

Trends in the Transmission of Religious Knowledge on Social Media: A Study of Gus Iqdam's Official YouTube Channel

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Abstract: This study examines Gus Iqdam Official's YouTube channel as a representation of a new trend in the process of transmitting religious knowledge. This article aims to examine this phenomenon from the perspective of religious mediatization, the factors behind its emergence, and the impact given by the process of transmitting religious knowledge in new media. The findings illustrate that Gus Iqdam Official represents a form of transformation of the role of the media in taking the role of the process of availability of religious knowledge in digital era. This is due to the increased strengthening of the media's role in the lives of people, which forms a new habitus of accessing religious knowledge. Additionally, the presence of "Gus Iqdam Official" shows that traditional religious authorities can civilize with new media and assert Gus Iqdam's religious authority.

Keywords: Gus Iqdam Official, transmission of religious knowledge, *da'wahainment*, religious authority.

Abstrak: Studi ini mengkaji kanal YouTube "Gus Iqdam Official" sebagai representasi tren baru dalam proses transmisi ilmu agama. Secara spesifik, artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji fenomena tersebut dari perspektif mediatisasi keagamaan, faktor-faktor yang melatarbelakangi kemunculannya, dan dampak yang diberikan oleh proses transmisi ilmu agama di media baru. Hasil penelitian ini menyatakan bahwa kanal youtube Gus Iqdam merepresentasikan bentuk transformasi peran media dalam mengambil peran proses ketersediaan ilmu agama di era digital. Hal ini disebabkan oleh semakin menguatnya peran media dalam kehidupan masyarakat, yang lebih lanjut membentuk habitus baru dalam mengakses ilmu agama. Selain itu, kehadiran kanal "Gus Iqdam Official" menunjukkan bahwa otoritas keagamaan tradisional dapat beradaptasi dengan media baru dan memperkuat otoritas keagamaan Gus Iqdam.

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Introduction

The *da'wah* activity represented by the Gus Iqdam Official (@gusiqdamofficial1024, n.d.) YouTube channel shows a new trend in the transmission of religious knowledge. The trend of transmitting religious knowledge that is usually carried out directly in a religious council (conventional) began to utilize new media based on the virtual world (internet). This trend shift occurs along with the increasingly strengthening role of new media in people's lives. This new media not only plays a role in facilitating conventional communication, but also in obtaining information, and knowledge, filling spare time, and even replacing the role of humans at once (Fakhruroji, 2021, p. 37). In this regard, Gus Iqdam Muhammad Khalid, the owner of the Gus Iqdam Official YouTube channel, also began to use YouTube social media as a medium to convey religious knowledge that can be accessed by the wider community. It's just that the process that occurs is not only carried out on YouTube social media but also carried out directly at the Mambaul Hikam II Islamic Boarding School Blitar which is also the headquarters of Majelis Ta'lim Sabilu Taubah. This fact confirms that the transmission of religious knowledge can not only be done limited to conventional patterns but can also be through new media, which in this case is YouTube.

This article departs from three study trends that place Gus Iqdam Official as the object of study. First, a study that pays attention to the *da'wah* method used in Gus Iqdam Official (Candra & Anam, 2023; Irawan & Radiamoda, 2023; Mubarokah et al., 2023; Pratama & Setyawan, 2023; Rofiq, 2023; Salafuddin et al., 2023; Yunita et al., 2023; Zamroni, 2023). Candra, Anam, Pratama, and Setiawan, for example, mentioned that rhetorically, the Islamic *da'wah* method used by Gus Iqdam Official fulfills a strong ethos scheme of knowledge and sincerity conveyed directly and expressively. Second, the study that focuses on Gus Iqdam's *da'wah* material states that many highlight ethical themes and inclusive attitudes toward human relations and relationships with Allah Almighty (Kholid, 2023; Musthofa, 2023). Third, the study places the subject of Gus Iqdam's social media account only as a sub-discussion as an example of the trend of *da'wah*

on social media (Fianto & Ghofur, 2023; Najib, 2023; Ulfah, 2023; Wijaya et al., 2023). Departing from the above tendency, studies that pay attention to the phenomenon of shifting trends in the transmission of religious knowledge represented by Gus Iqdam Official have not been discussed comprehensively and even tend to be ignored.

