

Ummatic Perspective of K.H. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim's Da'wah through YouTube

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine the *ummatic* perspective in KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Gus Baha)'s *da'wah (tabligh)* on YouTube, especially those broadcast through the *Santri Aswaja* YouTube channel. Methodologically, this study is a qualitative study with an Islamic communication approach using the *ummatic* concept of Hamid Mowlana. The study results showed several findings, namely *first*, Gus Baha emphasized the importance of understanding the differences in religious issues (*khilafiyah furuiyyah*) with an adequate knowledge basis. Knowledge will produce attitude wisdom amid differences. *Second*, Gus Baha emphasized the importance of networking relations between local religious authorities and global authorities. This is an attempt to build a globalized *ummah* and avoid locality claims that have the potential to divide the *ummah*. *Third*, Gus Baha emphasized the importance of *da'wah* which can build a good discourse in the public sphere instead of forcing *da'wah* (discourse) on the recipient. The preacher does not always have to aim at indoctrinating the recipient but can create a discourse that gives freedom to the recipient to accept or reject the *da'wah*. These three findings are relevant to Mowlana's concept of Islamic communication in the form of the *ummatic* principle that offers egalitarianism, rejects discrimination and domination, and encourages mutual understanding among people and differences in the exchanging information process.

Keywords: *New Media, Ummatic, Gus Baha, Tabligh, Da'wah.*

Abstrak

Makalah ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji perspektif *ummatic* dalam *dakwah (tabligh)* KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Gus Baha) di YouTube khususnya yang ditayangkan melalui channel YouTube *Santri Aswaja*. Secara metodologis, kajian ini merupakan kajian kualitatif dengan pendekatan komunikasi Islam menggunakan konsep *ummatic* dari Hamid Mowlana. Hasil kajian menunjukkan beberapa temuan, yaitu *pertama*, Gus Baha menekankan pentingnya mendekati perbedaan masalah keagamaan (*khilafiyah furuiyyah*) dengan ilmu. Ilmu akan menghasilkan kebijaksanaan dalam bersikap di tengah perbedaan. *Kedua*, Gus Baha menekankan pentingnya jejaring relasi antara otoritas keagamaan lokal dengan otoritas global. Ini merupakan upaya untuk membangun umat yang menggelobal dan menghindari klaim lokalitas yang berpotensi memecah belah umat. *Ketiga*, Gus Baha menekankan pentingnya dakwah yang mampu membangun diskursus yang baik di ruang publik bukan memaksakan kehendak kepada penerima dakwah. Pendakwah tidak harus



selalu bertujuan untuk mengindoktrinasi penerima tetapi dapat menciptakan diskursus yang memberikan kebebasan kepada penerima untuk menerima atau menolak dakwah. Tiga temuan ini relevan dengan konsep komunikasi Islam dalam bentuk prinsip *ummatic* dari Mowlana yang menawarkan egalitarianism, menolak diskriminasi dan dominasi, serta mendorong kesaling-pahaman antar orang dan antar perbedaan dalam proses pertukaran informasi.

Kata Kunci: Media Baru, Keummatan, Gus Baha, Tabligh, Da'wah.

Introduction

The implementation of *da'wah* (*tabligh*) activities in the realm of YouTube's new media requires a variety of relevant approaches. Errors in formulating *da'wah* language can cause social conflict in society. The Islamic communication model as open communication that rejects discrimination and domination in the information sharing and exchanging process can be an approach to *da'wah* problems in new media caused by some mistakes of preachers. Hence, Hamid Mowlana (2007) suggests some Islamic communication values in responding to destructive media activities.

