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Author : Ahmatnijar, Risdawati Siregar, Hamlan
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Religious Communication on the Phenomenon of Online Da'wah Ustadz and Its Implications for Discourse on Radicalism and Hate Speech

Ahmatnijar, Risdawati Siregar, Hamlan

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Padangsidempuan, Padangsidempuan, Indonesia, 22733

ahamatnijar@gmail.com, risdawati2376@gmail.com, hamlan.harahap60@gmail.com

Abstract

This study plays a role in analyzing the extent to which religious communication is built from da'wah delivered and obtained from online or social media between da'wah material and the understanding captured by the audience in this case students, thus giving rise to discourses of radicalism and hate speech committed by the audience. The audience of a preaching video of an ustadz. This study uses a descriptive qualitative research method by focusing on the form of Malay gastronomy based on observation and interview data collection techniques. As a temporary result, the communication that has been developed between online da'wah videos and student understanding related to the discourse of radicalism and hate speech is marked several factors, the use of media, knowledge, and the preachers, which lead to the relationship of factors that influence the notion of radicalism and hate speech of online *da'wah*. The strategy taken so that students can choose *da'wah* content and not deviate from Islamic teachings by being carried away towards radicalism and hate speech is in two ways, strengthening literacy and harmonization between communication, *da'wah*, and public understanding.

Keywords: Religious Communication; Radicalism; Hate Speech; Da'wah.

1. Introduction

In the latest era of the industrial revolution 4.0 as it is today, communication is no longer limited to direct speech acts or through written media but digital communication media. Everyone can interact without limits, both known and unknown people through internet media, especially social media. The same is true in preaching. In the past, *ustadz* had to preach around, now people can access the da'wah of an *ustadz* they want without having to attend the place where the *ustadz* does his da'wah, through video. This video can be downloaded and distributed to others freely. This is an innovation of the *da'wah* method to fulfill the needs of the society in the aspect of spiritual strengthening which is currently being carried out in order to anticipate deviant teachings.

Of course, videos that are watched especially by the younger generation such as students related to the *da'wah* of an *ustadz* have certain benefits for him. This benefit is felt by the audience with his understanding of the video he watched. So that, it causes certain reactions for the audience. This is a phenomenon that is currently circulating both among students and in expressions on social media written by students regarding the *da'wah* of an *ustadz* which is a reaction from the students. Oftenly, pro and con comments coloring social media related to the *da'wah* delivered by an *ustadz*.

In commenting on social media, there is an attitude of language both politely and not politely. Language impoliteness can reflect violence, especially verbal violence. Someone who's not polite is always caused by several factors, (1) always driven by emotion when speaking, (2) always wanting to win the speech with the partner in every speech, (3) always having a bad attitude towards the speech partner, and (4) always be protective of his opinion [1]. In the end,

such actions will lead to verbal acts that contain elements of hate speech to a group of parties and not infrequently part of a person's individual becomes the target. This is what then triggers the understanding of radicalism, especially in this case religious radicalism. Religious radicalism is a religious behavior that requires drastic changes by taking a hard character that aims to realize certain targets [2]

From the background of the phenomena that have been stated above, this study plays a role in analyzing how far religious communication is built from *da'wah* delivered and obtained from online or social media between *da'wah* material and the understanding captured by the audience, in this case students, thus giving rise to a discourse of action radicalism and hate speech by viewers of a preacher's video of an *ustadz*. Furthermore, this study tries to formulate and provide input to related institutions on strategies that need to be carried out to maintain the understanding of the younger generation, especially students, in understanding *da'wah* which is radical and has content towards hate speech. Thus, a discourse on deradicalization and prevention and handling of hate speech will be created in the process of accelerating good and correct *da'wah* communication in accordance with the teachings and guidance of Islam.

2. Literature Review

From the searches that have been carried out, there are no previous studies that have examined religious communication in the phenomenon of online preaching *ustadz* and its implications for the discourse of radicalism and hate speech, especially those aimed specifically at students, in this case, students of Islamic State University North Sumatra (UIN SU) and State Islamic Intitute of Padangsidimpuan (IAIN Padangsidimpuan). However, there are several relevant studies related to the theory and discourse of radicalism and hate speech that have been previously studied by other writers.