This article aims to complement the study regarding Gus Iqdam Official mentioned above. There are at least three questions asked in this article. First, how is the form of religious mediatization shown in Gus Iqdam's Official? Second, what factors support this trend shift? Third, what is the impact of the shift in the transmission of religious knowledge aimed at Gus Iqdam's Official? Specifically, the three questions above aim to examine the shifting trends in the transmission of religious knowledge from conventional culture to screen culture shown in Gus Iqdam's Official. The discourse is part of a larger discussion regarding the strengthening of the phenomenon of religious mediation in Indonesia. On many occasions, the media has taken a significant role in how a religious discourse is constructed and then widely distributed to the public. In addition, matters concerning the interconnectedness of religious discourse and the media are also the focus of this article.

This article assumes that Gus Iqdam Official has represented a shift in trends in the transmission of religious knowledge that was originally carried out conventionally, namely by visiting religious assemblies such as recitation forums, halaqah, madrassas, and pesantren to screen culture. This shift is due, among other things, to the strengthening of the role of the media in people's lives and cultural changes in society. New media have not only changed aspects of conventional communication but have also become new spaces in how religious information is constructed, distributed, and accessed by others (Radde-Antweiler & Zeiler, 2018, p. 3). Gus Iqdam Official also emphasized that there is an ability possessed by traditional religious authorities to adapt to the presence of new media. Its presence colors the existence of—borrowing the terms of Najib Kailani and Sunarwoto (Kailani & Sunarwoto, 2019, p. 182)—the fragmentation of religious authority due to the presence of the media in religious

discourse. That the media not only gives rise to a new religious authority that displaces or even replaces traditional religious authority, but also affirms traditional religious authority itself.

New Media Transformation in Religious Discourse

Literature Review

The inclusion of new media in religious discussions has invited the attention of some experts to formulate it from a theoretical perspective. Theorization of this is referred to by experts as the phenomenon of religious mediatization. Stig Hjarvard, Andreas Hepp, Kunt Lundby, Oliver Krüger, Łukasz Wojtkowski, and Fakhruroji, for example, suggest that religious mediatization is a phenomenon of religious social change that enters the logic of media (Fakhruroji, 2021; Hepp et al., 2015; Hjarvard, 2018; Wojtkowski, 2017). New media in this regard have taken a significant role in how religious knowledge is obtained, both in the amount, content, and direction of religious knowledge (Abdullah, 2017). In short, new media provide space in how religious knowledge is constructed and distributed to society at large.

Even from another perspective, the transformation of new media in religious discourse also plays a role in creating new religious authorities that have the potential to shift and even replace old religious authorities (Bunt, 2018; Herbert, 2011a; Hjarvard, 2016; Kailani & Sunarwoto, 2019; Radde-Antweiler & Zeiler, 2018). The emergence of new religious authorities in discussing religious knowledge is closely related to media openness. Every society can easily be both a producer and a consumer of religious discussion at the same time. That is, this transformation of new media has had an impact on the existence of a circulation of religious knowledge producers who are not only centered on religious elites, but people who do not even have qualified religious knowledge can talk about religion in new media.

Methodology

This article is a type of qualitative research that places Gus Iqdam Official as a material object (@gusiqdamofficial1024, n.d.). The placement of Gus Iqdam's Official material objects is intended as an illustration of a new trend in the transmission of religious knowledge which is also a form of fusion of religion and new media. The formal object of this article is the mediatization approach of religion (Hjarvard, 2008) which is used to see the form of media transformation in providing space for shifting trends in the transmission of religious knowledge. The two data sources used in this article are; primary data sources in the form of several video shows and comments in Gus Iqdam Official and secondary data sources in the form of various literature contained in physical and online libraries that are directly or indirectly related. To simplify the analysis process, this article uses the data analysis trilogy scheme offered by Matthew B. Miles and Michael Hubberman (Miles & Huberman, 1992, pp. 16–20). Procedurally, the data analysis trilogy offered by both is engaged in data reduction, data presentation, and data verification.

Result and Discussion

Mediatization of Religion: Between “Da’wahtainment” and “Religiotaainment”

The intensity of the pace of development of new media that has entered into various joints of people's life needs, especially in terms of fulfilling religious knowledge, has been transformed as a new trend. Douglas Kellner identifies the presence of this new trend by relating to the phenomenon of the strengthening role of the media in framing people's lives (Kellner, 1995, p. 1). This phenomenon shows that the media has filled people's free time which then has an impact on changing the point of view and identity of individuals or groups of people about politics, social, economics, and religion. In the historical account written by Peter Horsfield, America is a country that in the 1920s showed a pattern of

increasing this role marked by the emergence of printing, radio, and film media (Horsfield, 2008, p. 111). The phenomenon of strengthening media has an impact on the creation of more specific behaviors and attitudes in society such as the behavior of accessing information and shopping for everything only with smartphones connected to the internet (Fakhruroji, 2021, p. 37).