Previous studies on Islamic communication can be divided into two trends. *First*, the study of Islamic communication in the theoretical-conceptual area as done by Hamid Mowlana who discusses the perspective of Islamic theory and communication (2007); Ayish (2003) who sees Islamic communication based on the Arab Islamic worldview; Kusnadi et al (2021) on the principles of Islamic communication in the Quran; and Faizal Kasmani et al (2017) about the Islamic communication paradigm. There is also a study by Koroglu & Tingoy (2011) who focuses on the principles of Islamic communication in the comparison of the West and Turkey (Islam), and Khiyabani (2013) on criticism of Mowlana's Islamic communication model. *Second*, the studies that focus on how Islamic communication is implemented in various social lives, such as Harun who focuses on discussing the role of Islamic communication in building organizations (2021); Tahir & Rayhaniah who writes about the implementation of Islamic communication in the digital era (2021); Hamdan who studies the role of Islamic communication in responding to human rights issues in Indonesia (2020), and Fikruzzaman & Arsyad who discusses the application of Islamic communication among religious students (*santri*).

However, from these studies, no studies have discussed Islamic communication in the context of new media, especially YouTube. Studies that are close to this are Nuratiqoh's studies on the spiritualization of social media for *da'wah* purposes (2020) and Adeni (2021) on the need for morals in new media to deal with hoaxes. In fact, the study of Islamic communication in the context of new media needs to be carried out because new media that are full of openness are in line with the nature of Islamic teachings that promote inclusiveness in the process of sharing information in the public sphere.

One of the interesting *da'wah* activities discussed in new media is the *da'wah* conducted by K.H. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Gus Baha) on the theme "*Cara Cerdas Gus Baha Menyikapi Perbedaan NU dan Muhammadiyah*" (*Gus Baha's Smart Way to Respond to the Differences between NU and Muhammadiyah*). This title appears on the *Santri Aswaja* YouTube channel. The interesting thing is that this title reflects the nature of Islamic communication in the form of *ummatic* values. *The ummatic* is one of the principles of Islamic communication offered by Hamid Mowlana (2007) strengthened by Bakti (2020) who views that the principle of *the ummah* is important in the implementation of *da'wah* communication (*tabligh*) in the public sphere. *Ummatic*, which

emphasizes information egalitarianism, anti-domination, and information disclosure, becomes relevant to the nature of new media.

On that basis, this article is intended to fill the gap in the study of Islamic communication in new media, especially those related to the YouTube platform that previous researchers have not studied. This study will explore what *ummatic* perspective is offered by KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim in preaching Islam through YouTube.

Gus Baha is a unique preacher figure. What differentiates him from other preachers is (1) his simple personality, always appearing as he is; (2) his always looking for a middle way in every socio-religious problem faced by society; (3) his ability to combine the pure traditions of Islamic boarding schools with an open, egalitarian way of thinking. Gus Baha's inclusive preaching thinking was greatly influenced by its simplicity resulting from the Islamic boarding school tradition.

Method

The research method used is qualitative research. This was chosen because the data is narrative in nature which requires in-depth interpretation. We use an Islamic communication approach, especially the *ummatic* perspective of Hamid Mowlana. According to Mowlana (2007), in *tabligh* activities (delivering information), one of the principles to be considered is the *ummatic* or community principle. Mowlana's concept of the *ummah* can be summarized in the following points. *First*, the *ummah* avoids excess and extravagance, encourages steadfastness and consistency, knows what to accept and what to reject, and can adapt to changing human life. *Second*, the *ummah* is based on equality, justice, and people's ownership. No individual or class of individuals dominates, exploits, or damages the state. *Third*, the *ummah* emphasizes intercultural and inter-religious relations that know and understand each other following the demands of the Qur'an, 'We created you from one (pair) of male and female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you know each other (not so that you hate each other).' *Fourth*, under the *ummah*, Islam has a new concept of society. One of the most important aspects of the *ummah* is that Islam does not discriminate between individuals as members of its community. Race, ethnicity, ethnicity, and nationalism cannot differentiate one member of society from another, because all people are equal under the *ummah*. The factors of nationality, cultural differences, and geography can indeed be acknowledged, but domination based on certain nationalities (groups) is highly challenged.

This concept is used to analyze how K.H. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Gus Baha) presents *da'wah* based on the principle of *ummah* which is part of Islamic communication. The assumption built is that Gus Baha does not problematize the differences among religious groups but he emphasizes the meeting point among groups with mutual understanding.