First, the research entitled *Participatory Da'wah Communication Strategies in the Riau FSRMM Community in the Young Generation of Pekanbaru Riau Society* which was written by M. Hafidz Hasan [3]. In his writings, Hasan used communication theory that focuses on participatory *da'wah* communication. The results of his research show that the phenomenon of participatory *da'wah* communication strategy is very influential in educating the younger generation. Second, the article entitled *Sowan Kyai, Communication from the Javanese-Islamic Perspective* [4]. As the results, communication in the Javanese-Islamic perspective is more emphasized on three concepts, *Barokah*, *Tawadlu*, and referring to the former. The study concludes that the Islamic-Javanese perspective communication emphasizes balance, benefits for the surrounding environment, and respect for people who are wiser than just persuasive and transactional.

In this study, we use theory of communication that is devoted to *da'wah*. There are two types of definitions of communication. The first sees it as a process in which A sends a message to B to whom it has an effect. The second sees it as the negotiation and exchange of meaning, in which messages, people in culture, and reality interact so as to allow meaning to be generated or understanding to occur. In communication, John Fiske [5] suggests that there is a close relationship between the elements of culture and communication in building life relations together, especially in the midst of the times and mass communication technology. Without communication, culture will die, and consequently communication always involves cultural studies and integration.

3. Methods

This study uses descriptive qualitative research methods [6] which are commonly used to examine the natural conditions of objects. Qualitative research seeks to reveal the uniqueness of individuals, groups, communities or organizations universally, in detail, and in depth, in everyday life which can also be scientifically justified. Thus, it is expected to be able to produce an in-depth explanation of speech, writing, behavior, which can be observed from each individual, group, and community who is the object of research in a certain context and focuses on the limitations of research and things that are analyzed comprehensively and completely.

Data collection techniques used are questionnaires, observations, and interviews. Questionnaires are instruments in the survey method that are distributed to resource persons according to the needs of researchers. The results of the survey will then be analyzed using a quantitative descriptive method approach to answer how respondents interpret the online *da'wah* they watch.

This research was conducted at two state Islamic campuses in North Sumatra, the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) Padangsidempuan and the State Islamic University of North Sumatra, which are located in the capital city of North Sumatra, Medan. This study concerns students' understanding of the discourse of radicalism and hate speech in the online preaching of *ustadz*.

4. Results And Discussions

One of the *da'wah* strategies to be accepted by the recipients of *da'wah* messages is to convey the *da'wah* in a new and different way from other *da'i*. Therefore, each preacher has its own characteristics. To bring out the characteristics of the preacher himself, the preacher usually has the specificity of *da'wah*, especially in the material presented. There are preachers who only preach about fiqh, monotheism, hadiths, the *Qur'an*, and so on. Thus, the recipient of the *da'wah* message will know the specialization of a preacher from what he preaches.

In preaching in online media, preachers also usually choose online media that are most often accessed by the public or prospective recipients of *da'wah* messages. Online media platforms that are often used by the public, especially students today, are *YouTube*, *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Whatsapp*, and *Twitter*. Some of these online social media are widely used as main media by preachers.

Similar to preachers, people who receive the *da'wah* today not only receive *da'wah* from direct experience but also from online social media that exist today. The platform used is also the same as that used by preachers in online media. This shows that there has been significant progress made by both the preacher and the recipient of the *da'wah*.

In this study, we examined the communication behavior of students to gain knowledge, especially in the field of religion and saw the existence of discourses of radicalism and hate speech through *da'wah* delivered by preachers through online media. This *da'wah* communication behavior is carried out by looking at the reaction of the *da'wah* recipient on their understanding of the issues of radicalism and hate speech.

4.1. Factors That Influence The Inclusion Of Radicalism And Hate Speaking In Online Dakwah

The entry of radicalism and hate speech through online *da'wah* into people's minds to cause intentions and actions that have a negative impact can be seen from several factors. These factors are described as follows.