The strengthening role of the media in providing religious discourse gave rise to a specific term in the perspective of media studies known as religious mediatization. The term simply refers to the phenomenon of intersection that occurs between religion and the media. Stig Hjarvad, Krüger, Andreas Hepp, and Lundby define the term as the phenomenon of changing the landscape of socio-religious conversation that enters into the logic of media (Hepp et al., 2015; Hjarvad, 2018; Krüger, 2018). The inclusion of religious discourse into the logic of the media has an impact on efforts to reconstruct religious messages, represent religion, and form new patterns in society when interacting and dealing with religion (Lövheim & Hjarvad, 2019; Lundby, 2018; Pabbajah et al., 2020; Pink, 2019, p. 81). This thesis was later reinforced by David Herbert and Elfriede Fürsich that the media participated in supporting official producers (religious institutions, religious organizations, Ustaz, kyai, and ulama) and unofficial producers in constructing and then distributing religious interpretations according to their beliefs (Fürsich, 2010; Herbert, 2011b). Based on the conceptual perspective and the impacts it provides, new media have a significant role to play in presenting religious knowledge.

The role of the media in providing religious knowledge is at least – to provide a big picture of the fusion of religion and media without discriminating against others – two trends of religious knowledge providers on social media, namely *da'wahtainment* and *religiotainment*. The first trend of the fusion of religion and new media is known as *da'wahtainment*. The term is a combination of two key terms, namely "da'wah" and "entertainment". This trend refers to a conventional da'wah concept, namely the pattern of da'wah in which kyai, Ustaz, gus, and/or da'i deliver monologues (sometimes there are also

interactions) religious material to worshippers or listeners (*madh'u*) (Saefulloh, 2009; Sofjan, 2012; Tajuddin, 2016). This concept uses new media as a representation of "entertainment" or the world of entertainment to spread religious teachings to the public. Entertainment, or the world of entertainment, referred to in this concept can be related mainly to social media or other platforms such as YouTube and also other popular culture. Greg Fealy in this context presents a specific picture of such trends (Fealy & (ed.), 2012, pp. 44–45). *Da'wahtainment* trends an important point of the fusion of religion and entertainment in the concept of "*da'wahtainment*" is the conventional pattern of da'wah that uses new media as the basis for its dissemination.

The next trend in the phenomenon of the fusion of religion and new media is known as "*religiotaainment*". This phenomenon has significant differences from the previous term, especially in terms of coverage. In simple terms, this phenomenon refers to the fusion of "religion" which means religion, and "entertainment" which means entertainment (Nieder-Steinheuer, 2016). This term is not Islamic-biased as indicated in the area of *da'wahtainment* (Kurniawan, 2021, p. 215). Furthermore, the scope of *da'wahtainment* is relatively limited, which only focuses on the phenomenon of conveying religious knowledge through new media. Furthermore, the fusion that occurs between religion and entertainment in religion tends to be widespread, namely using popular culture as a medium conveyed in new media. The popular culture in question, following Ariel Heryanto's perspective, includes films, music, fashion, social media content, and television programs (Heryanto, 2018, p. 22). Therefore, the study of religiosity is not limited to conventional da'wah patterns, but all forms of variations of religious representation in public spaces, including on social media.

Gus Iqdam Official and Representation of Islam in New Media

Gus Iqdam Official is one of the YouTube channels that marks the development of the *da'wahtainment* phenomenon on the social media platform YouTube. The categorization of Gus Iqdam Official as

part of this *da'wahainment* phenomenon is based on the alignment between theoretical perspectives and field facts that demonstrate the da'wah activities of Gus Iqdam Muhammad Khalid, the caretaker of Pondok Pesantren Mambaul Hikam II Blitar, who is also known as a millennial scholar Gus Iqdam, as he is affectionately called, holds regular religious gatherings at his pesantren every Tuesday and Friday evening, which are broadcasted on social media YouTube. His consistency in that has successfully caught the attention of people from various backgrounds. Some circles assess that Gus Iqdam's success is based on his unique preaching strategy, which involves presenting the local culture of East Java (language and humor), emphasizing inclusivism, and utilizing social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, while still being rooted in traditional religious texts (yellow books) (Candra & Anam, 2023; Kholid, 2023; Mubarokah et al., 2023).