The data in this study are obtained by using documentation techniques, namely (1) listening; (2) observing; (3) and making notes on Gus Baha's *da'wah/tabligh* in a video entitled "*Cara Cerdas Gus Baha Menyikapi Perbedaan NU dan Muhammadiyah*" (*Gus Baha's Smart Way to respond to the Differences between NU and Muhammadiyah*) as seen at figure 1. The data obtained are processed and analyzed with the *ummatic* concept from Hamid Mowlana.



Figure 1. KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim's Da'wah

Result and Discussion

The study of the video "Gus Baha's Smart Way to Respond to the Differences between NU and Muhammadiyah" found several important things that could strengthen the *ummatic* thesis in da'wah communication delivered by Gus Baha. There are at least three important things obtained from the application of documentation techniques in the video. *First*, the difference (*khilafiyah*) among Muslim groups can be resolved by returning to the tradition of knowledge, not identity politics. *Second*, local-global *ummatic* network for the strength of the *ummah*. *Third*, let the 'discourse' happen.

1. 4Problems of *Khilafiyah* and Studying (*Meng-Ilmui*) the Differences

One of the important values in *ummatic* (Mowlana, 2007) is the urgency of equality and the loss of dominance among groups amid differences as well as suggestions for understanding and recognizing those differences. Gus Baha views that the differences in the *furu'iyyah* issues need not be exaggerated because from the beginning it has become a *khilafiyah* among the scholars (ulama). Regarding a different Islamic practice between Islamic groups, there is no need for a long debate. Gus Baha gave an example of the *Tablilan* tradition which is given to the dead by saying:

*"Kita berkeyakinan bahwa sedekah dan tablilan itu sampai ke mayit. Kata Mbah Ali Ma'sum, itu adalah masalah *furu' khilafiyah*, sehingga tidak perlu menjadi masalah berkelanjutan, baik yang menuntut melakukan itu atau yang menuntut menentang itu. Sing melakoni monggo, sing nentang monggo. Selama ini kan kita yang melakukan memaksa orang lain menerima, yang menentang memaksa orang lain menghentikan. Ini tidak fair kata Mbah Ali."*

"We believe that sedekah and tablilan reach the dead. Mbah Ali Ma'sum said, it is a furu' khilafiyah problem, so it doesn't need to be an ongoing problem, either demanding to do it or demanding against it. Those who do are welcome, and those who oppose are welcome. So far, we are the ones who force others to accept, and those who oppose force others to stop. This is not fair, said, Mbah Ali."

Gus Baha strengthened his opinion with a view on the authority of the *sanad*. Anyone can be different as long as each has a *sanad* or authority to follow. *Sanad* relates to the scientific authority which is the basis of every religious practice. Gus Bah says:

"Kalaun yang melarang yasinan dan tablilan dikirim ke mayit itu punya mustanad, bagi yang membolehkan juga punya sanad. Masalah khilafiyah tidak perlu jadi perdebatan dan konflik. Saya sampaikan ke santri Krapyak, sebenarnya masalah kita ini tercerabut dari ilmu."

"Those who forbid Yasinan and Tablilan to be sent to the dead have mustanad and those who allow it also has a sanad. The problem of khilafiyah does not need to be a debate and conflict. I conveyed to the Krapyak students, our problem is uprooted from knowledge."

This shows that Gus Baha sees the fundamental problem in the body of the Muslim *Ummah* as a question of being uprooted from knowledge. The long debate internally within the Muslims community occurs because Muslims forget knowledge. Adhering to knowledge will give birth to a wise attitude in religion, by not easily judging others just because they are different, but trying to understand the position of others with knowledge.