4.1.1. Media Usage

The application of online media to view, read, and watch the *da'wah* of an *ustadz* can be seen how often people access the media. Based on the results of this research at the two campuses where the research was conducted, it can be seen in the diagram below.

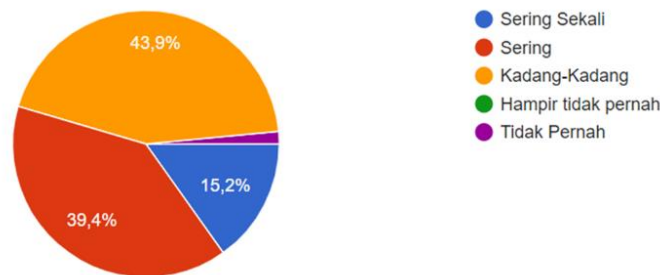


Diagram 1. Media Social Frequency Usage by IAIN Padang Sidempuan Students

From the diagram above, it can be seen that 43.9% of IAIN Padang Sidempuan students said "sometimes", 39.4% said often, 15.2% said very often and 1.5% said never. Meanwhile, UINSU students can be seen in the following diagram.

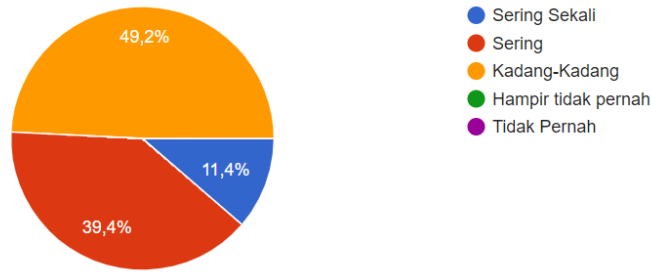


Diagram 2. Media Social Frequence Usage by UIN SU Students

From the two diagrams above, it shows that students from both IAIN Padangsidimpuan and UIN SU stated "sometimes" in watching the preaching video of the *ustadz*. While the frequency of "often" is in second place, and "very often" is in third. This shows that on average, students continue to watch the preaching of an *ustadz* through online media at a "quite frequent" frequency.

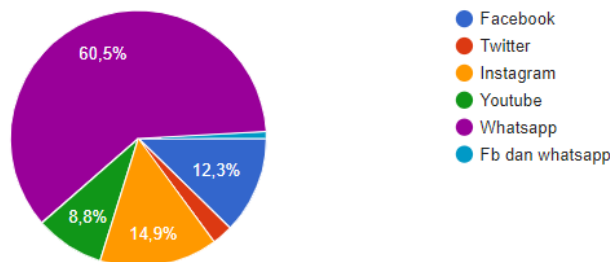


Diagram 3. Use of Social Media for UIN SU students

From the diagram above, we can see that the most widely used social media by UIN SU students is *Whatsapp* (60.5%). The second most used media is *Instagram* (14.9%), the third media is *Facebook*, the fourth is *Youtube* (8.8%), and the fifth is *Twitter* (2.6%).

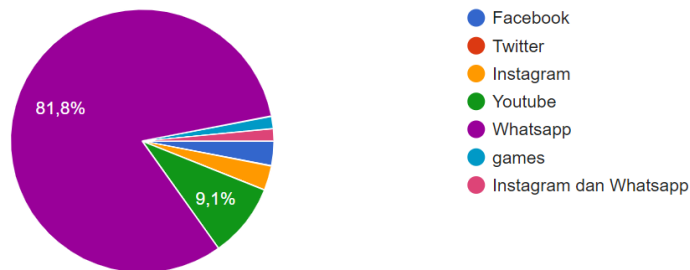


Diagram 4. Use of Social Media for IAIN Padang Sidimpuan Students

It can be seen in the diagram above that the most widely used use of social media by IAIN Padang Sidimpuan students is *Whatsapp* (81.8%). The second most used media is *Youtube* (9.1%), the third is *Instagram* (4%), the fourth is *Facebook* (3%), and the fifth is *Twitter* (2.6%).