The success of Gus Iqdam Official in capturing the attention of the public is closely related to his success in representing inclusive Islam on social media. His representation of Islam can be seen in several aspects. The first aspect is undoubtedly his preaching activities, which are his main presentation. Preaching, in the context of Islam, is an important aspect (Poston, 1992, p. 11). This activity is the process of transmitting religious knowledge from Islamic literature producers such as *da'i*, *ustadz*, *kyai*, and *ulama* (religious message conveyors) to the *madh'u* (listeners, congregation). The success in choosing strategies for preaching greatly influences the public's conception of knowledge, even within institutions. As for the context of Gus Iqdam Official, the strategies used tend to be dynamic, emphasizing interaction with the congregation, using simple language close to the community, and often attended by artists, entrepreneurs, and government officials, and accompanied by the chanting of shalawat from hadrah groups.

The representation of Islam in Gus Iqdam Official is also shown in terms of fashion Islamic symbols as representations in fashion can be identified through the figure of Gus Iqdam Muhammad and also the congregants who are present. Some symbols representing Islam include the use of koko shirts, sarongs, kufi hats, and turbans worn by Gus

Iqdam Muhammad, as well as Muslim women's clothing and hijabs. The most prominent aspect of using Islamic symbols can be seen when, for example, figures like Soimah, Happy Asmara, and Irfan Hakim participate in religious activities that are broadcasted on Gus Iqdam Official (Gus Iqdam Official, 2023a, 2023b). Looking at these three individuals, the use of Islamic symbols such as the kufi hat, koko shirt, Muslimah clothing, and hijab during religious gatherings at Gus Iqdam Official represents a form of respect while simultaneously representing Islam in new media.

Regarding the Transmission of Religious Knowledge: From Conventional-Traditional to New Media

The popularity and success of Gus Iqdam Official in transmitting religious knowledge through new media, especially YouTube, is an indication of a shift in the trend of transmitting religious knowledge from conventional-traditional to screen culture. Martin van Bruinessen mentions that the trend in traditional religious knowledge transmission can be seen from patterns that emerge in spaces called pesantren in Java and similar institutions such as surau in the Malayan Peninsula (Bruinessen, 2012, p. 85). Transmission patterns in conventional-traditional religious institutions, according to Martin, have elements and patterns that are almost similar. They involve transmitting religious knowledge through face-to-face interactions based on classical Islamic literature such as Tafsir Al-Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, *Uşûl Fiqh*, and Tasawuf, delivered by kyai, ulama, or Ustaz and then heard and recorded by students. However, technological advancements have allowed new media to become a new space for transmitting religious knowledge from conventional-traditional patterns to screen culture (Bunt, 2018, p. 19).

The entry of discussions about religion in the cultural space of screens is a phenomenon of cultural change in society. One important cultural change, as mentioned by Douglas Kellner and Fakhruroji, is the culture based on the strengthening role of new media (Fakhruroji, 2021, p. 37; Kellner, 1995). Media-based culture has not only transformed communication patterns in society but also altered the

transmission patterns of religious knowledge. Today, to acquire religious knowledge, society no longer needs to allocate extra time and effort by visiting pesantren or other religious gatherings. Instead, it is sufficient to utilize the facilities provided by the development of new media, such as smartphones and internet connectivity, to access religious knowledge from anywhere. This thesis is supported by Brenda E Brasher, who states that new media has become a strategic space for the growth and development of religion (Brasher, 2001, p. 2001). New media has provided a new space where religious knowledge is constructed, distributed, and widely accessed by society.

The significance of the role of new media in providing and disseminating religious knowledge is directly proportional to the new trends in Indonesian society. Lilik and Hasanuddin mention that Indonesian society closely aligns with three trends: creativity, confidence, and connectivity (Ali & Purwandi, 2019, p. 28). Creativity, self-confidence, and the internet's connectivity shape a new habitus that can be identified through religious learning trends on social media, hijab usage, sharing trends, avoiding usury, and fashion trends that align with current styles while remaining within the boundaries of Sharia (Jufri, 2022; Jufri & Ar, 2022). The trend of connectivity is also reinforced by data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association, which indicates a 131% increase from 215 million internet users in 2023 to 221 million users in 2024 (*Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia*, n.d.). The alignment between the development of new media and its significant role in the creative and connecting trends in society further enhances the transmission of religious knowledge through new media.