Gus Baha then explains how the difference in understanding (knowledge) had occurred among the scholars (ulama) of the past schools of thought in *furujiyah* matters, such as between those who practice *Qunut* and those who do not:

"Coba dari awal kita katakan, yang tidak qunut itu Abu Hanifah, yang qunut itu Imam Syafii. Maka melihat orang tidak qunut itu keren karena ikut Hanafi. Yang Qunut juga keren karena pengikut mazhab Syafii. Tapi kita di zaman akhir, Qunut dan tidak qunut menjadi politik identitas, sehingga yang ga Qunut adalah Muhammadiyah, yang qunut adalah NU. Mana Mbah Hasyim Asy'ari sebagai mujaddi/mujathid yang mengharuskan qunut atau Mbah Ahmad Dahlan yang melarang Qunut. Wong mereka berdua pernah mengaji sama Syaikh Minangkabau dan Mbah Mahfudz ketika di Mekkah. Jadi cobalah ilmu itu diperkuat sehingga kita mengatakan qunut adalah sunnah bagi imam syafii, dan tidak sunat bagi abu hanifah."

"Let's say from the beginning, the one who didn't qunut was Abu Hanifah, the one who did qunut was Imam Shafii. So seeing people who don't do qunut is good because they follow Hanafi. As for those who do not do Qunut, it is also good because they are followers of the Shafii School. But in this day and age, doing and not doing Qunut become identity politics, so the one who doesn't perform Qunut is Muhammadiyah, and the one who does qunut is NU. Where is Mbah Hasyim Asy'ari as a mujaddi/mujathid who requires qunut or Mbah Ahmad Dahlan who forbids Qunut. Both of them had studied with Shaykh Minangkabau and Mbah Mahfudz when they were in Mecca. So try to strengthen that knowledge so that we say qunut is a sunnah for Imam Shafii and not sunnah for Abu Hanifah."

It seems Gus Baha views that the internal differences of Muslims are often obscured by the interests of identity politics. Of course, in this context, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah are only representations of the internal differences of Muslims in Indonesia and even the world, because they are both mainstream Islamic groups, but more broadly it

includes other non-mainstream groups. Gus Baha drew the discussion about NU and Muhammadiyah to the context of the lives of the intellectual actors of these two organizations, namely K.H. Ahmad Dahlan and K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari. Gus Baha views them as great figures, thinkers, scientists, *mujtabids*, and reformers. In history whose lives are oriented toward science/knowledge and charity, and are not considered representations of identity politics at all. Both had studied with the same teacher although they had different ways of social-religious movements in the community.

Because it is based on knowledge, the emphasis is on discourse, not emotion. It can be seen in Gus Baha's statement when he emphasizes the discourse regarding the practice of *Qunut* and not doing *Qunut*. In conveying this issue, Gus Baha does not necessarily defend NU as an organization to which he is affiliated, but he gives freedom of discourse to other groups that do not have *Qunut*. It says:

"Saya pernah ngaji sama Mbah Mun, diberitahu kalau pun Rasulullah pernah Qunut sekali, biasanya perdebatan kan, oke Rasulullah pernah Qunut tapi ahyanan. Pertanyaannya adalah setiap Nabi melakukan sesuatu, akan menjadi sunnatan muttabah atau tidak. Tentu jawabannya iya. Rasulullah puasa Senin-Kamis juga ahyanan, tidak selalu, Rasulullah tafa rakiban juga ahyanan, tidak selalu. Tapi apapun yang dilakukan Nabi, akan berstatus sunnah sampai hari kiamat. Sebingga, karena di hadist itu ahyanan, ini boleh dilakukan hanya ahyanan karena nabi melakukannya hanya ahyanan. Sekali Nabi melakukan itu, dan tidak dibatalkan lewat nasikh mansukh, maka kesunnatan itu sampai hari kiamat. sehingga imam Syafii, cara berpikir meskipun Nabi Qunut ahyanan, kalaupun itu ahyanan tentu qunut itu akan sunnah sampai hari kiamat. Bagi yang tidak mensunnatkan, mongo, itu ada Abu Hanifah. Maka kata Mbah Ma'sum, di sini diberi muqaddimah, wahuwa min masail al-furu al-khilafiyah, fala yajuzu bisya'nihi itsaratul khitian wal jidal wal inkar ala al-qail wa al-amili bish wa ala al-mukhalif. Jadi kita sendiri disarankan beliau, kamu tidak nantang debat sama mukholif, karena dari awal sudah masalah-maslah khilaf."