Respondents generally stated that they often received *da'wah* through the online media *Whatsapp*. This is because the use of this media is easy and quite personal to its users. Personal means that, some content, both excerpts of sentences, *da'wah* stories, and videos, is sent through certain groups contained in the *whatsapp* application feature. The group where *da'wah* is most important is in the class group. Some students often share excerpts of sentences, *da'wah* stories, and videos of *da'wah* by one of *ustadz* through the class *whatsapp* groups with limited participants. In addition to making it easier to access, students can directly discuss the *da'wah* delivered by the *ustadz* to their classmates. Although sometimes some people have different views, this will not be conveyed to people outside the *whatsapp* group so that it does not create the possibility of religious conflicts due to widespread differences of opinion. In addition, in the group on the *whatsapp* online media, the conflict will stop if it is mediated by the emergence of

new videos or other topics that are not related to *da'wah* such as collecting lecture assignments and information from certain lecturers.

Different results were found when students were asked what media they used to only watch *da'wah* videos without any comments and discussions. UIN SU students prefer to watch *da'wah* videos from online social media *youtube* (53.8%) followed by *instagram* (29.5%), *facebook* (12.1%), *tiktok* (2.3%), and *whatsapp* (2%), and the last is *twitter* (0.8%). Meanwhile, IAIN Padang Sidimpuan students also like watching videos from social media *youtube* (77.3%) followed by *facebook* (12.1%), and *instagram* (10.6%). From the results obtained in the field, the use of *youtube* media which is a favorite when only watching *ustadz's* preaching videos is because the online media only focuses on videos so that the audience is focused on what they want to watch.

Thus, it is clear that the usage of online media is one of the main factors in influencing the notion of radicalism and hate speech. This is due to unlimited communication between online media users and other users, especially on individual posts that can be seen by many people and can be commented freely in the available columns so that it triggers other people to also comment to lead to hate speech and create enmity.

4.1.2. Knowledge

Knowledge is very important in life and the learning process. According to the online version of the KBBI [7], knowledge is everything that is known; cleverness; everything that is known regarding the subject (subject). Someone who has knowledge of something will not be easily influenced by something that has a negative impact, especially for himself and others. On the other hand, people without knowledge will be very easily influenced by other people's words so that the impacts that arise tend to lead to bad or negative things. Likewise, the notion of radicalism and hate speech.

Based on the results of the study, student knowledge is also one of the factors that influence the existence of radical understanding and hate speech in him. Students' understanding and knowledge of radical understanding and hate speech determines whether they consciously or not do things that lead to radicalism and hate speech itself.

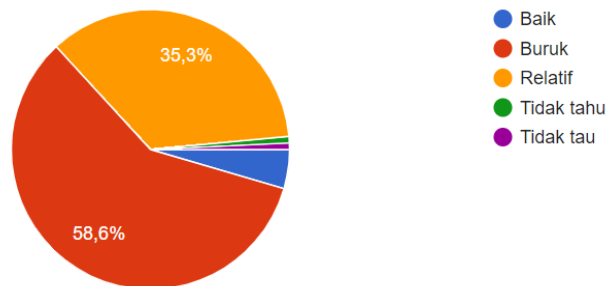


Diagram 5. student knowledge related to students radicalism at UIN SU

It can be seen in the diagram above that the most widely used use of social media by IAIN Padang Sidimpuan students is *Whatsapp* (81.8%). The second most used media is *Youtube* (9.1%), the third is *Instagram* (4%), the fourth is *Facebook* (3%), and the fifth is *Twitter* (2.6%).

From the diagram above, UIN SU students dominantly answered that radicalism was a bad understanding (58.6%) and as many as 35.3% stated it was relative. In addition, 4.5% said they were good and 1.6% said they didn't know.