The need for religious knowledge in society is another factor, in addition to the two factors mentioned above, that supports the shift in the transmission of religious knowledge in new media. For example, Greg Fealy states that the increase in religious needs is caused by intense competition in the professional world, generally experienced by urban middle-class Muslims (Fealy, 2012, p. 27). This competition leads middle-class Muslims to seek a middle ground through religious aspects that align with accessibility, and market trends and can be

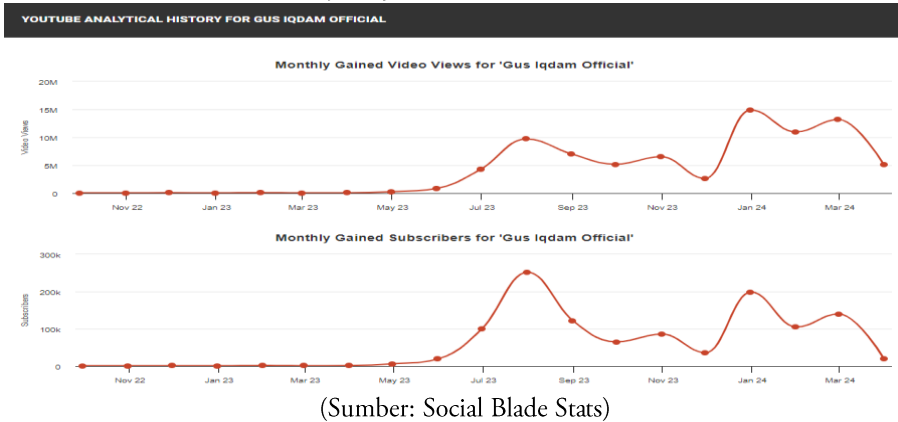
traded in the spiritual world. Given the current situation, religious elites need to consider social and cultural changes in society, especially among the urban middle-class Muslim community. Religious elites, in particular, should take into account cultural shifts influenced by new media connected to the internet, preferences, and the desire to convey necessary religious knowledge to the public

Considerations about cultural changes, tastes, and desires within society appear to be the backdrop for the emergence of Gus Iqdam Official in enlivening religious discourse in new media. This can be seen in the description columns of each presentation on Gus Iqdam Official, where it is explicitly stated that Gus Iqdam Official aims to consistently provide Islamic teachings filled with wisdom and knowledge, intertwined with love and compassion for Allah and fellow beings. The central themes of his teachings revolve around religion, interpretation, and hadiths, aiming to derive spiritual meanings applicable to daily life.

The themes that form the basis of every da'wah presentation above are delivered in various variations. At least the variations in Gus Iqdam Official range from snippets of da'wah, religious music, and live broadcasts of pengajian, both those conducted routinely in his majlis taklim and those held in various regions. Its consistency can be seen from a historical aspect, as since joining YouTube on April 1, 2020, Gus Iqdam Official has released a total of 335 Islamic religious videos that—until this article was written—have been viewed 82,222,439 times (*Gus Iqdam Official - YouTube*, n.d.). However, YouTube is not the sole media used by Gus Iqdam Muhammad; he also utilizes other social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram to convey religious knowledge. It should be emphasized that this article only focuses on YouTube, without disregarding other media used by Gus Iqdam Muhammad.

A review of Gus Iqdam Official shows that new media has become a strategic space in constructing and then conveying to the public at large. People from various regions and layers can easily participate in accessing religious knowledge presented in Gus Iqdam Official without having to come directly to the place. This is reinforced

through Gus Iqdam Official's graph which consistently increases, both in terms of viewers and subscribers. Here is a graph of Gus Iqdam Official's increased viewers and subscribers (*Gus Iqdam Official's YouTube Stats (Summary Profile) - Social Blade Stats, n.d.*):



(Sumber: Social Blade Stats)

The graph showing the increase in viewers and subscribers indicates that Gus Iqdam Official has become a reference for the community in obtaining religious knowledge. This is directly proportional to the positive responses received from each video presented by Gus Iqdam Official, compared to negative responses. Below is a brief table of viewer responses that can be seen from each video on Gus Iqdam Official:

Table 1. Audience Response to Preaching Content on Gus Iqdam Official

Content Title	Number of Viewers, Likes, and Comments	Audience Response	Link
"Keutamaan Sholat Dhuha dan Kunci Ketahanan Hidup dengan Gus	44,915 viewers 12 thousand likes 97 comments	@Maskiamas7360: <i>Nnderek ngaos Ten Gus iqdam.mugi angsal berkahipun...Aminnn.</i> (Attending religious study at Gus Iqdam's	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MpC7E_0c60&t=1213s&tab_channel=GusIqdamOfficial

Content Title	Number of Viewers, Likes, and Comments	Audience Response	Link
Iqdam” (29 Februari 2024)		May it bring blessings Amen.)	
		@safaatchannel4538: <i>Derek sinau gus igdam. Mugi mugi gus igdam di paringi sebat lan sukses selalu</i> (May Gus Iqdam be blessed with health and success always)	
“Menggapai Berkah: Majelis Pengajian dan Sholawat Gus Iqdam di Banjarsari” (27 Februari 2024)	20,725 viewers 571 likes 23 comments	@anwarmalawu987: <i>Berkah barokah selalu gus ku...kulo jamaah online....mugi njenengan budal mantuk palestina diparinggi rahayu wilujeng gus....nyuwun barokah ipun njenengan supados angene kulo sakit sampun 8 bulan dpun angkat marang gus gus.... Kepingin budal markas dereng saget....nyuwun do,ane para kadang <3 <3 <3 <3</i> (May your blessings always be abundant, my respected sir I am an online congregation member	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8pZD SXbzxY&tab_channel=GusIqdamOfficial

Content Title	Number of Viewers, Likes, and Comments	Audience Response	Link
[LIVE] Rutinan Malam Selasa Majlis Sabilu Taubah (18 Maret 2024)	251,235 viewers 82 thousand likes	<p>May you have a safe journey to and from Palestine, sir I kindly request your blessings so that my illness of the past 8 months can be healed I still cannot go to the headquarters, but I ask for your prayers)</p> <p>@Nurimamah-fr7ff: <i>Alhamdulillah Masya Alloh Tabarakalloh derek ngaos Gus Iqdam mugi2 pinaringan Barokah Aamiin ya Alloh</i></p> <p>(Thank you, may Allah bless you for studying with Gus Iqdam May you be granted blessings Amen, O Allah)</p> <p>@putrikarismamahrani7131: <i>Derek ngaos Gus ngalap barokah ipun</i></p> <p>(May you receive blessings from participating in Gus's religious study)</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dw1JLmoKeoE&t=311s&ab_channel=GusIqdamOfficial</p>

Content Title	Number of Viewers, Likes, and Comments	Audience Response	Link
		<p>@yenisusilowati1535: <i>Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarokatoh, nderek ngaji, salam saking Kalimantan Timur, Kutai Kartanegara</i></p> <p>(Peace be upon you and may the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you, I am participating in religious study, greetings from East Kalimantan, Kutai Kartanegara)</p>	
		<p>@sitisofiah2663: <i>Alhamdulillah... Malang Barat masih setia live streaming...nderek ngaos mugi barokah...semoga Gus e dan keluarga besar pondok tansah pinaringan sehat 🙏🙏</i></p> <p>(Thank God... West Malang is still loyal to live streaming... Join</p>	

Content Title	Number of Viewers, Likes, and Comments	Audience Response	Link
[LIVE] Rutinan Malam Jum'at Pembacaan Simtudduror (07 Maret 2024)	252,900 Views 8.3K Likes	<p>ngaji hopefully Barokah... May his Gus and the big family of the cottage always be given good health 🙏🙏🙏)</p> <p>@stisofiah2663: <i>Alhamdulillah....kema rin malam masih di beri kesempatan untuk streaming....semoga Malang Barat tetap setia rutinan malam jumat dan malam selasa... mugi barokah</i> 🙏🙏🙏</p> <p>Alhamdulillah....yester day night was still allowed to stream.... hopefully, West Malang will remain loyal to the routine of Friday night and Tuesday night... Mugi Barokah 🙏🙏🙏</p> <p>@user-ki4mj1nt4v: <i>Assalamualaikum wrwb. Bu Hj.Siti Fatimah mama nya mas Ananda Rizky Subarto, SH.MH. derek ngaos pengajian</i></p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQaS3ZCdvI0&ab_channel=GusIqdamOfficial</p>