"I once studied with Mbah Mun, I was told that even if the Prophet had Qunut once, usually the debate was that Prophet Muhammad had Qunut but occasionally. The question is whether every Prophet doing something, will be a sunnatan muttaba'ah (sunnah to be followed) or not. Of course, the answer is yes. Rasulullah fasted Monday-Thursday also occasionally, not always, Rasulullah tafa rakiban also occasionally, not always. But whatever the Prophet did, it would be a sunnah until the Day of Resurrection. Once the Prophet did that, and it was not canceled through the text of mansukh, then the sunnah of qunut was valid until the Day of Resurrection. So Imam Shafii thought that even if the Prophet performed Qunut occasionally, it would still be a sunnah until the Day of Resurrection. For those who did not say the sunnah of qunut, they follow Abu Hanifah. So Mbah Ma'sum mentioned in muqaddimah of his book, 'wahuwa min masail al-furu al-khilafiyah, fala yajuzu bisya'nihi itsaratul khitian wal jidal wal inkar ala al-qail wa al-amili bish wa ala al-mukhalif.' So, we are advised by him not to oppose the debate with mukhalif because from the beginning it has been a matter of khilafiyah."

Gus Baha's position is in line with the *ummatic* principle in the concept of Islamic communication initiated by Hamid Mowlana (2007). The *tabligh/da'wah* process carried out by Gus Baha places NU and Muhammadiyah as two equal camps, no one more than the other. Mowlana said that "*the ummah* emphasizes intercultural and inter-religious relations that know and understand each other" (Mowlana, 2007). Internal differences in religion are necessary because God has destined humans to be different and the task of humans is to recognize these

differences by studying or understanding those differences. From here the *ummah* is created when each group does not feel the most dominant over the others while the others are submissive (Mowlana, 2007). Gus Baha's recommendation to learn about differences is an important value in the development of the *ummah*. Also, the *ummah* rejects all destructive identity tendencies.

2. Local-Global *Ummatic* Network

Gus Baha discusses religious debates in local and global contexts. There is an opinion among some that certain religious practices are only carried out by local Ulama, such as the tradition of *Tablilan* (sending rewards to people who have died) so that it is considered unacceptable by the Ulama in the global world. Gus Baha responds to this issue by saying:

'Menyangkut tsawabul qiraat atau tsawabul khair apakah sampai ke mayit atau tidak? Mbah Ali Ma'sum justru menukil Ibn Taymiyah yang notabene sering dipakai dalilnya oleh para orang-orang sana. Kita sekarang tidak pernah kayak Mbah Ali Ma'sum, pakai dalil boleh hadiah pahala kepada mayit berdasarkan pendapat Ibn Taymiyah dan Ibn Qayyim. Seakan-akan Ibn Taymiyah itu pasti orang yang melarang itu, sehingga kita terus mengatakan bahwa yang menyuntikkan tablilan siapa, Mbah Hasyim, atau Mbah Faqih atau siapalah, meskipun riwayat ini mukhtalifah dari Mbah Hasyim. Kesannya adalah bahwa yang membolehkan hanya kiyai lokal, kiyai nasional, padahal zaman Mbah Ali, sudah mengajarkan kita, yang membolehkan menghadiahkan perbuatan baik kepada mayit, Yasin, Fatihah, dan Tahlil kepada mayit adalah orang sekaliber Ibn Taymiyah dan Ibn Qayyim, sehingga andaikan kita pakai ilmiah yang diterapkan Mbah Ali Ma'sum, kita merasa orang keren, orang global, karena di tingkat lokal guru-guru kita Mbah Ali Ma'sum dan Mbah Hamid biasa mentahllili semua guru-gurunya, dan di level global ada Ibn Taymiyah dan Ibn Qayyim, tapi karena kita tidak membaca, seakan-akan tablilan itu hanya tradisi lokal, yang tidak di-ACC / tidak setuju ulama kelas internasional. Jelas diceritakan bahwa Ibnu Taymiyah berpendapat, membaca al-Quran yang dibadiahkan kepada mayit atau tablil, jadi ini sangat penting, supaya orang itu pakai tradisi ilmu.'

