvement through initiatives like the X-School program, which serves as both an educational tool and a transformative experience, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Islam among participants. This research contributes to the academic discourse by emphasizing the crucial role of social media in reaching younger generations and advancing da'wah efforts in the modern digital era.

## References

- Afifi, S. (2022). Dakwah Undisrupted: Resiliensi Komunikasi Dakwah di Era Pandemi. In H. M. F. Robby & A. Sadzali (Eds.), *Islam Indonesia 2022* (pp. 1-38). Yogyakarta: UII Press. Retrieved from <https://dspace.uui.ac.id/handle/123456789/44965>
- Afifi, S., & Kurniawan, I. N. (2021). Ragam komunikasi Verbal dalam Al-Qur'an. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 15(2), 153–170. <https://doi.org/10.20885/komunikasi.vol15.iss2.art6>
- Afifi, S., & Setiawan, N. A. (2021). Communication ethics in the book of Adabul Mufrad by Imam Al-Bukhari. *Communications in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(2), 82–90. <https://doi.org/10.21924/chss.1.2.2021.20>
- Afifi, S., & Suparno, B. A. (2023). Principles of Interpersonal Communication in Islam: A Theoretical Framework. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Islamic Social Sciences and Humanities (ICONISH)*, Volume 1 (pp. 121–134). Retrieved from [https://fpsc.uui.ac.id/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ICONISH-Article-16\\_121-134-Principles-of-Interpersonal-Communication-in-Islam\\_Subhan-Afifi\\_Basuki-Agus-Suparno.pdf](https://fpsc.uui.ac.id/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ICONISH-Article-16_121-134-Principles-of-Interpersonal-Communication-in-Islam_Subhan-Afifi_Basuki-Agus-Suparno.pdf)
- Afifi, S., Kurniawan, I. K., & Sumintono, B. (2023). Pengembangan Instrumen Penelitian The Qur'anic Ver-bal Communication Index (QVCI) Menggunakan Pemodelan Rasch. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 21(1), 94–112. <https://doi.org/10.31315/jik.v21i1.8688>
- As-Sa'di, A. bin N. (2012). *Tafsir Al-Qur'an (Tafsir al Karim ar-Rahman Fi Tafsir Kalam al-Manan)* Jilid 1. Jakarta. Darul Haq.
- Coe, K., & Scacco, J. M. (2017). Content Analysis, Quantitative. In *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods* (pp. 1–11). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118901731.iecrm0045>
- Holsti, O. R., & Parker, E. B. (1969). Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities. *American Sociological Review*, 35(2), 356. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2093233>
- Krippendorff, K. (2019). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071878781>
- Lombard, M., Snyder-Duch, J., & Bracken, C. C. (2002). Content Analysis in Mass Communication: Assessment and Reporting of Intercoder Reliability. *Human Communication Research*, 28(4), 587–604. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hcr/28.4.587>
- Lu, J. D. (Evelyn), & Lin, J. S. (Elaine). (2022). Exploring uses and gratifications and psychological outcomes of engagement with Instagram Stories. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 6, 100198. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2022.100198>
- Nili, A., Tate, M., Barros, A., & Johnstone, D. (2020). An approach for selecting and using a method of inter-coder reliability in information management research. *International Journal of Information Management*, 54, 102154. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102154>
- Omar, R., & Geraldine, H. B. (2015). Islamic perspectives relating to business, arts, culture and communication. In *Islamic perspectives relating to business, arts, culture and communication*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-287-429-0>
- Pramana, M. A. (2023). Salafi Online: Dakwah Salafi Pada Akun Instagram @dakwah\_tauhid. *Idarotuna*, 5(1), 63. <https://doi.org/10.24014/idarotuna.v5i1.22792>
- Rafidatikna, A., & Amrullah, A. M. K. (2022). Pengaruh Program X-School oleh XK-Wavers terhadap Pembentukan Kesadaran Beragama Islam bagi Pecinta Korea. *Muta'allim: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 1(2), 144–160. <https://doi.org/10.18860/mjpai.v1i2.1434>

- 
- Rahmasari, A., & Shaleh, K. (2022). Strategi Dakwah Program X-School dalam Meningkatkan Pemahaman Keagamaan. *Jurnal Riset Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam*, 79–84. <https://doi.org/10.29313/JRKPI.VI.1243>
- Rinata, A. R., & Dewi, S. I. (2019). Fanatisme Penggemar Kpop dalam Bermedia Sosial di Instagram. *In-teraksi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 8(2), 13. <https://doi.org/10.14710/interaksi.8.2.13-21>
- Rosmalina, A., & Zulfikar, F. A. (2019). Pesan Dakwah Tentang K-Wavers Hijrah di Media Sosial Insta-gram. *Orasi: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi*, 10(2), 136. <https://doi.org/10.24235/orasi.v10i2.5419>
- Syahputra, Iswandi. (2007). *Komunikasi Profetik: Konsep dan Pendekatan*. Bandung. Simbiosis Rekatama Media.
- Mulya, T.W. (2021). Faith and fandom: young Indonesian Muslims negotiating K-pop and Islam. *Con-temporary Islam*, 15(3), 337–355. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-021-00475-1/metrics>
- Yoon, S. (2019). K-POP fandom in veil: Religious reception and adaptation to popular culture. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 13(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.15642/jiis.2019.13.1.1-20>
- Yusoff, S. H. (2016). Western and Islamic communication model : a comparative analysis on a theory ap-plication. *Al-Abqari*, 7 (MAY), 7–20.