Content Title	Number of Viewers, Likes, and Comments	Audience Response	Link
[LIVE] Pengajian umum bersama Gus Iqdam Muhammad di Desa Banjarsari,	333,128 Viewers 8.8K Likes	<p><i>di shola watan mlm jumat kirim doa dumatenf sedoyo poro lelebur Alfatehah...smg husnul khotimah ditempatkan di surga disisi Alloh di dampingi poro bidadari Aamiin 3xYRA.</i></p> <p>Assalamualaikum wrwb. Mrs. hj. Siti Fatimah mama nya mas Ananda Rizky Suharto, SH. MH. derek ngaos recitation at shola watan mlm Friday send prayer dumatenf sedoyo poro ancestor alfatehah... smg husnul khotimah was placed in heaven at the side of Allah accompanied by the angel poro Aamiin 3xYRA</p> <p>@triastuti4972: <i>Nyawang Gus Iqdam, turut mesam mesem dewe, pdhal y ra pas nglucu, barokaah barokaah gus 😊</i></p> <p>(Look at Gus Iqdam,</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1_SP_P8JDC&ab_channel=GusIqdamOfficial</p>

Content Title	Number of Viewers, Likes, and Comments	Audience Response	Link
Tulungagung (23 Februari 2024)		join my smile, even though it's not funny, barakah barakah gus 😊)	
		@kariyati4592: <i>Besowo Kepung derek straiming mawon Mugi” pikantok barokah Aamiin 🙏</i>	
		(Besowo Kepung just stream it and hopefully, get barakah Aamiin 🙏)	

The intensity of society in accessing religious knowledge through Gus Iqdam Official positions Gus Iqdam Muhammad as a patron and trendsetter for the wider community in matters of religion, according to a sociological perspective (Ali & Purwandi, 2019). Some previous researchers have mentioned that at least the community's interest in accessing religious knowledge on Gus Iqdam Official is related to its inclusive delivery style and the use of simple language that is easily understood by people from various backgrounds (Candra & Anam, 2023; Irawan & Radiamoda, 2023; Kholid, 2023; Musthofa, 2023). It is not uncommon for people who access Gus Iqdam Official to be interested in Gus Iqdam Muhammad's appearance and style. Therefore, it is not surprising that many of the attendees are drawn to him after watching Gus Iqdam Official's YouTube videos and snippets of his teachings spread massively on social media platforms TikTok and Instagram.

The transmission scheme of religious knowledge carried out by Gus Iqdam Official fundamentally strengthens Stig Hjarvard's thesis on the transformation of media roles (Hjarvard, 2008). New media has provided a strategic space for the growth of religious knowledge producers, both from official institutions and non-official ones. However, Stig Hjarvard's argument in his approach to *The Mediatization of Religion* seems to have reduced the authority of official religious institutions that also represent religion originating from traditional religious texts. The facts about Gus Iqdam Official affirm that the process of *The Mediatization of Religion* does not always originate from and does not necessarily represent religion from religious texts. Instead, Gus Iqdam Official not only follows traditional patterns, as outlined by Martin van Bruinessen (Bruinessen, 2012, p. 85), which are carried out in pesantren or similar traditional religious institutions, involving charismatic ulama with recognized religious authority, and based on *Kitab Kuning*. Furthermore, Gus Iqdam Muhammad, through Gus Iqdam Official, has incorporated new media as a means of transmitting religious knowledge.

Fragmentation of Religious Authority: Affirmation of Traditional Authority in New Media

The existence of new media in providing space for religious discourse has raised a debate about the authority status of religion. The discourse often revolves around the role of media in creating new religious authorities (Bunt, 2018, p. 1). Irwan Abdullah suggests that this phenomenon is closely related to the phenomenon of religious divergence (Abdullah, 2017). The development of media has opened up broader possibilities for public participation in producing and discussing religious discourse. In summary, from Irwan Abdullah's perspective, the media has transformed societal culture and opened up broader public engagement to discuss and debate religion openly on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, which were not previously discussed. Irwan Abdullah's argument aligns with David Herbert and Elfriede Fürsich, who also discussed this earlier (Herbert, 2011b). Both of them mention that the media has become a new space

for the circulation of religious knowledge. New media provides opportunities for the emergence of new religious authorities (both official and unofficial producers) in the circulation of religious symbols and discourse in new media.