'Regarding tsawabul qiraat or tsawabul khair, does it reach the corpse (janazah) or not? Mbah Ali Ma'sum actually quoted Ibn Taymiyya, whose argument was often used by the Salafis. We are now never like Mbah Ali Ma'sum, using the argument of the possibility of giving gifts to the dead (Tablilan) based on the opinions of Ibn Taymiyah and Ibn Qayyim. It is as if it was Ibn Taymiyah who forbade it, and we keep saying that it was Mbah Hasyim, or Mbah Faqih or anyone who advocated tablilan, even though this history is mukhtalifah (uncertain) from Mbah Hasyim. The impression is that only local kiai or national kiai allow tablilan, whereas during Mbah Ali's time, we have been taught that the scholars who allow giving reward (Yasin, Fatihah, and Tablilan) to the dead are people like Ibn Taymiyah and Ibn Qayyim. That is if we use knowledge. Based on that, we feel that we are good and global people because at the local level our teachers (Mbah Ali Ma'sum and Mbah Hamid) do tablilan, and at the global level there are Ibn Taymiyah and Ibn Qayyim who do tablilan, but because we If we don't read (we don't study), it's as if tablilan is just a local tradition, which is not approved by international class scholars. It is clear that Ibn Taymiyya was of the view that it is permissible to read the Qur'an, which was awarded to the deceased as a reward. So it's very important that we use the tradition of knowledge.'

Gus Baha attempts to build scientific relations between local scholars and the global community. This shows the *ummatic* orientation in Gus Baha's *tabligh/da'wah*. Gus Baha does not view the *furu'iyah* issue as purely a local problem but has become a global problem. In this way, religious practice which is included in *furu'iyah* issues cannot be accused as something that deviates from the discourse of global Ulama, but instead local Ulama relate to global Ulama in

a scientific network. Viewed from the *ummatic* point of view, it seems that da'wah communication carried out on *ummatic* principles will negate various partial subjective tendencies that can damage the order of the *ummah*. In turn, the connectedness of local communities with the global produces a global *ummatic* in which differences are no longer considered as triggers for conflict but rather as something that must be treated and as a source of strength.

3. Letting the 'Discourse' Happen

In preaching (*tabligh*), the task of the preacher is to create a discourse, to invite people to think about something the preacher conveys. Da'wah cannot always be interpreted as a process of indoctrination where the message must be accepted by the recipient, but da'wah can be directed as an effort to stimulate the public to think and have a discourse. The creation of discourse indicates that there has been a healthy public space where people can exchange ideas. Gus Baha says:

"Lalu terakhir, pilihan-pilihan terus kemudian tetap memunculkan polemik, saya mau terangkan cerita lucu di Ihya. Ihya yang katanya kitab sakral, punya sisi lucu. Nabi Musa sebagai Nabi Bani Israil itu sering digugat, karena Israil itu senang debat. Nabi Musa minta ijazah ya Allah, saya dikasih ijazah supaya orang itu tidak berkata buruk sama saya, semuanya muji saya. Jawabannya Allah itu unik, 'ya Musa, hadza syaiun lam asna'hu linafsi, fakaika asnuhu bika. Aku pengarane sering disalahpahami, apa meneh kue, katanya. Saya ini Tuhan, yang mengatakan saya punya anak ya banyak, yang menyebut saya bakhil ya banyak, yang salah paham dengan saya banyak, padahal saya ini Tuhan. Kalau saya mau, tak bungkam semua itu orang, itu saja tidak aku lakukan. Apalagi dirimu Nabi."

"Then lastly, the choices that then continue to cause polemics, I want to explain a funny story in Ihya Uluiddin Book. Yes, what is said to be a sacred book also has a funny side. Prophet Musa as the Prophet of the Bani Israel was often sued because Israel liked to debate. Moses asked Allah so that people would not say bad things about him, and all of them praised him. Allah's answer is unique, 'Yes Musa, hadza syaiun lam asna'hu linafsi, fakaifa asnuhu laka. I'm God but often misunderstood, what else are you, He said. I am God, but those who say I have children are many; who call me stingy (stingy) yes a lot; many misunderstand me, even though I am God. If I wanted to, I would silence all those people that are all I didn't do. Moreover, you are the only Prophet."