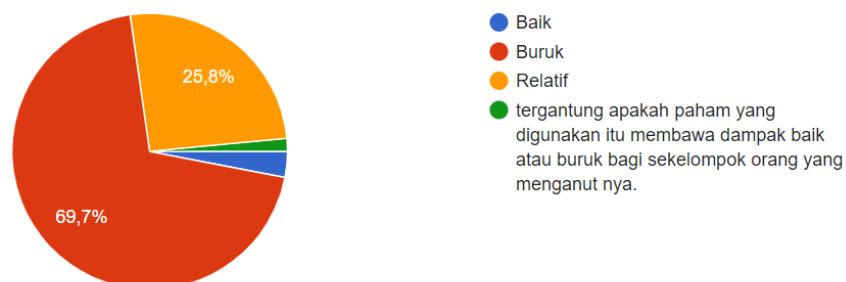


Diagram 6. student knowledge related to students radicalism at IAIN Padangsidimpuan

From the diagram above, IAIN Padang Sidempuan students dominantly answered that radicalism was a bad understanding (69.7%) and as many as 25.8% said it was relative. In addition, 3% said it was good and 1.5% said "depending on whether the understanding used has a good or bad impact on a group of people who adhere to it".

When viewed from the two diagrams, both IAIN Padangsidempuan and UIN SU, the dominant students answered that radicalism was a bad thing. This is in fact not only based on knowledge but based on the experience a person gains in obtaining that knowledge. In this case, it is in the form of radicalism. According to some students, radicalism is bad because based on their experience, radicalism tends to lead to misunderstandings about religion. Thus, a person has a mindset rooted in something fanatical. Radicalism is bad because there are groups or ideologies that use violence and coercion. It is also associated with government or the state and politics, especially in Indonesia. People who have an understanding of radicalism will tend to be anti-NKRI by opposing the state and violating state ideology so that they try to change it by means of coercion and violence.

According to students from both UIN SU and IAIN Padangsidempuan, hate speech is more of a statement issued by a person addressed to another person who has influence in society whose sentence contains an ambiguous meaning so that it can lead to speculation in the community and lead to the formation of camps that might lead to mutual hatred. Thus, hate speech is an attitude that must be avoided by looking for facts first related to the sentence or statement of the person who said it so that there are no mistakes that cause negative impacts.

From the data above, it can be concluded that students both at IAIN Padangsidempuan and UIN SU, have knowledge of hate speech and are able to detect dominant forms of hate speech which will have a negative impact in the form of hostility between others, the existence of camps in a system that can cause disunion.

4.2. Prevention And Management Of The Impact Of Radicalism And Hate Speaking On Social Media Internet

From what has been stated in the previous section, we summarize several designs in preventing and overcoming the impact of radicalism and hate speech on the online social media.

4.2.1. Literacy Strengthening

One of the most important elements in preventing and overcoming the impact of radicalism and hate speech on online social media is literacy. In the large online Indonesian dictionary, literacy is defined as the ability to write and read; knowledge or skills in a particular field or activity...; individual's ability to process information and knowledge for life skills [7].

The thing that is most emphasized in this case is the ability of students to process information and knowledge obtained from *da'wah* on online media. With this ability, students do not take for granted what is conveyed by the *ustadz*, especially those related to things that are poorly understood or confusing in their *da'wah* videos. Students must have curiosity to explore more about the material presented by the *ustadz*. Thus, the knowledge obtained is not only true, but is validated by several sources so that it is proven to be valid.

In addition, there is a need for student awareness to learn not only from one source but from several sources so that the knowledge and knowledge gained can be fully accounted for. By learning from several sources, we will enrich reading material and thoughts so we don't fall into certain ideologies that are conveyed through online media.

Furthermore, with an understanding of literacy, students always explore the ins and outs of the problem before it is used as a guide both in actions and words as well as thoughts. Thus, students can think critically and always provide a good alternative to a problem, especially regarding radicalism and hate speech.

With literacy awareness and carrying out literacy, students do not spread information that has not been identified as true. This will tend to lead to falsification of information which can be called a hoax. Dissemination of hoax information often triggers differences of opinion which lead to hate speech and the breakdown of unity.

With the strengthening of literacy among students, it will have a positive impact on various aspects of life. Not only religious problems, but social, cultural and economic problems can also be resolved properly. Students will realize that all words and actions have an impact, including what is said and thrown into online social media.

4.2.2. Harmonization Between Communication, Da'wah, And Students Understanding

The prevention of radicalism and hate speech will be realized if there are efforts to harmonize communication, *da'wah*, and public understanding. This harmony can be built if each party can understand and know the limitations of each in conveying something.