It is a form of da'wah attitude in a heterogeneous society. Not all people can accept da'wah and should be based on it in accordance with the statement of the Quran that "*there is no compulsion in embracing religion.*" The task of the preacher is only to remind or convey (*fadzakkir, wama alayna illa al-balagh al-mubin*), then it is returned to the recipient to change or remain in his position (unchanged). This is in line with the *ummatic* value as a principle of Islamic communication from Hamid Mowlana (2007) that exaggeration must be avoided and at the same time, people are encouraged to be steadfast and consistent and adapt to changing human life. Thus, da'wah with an open mind and heart is something that a preacher must have in the public sphere.

4. Urgency of *Ummatic* Principles in New Media

In the introductory part of this paper, it has been emphasized that the principles of Islamic communication can be applied in the context of new media. New media that are free and open, as well as interactive, produce a da'wah space that is different from conventional da'wah space. In the new media, da'wah has shifted from just an effort to Islamize many people to an orientation to spread goodness and build discourse (Adeni, 2022). Da'wah with the notion

of 'spreading goodness and strengthening discourse' requires that da'wah is not carried out in extreme ways but prioritizes justice and rejects discrimination. Thus, da'wah with this orientation requires a set of underlying values, including those based on *ummatic* principles.

The *ummatic* principle (2007) offered by Hamid Mowlana provides the basis for *tabligh* activities in the public sphere of new media. YouTube as one of the new media platforms provides a variety of features that can build a discourse between the sender and the recipient of da'wah. YouTube also provides a comment column where the sender and receiver of da'wah can interact with each other (Holmes, 2004). *Ummatic* which emphasizes the equality of information rejects the dominating attitude between users in the process of exchanging information.

Departing from here, Islamic da'wah activities based on *ummatic* principles can bridge between *ummah* and national orientations. The principle of *ummah* does not recognize the existence of a second-class society, rejects discrimination against minorities, fights tyranny and colonialism, and fights for justice and social welfare. Everyone is equal under the umbrella of *ummah*. In the context of Indonesia, it is of course in line with the spirit of nationalism.

In sharing and exchanging information (say religious information) this *ummatic*-based Islamic communication is different from the communication tradition offered by conventional models from the West which are more one-way in nature as known from the Shanon & Weaver model for example (1961) that tends to make information a product or commodity that is tailored to the interests of the information owner. Not infrequently the rulers and controllers of information are those who control the media. Meanwhile, *ummatic*-based Islamic communication encourages an open communication model, a communication activity that makes information a moral imperative, not a commodity (Mowlana, 2007). This avoidance of a mere commodity orientation makes *ummatic*-based Islamic communication focus on development, intelligence, and community enlightenment.

In the realm of new media, preaching with a moral imperative base becomes a necessity. It is done to restore the activity of exchanging and sharing information as a basic human need to continue to grow. Ibn Khaldun said that "development is produced by the power of information and the power of community" (1967). The presence of new media is an important means to support the community to grow and develop to be more advanced. Even Sardar saw that the media era was an era that brought Muslims back to the scientific tradition that Muslims had in the early days where people were free to think, discuss and express opinions in public. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) facilitates distributive and decentralized scientific networks, provides new potential for gathering religious knowledge, and reopens the "door of *ijtihad*" concerning sacred texts abandoned by Muslims five centuries ago (Sardar, 1993). However, at the same time, new media also has the potential to foster individualism where people can have their orientation even for destructive purposes. Often information related to a fact is processed in such a way that it shifts from the fact. For this reason, based on the *ummatic* principle, communication activities are directed at strengthening discourse in the public sphere to spread goodness.

This *ummatic* principle is reinforced by the findings of the data in this study. What Gus Baha offered about the three principles of preaching in public, especially through new media, is relevant for discussion. Gus Baha reflects on the three characteristics of *tabligh* in new media, namely (1) *khilafyah* and the necessity to learn about differences; (2) *ummatic* local-global network; (3) creating discourse. These three characters can be a reference in da'wah's activities in new media.

New media of religion/*da'wah* can be a place where religious people strengthen their respective authority (Bauwens, 1996; Campbell, 2007). New media as sharing media are a means to introduce others to their identity and existence and at the same time, other communities introduce their identity to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding (Everett, 2013). Each group in the new media room can present their respective arguments regarding a topic. Thus,

differences are based on science/knowledge, not emotion. Differences based on knowledge will encourage maturity.

In addition, in the realm of new media, to achieve a broader good, the scientific discourse built must be based on network relations between local and global contexts (Bunt, 2022; Zuhri, 2019), so that religious problems considered a source of conflict can be resolved within global scientific network. Scientific discourse between local and global is needed to avoid conflicts of interest among groups. On the other hand, by emphasizing local-global relations of Islam, the universal mission of Islam can be achieved. This value is part of *the ummatic* principle that Mowlana emphasizes. In the context of new media, efforts to strengthen local-global relations are very easy because any content shared via YouTube, for example in Indonesia, can be accessed by other communities in other parts of the world. The spirit of globalizing Islam as a religion is the biggest dream of *ummatic* principles that can be facilitated by new media.

On the other hand, if there is a rejection or denial of a religious thought coming from a certain group or individual, then it can be considered reasonableness that should not be questioned (Bakti, 2021). That's because da'wah in the new media space is indeed more appropriately oriented as da'wah to create discourse and provoke people to think, and then freely accept or reject it. Letting the recipients discourse with a da'wah message is a necessity rather than forcing them.

Islamic da'wah via YouTube requires a communication model that should be different from conventional communication models. *The ummatic*-based Islamic communication model via YouTube can be described in the following points. *First*, *Ummatic* is an egalitarian social system that rejects discrimination and domination, as well as encourages interconnectedness and mutual understanding. The distribution of information between people is built based on equality. *Second*, in this context, preachers (*da'i*) are those who invite to goodness in a way that is not coercive, does not discriminate, and does not dominate. *Third*, *Mad'ūn* is people who are free to accept and reject messages, are not dominated, and are critical of every da'wah message they receive (Adeni, 2020). *Fourth*, the message of da'wah is the discourse, something that can still be interpreted, not something final. Thus, the relationship between the sender and the receiver is an equal and non-binding relationship. Both can be preachers and recipients of da'wah at the same time. The relationship between the two is a scientific relation. *Fifth*, the media used is open media that is free of access and can strengthen globalization and the universalization of Islam.

Conclusion

The description in this paper supports Hamid Mowlana's concept of *ummatic* which is a principal part of Islamic communication. An analysis of KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim's da'wah via YouTube *Santri Aswaja* resulted in the finding that Gus Baha emphasizes three things in his da'wah, namely, *first*, understanding differences. He does not view differences as something that must be constantly questioned, but the way out for differences is to return to knowledge. Knowledge makes people mature in religion amid differences.

Second, emphasizes local-global community network relations. Gus Baha views the importance of connecting every problem of *khilafiyah* in the local context with the discourse in the global world. It is intended to create a wider relationship in religion so that an issue of *khilafiyah* is not considered a particular group problem but a common problem that must be controlled together as well. Of course, this can encourage the creation of an open mind. *Third*, prioritizing discourse rather than imposing one's will. Gus Baha views the need for preachers who are not easily emotional by forcing their own will on the recipients of da'wah. At the same time, the preacher is required to understand (accept) the rejection of the recipient. It is done so

that da'wah becomes a process of strengthening discourse, growing the power of community criticism, not just indoctrination as is often the case so far.

These three things are following the *ummatic* principle which emphasizes equality, justice, anti-discrimination, and anti-domination between people. *Da'wah/taligh* activities carried out through new media (YouTube) which are full of openness, of course, can refer to these values as a foundation. The openness of YouTube is relevant to the spirit of the *ummah* values.

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