To harmonize the understanding of the community with the *da'wah* delivered, it is necessary to have easy communication. From this study, some *ustadz* are popular because of their ease in conveying information related to their *da'wah* so that people quickly understand the meaning of what is said along with examples in actions and words. *Da'wah* will be difficult to understand if the *ustadz* conveys the meaning of his statement by giving examples of what is happening in social life so that people guess what will happen next. Unlike the case with conveying intentions by exemplifying actions and words that have passed and become history. Thus, the public understands the meaning conveyed and can immediately think independently of what is happening.

Not infrequently the words or statements of the *ustadz* in online media cause debate among the public, especially students. People who are not literate will always carry on statements that are still controversial in the public, causing further debates to the point of prolonged social conflicts. Therefore, by aligning the understanding of the public and the *da'wah* delivered, communication will be well established. This is done by knowing in advance the problem so that what is conveyed does not come from unknown or only one-sided data.

In an effort to harmonize *da'wah* and public understanding through *da'wah* communication, *ustadz* are considered necessary to reduce personal ego in conveying *da'wah* and prioritize togetherness in brotherhood and unity. Conveying ego and personal opinions that lead to certain directions such as calling for revolution, changing ideology, and demeaning other people or other parties in *da'wah* are actions that can cause misperceptions in society. This is what can lead to radical thoughts and actions of the community that have a bad impact on him and others.

From the society side, it is necessary to have good communication between each other, especially those who have differences. This is known as tolerance. Tolerance in communication is a person's low self-esteem to be able to accept and measure reasonable limits in behaving both in actions and words. Thus, the existing differences are always enriching and not limiting. The two things above, if they can be applied in social life, will be able to have an impact on preventing and overcoming radicalism and hate speech in today's society, both in online media and in reality.

5. Conclusions

The communication that is built between online *da'wah* videos and student understanding related to radicalism and hate speech is characterized some factors, the use of media, knowledge, and the preachers, which lead to the relationship of factors that influence the understanding of radicalism and hate speech from online *da'wah*. Students, both from IAIN and UIN, quite understand the discourse of radicalism and hate speech in online *da'wah* videos delivered by the *ustadzs*. This can be seen from the attitude of students who give a fair view of the video of the *ustadz* they watched.

View from media usage, students can see the discourse of radicalism and hate speech in online media such as *youtube*, *instagram*, *facebook*, *whatsapp*, and *twitter*. Communication related to the discussion of *da'wah* is carried out using *whatsapp* media because it is more private and does not spread outside. Meanwhile, if the discussion is carried out on other online media through the comments column, it will cause a lot of debate and differences of opinion so that it tends to cause hate speech.

From the knowledge factor, students tend to be aware and understand the elements of radicalism and hate speech and are able to detect the dominant forms of hate speech that will have a bad impact. Students prefer *ustadz* who deliver *da'wah* in simple language and are also based on the understanding and knowledge gained after watching *ustadz's da'wah* videos such as providing insight into religion, being able to change perspectives, adding worship values, and being inspiring. In addition, there is an impact after watching a *da'wah* video is a change in actions and speech and thoughts. From the relationship of these factors, it can be seen that students have understood and realized the existence of radical understanding and hate speech in the *da'wah* of an *ustadz*.

The strategy taken so that students can choose *da'wah* content and not deviate from Islamic teachings by being carried away towards radicalism and hate speech is in two ways, strengthening literacy and harmonization between

communication, *da'wah*, and public understanding. Strengthening literacy needs to be done so that students do not take for granted what is conveyed by the ustadz, especially those related to things that are poorly understood or confusing in his *da'wah* videos. This is done with the awareness of students to learn not only from one source but from several sources so that they do not fall into certain ideologies that are conveyed through online media. In addition, by strengthening literacy, students can explore the ins and outs of problems before they are used as guidelines and think critically and not spread information that is not yet clear. In terms of harmonization, there is a harmony of thought and understanding between students as the community and the *ustadz* as a preacher so that the material presented is general material and does not contain ambiguity to the community or public.

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