The discussion about the status of religious authority in new media is also an important issue that is fully recognized by Najib Kailani and Sunarwoto (Kailani & Sunarwoto, 2019, p. 179). Building on the arguments of experts who mention the influence of new media on the emergence of religious fragmentation, they both state that new media not only brings forth new religious authorities, eroding and replacing traditional religious authorities but also reaffirms the existence of those traditional religious authorities themselves. The argument is based on the rapid development of media, which allows everyone to easily access religious knowledge directly through virtual media without having to ask directly from religious scholars. This thesis reinforces Radde-Antweiler and Zeiler's statement that new media has played a role in how official and unofficial producers create, construct, distribute, and then make information widely accessible to the public through new media (Radde-Antweiler & Zeiler, 2018).

The involvement of official and unofficial producers in the process of transmitting religious knowledge in new media is a consequence of the strengthening role of the media in people's lives. Irwan Abdullah said the strengthening of the role of the media was a consequence of cultural changes in society (Abdullah, 2017). The changes allow wider public participation in discussing religious discourse in new media. New media, thus, play a role in creating a circulation of religious knowledge that not only comes from religious elites but also comes from ordinary people who have never even received religious education from official religious educational institutions such as pesantren or madrasas.

Following Irwan Abdullah's opinion, Fadhli Lukman states that social media has opened up space for lay people—or, in the perspective of Radde-Antweiler and Zeiler, unofficial producers—to actively engage in the production of religious knowledge, particularly in the practice of Qur'anic hermeneutics (Lukman, 2016). The presence of

social media has facilitated Qur'anic hermeneutics practice not only among religious elites such as scholars and educated individuals but also provided access for lay people to participate. The involvement of lay people often overlooks the necessary actions as rigidly stated in the discipline of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Such a situation fundamentally demonstrates the emergence of democratization in interpreting the Qur'an and raises questions about religious authority (Qudsy, 2019, p. 182). In other words, new media has opened up space for the fragmentation of religious authority.

Gus Iqdam Official departs from a theoretical perspective on religious fragmentation, asserting his position against traditional religious authorities in the media. Unlike lay people who generally come from secular education or celebrity converts (Kailani & Sunarwoto, 2019, p. 179), Gus Iqdam Official demonstrates the characteristics and traits of traditional religious authority, marked by his ability to read the Yellow Book acquired from authoritative Islamic educational institutions. From a historical perspective, Gus Iqdam Muhammad initially gained religious knowledge directly from his father, KH Kholid, and Ny Hj Lanratul Faridah (Musthofa, 2023; Sugendal, 2023). Both of them are caregivers at Pondok Pesantren Mambaul Hikam, Kediri. After his father's passing, Gus Iqdam Muhammad continued his religious education by studying under his uncle, KH Dliyauddin Azzamzami. Following that, Gus Iqdam Muhammad continued his religious education at Pondok Pesantren Queen Al-Falah Ploso, Kediri, under the guidance of KH Munif Dzajuli (*Cerita Awal Mula Gus Iqdam Disebut "Gus", Pernah Jadi Anak Racing (Bagian 1)*, n.d.).

A historical review of the background of religious education shows that Gus Iqdam Muhammad possesses religious knowledge from authoritative religious institutions. At the same time, this fact also confirms the clear chain of transmission (sanad) of religious knowledge held by Gus Iqdam Muhammad. Possessing a sanad in religious knowledge is an important aspect of one's traditional religious authority. Because the ownership of a sanad directs someone not to discuss religious matters, especially related to authoritative religious

texts such as the Qur'an and Hadith, based on subjective and non-factual aspects (al-Aṣḥānī, 2002, p. 202; al-Naisaburi, 1977, p. 6). The above facts confirm that the presence of Gus Iqdam Muhammad in the transmission process of religious knowledge displayed through Gus Iqdam Official reinforces the traditional religious authority status amidst the fragmentation of religious authority in new media. The affirmation of traditional religious authority status implies a strong theoretical and cultural foundation.

Conclusion

The presence of Gus Iqdam Official in providing religious knowledge has shown the success of Gus Iqdam Muhammad Khalid in civilizing the new world by combining *da'wah* (Islam) with new media. The merger phenomenon is part of the religious mediation process which is reflected in two forms, namely *da'wahainment* (*da'wah* with new media entertainment) and *religiotaainment* (religion broadly with the world of new media entertainment). Based on those two forms, Gus Iqdam Official falls into the first form. The success of Gus Iqdam Official in providing religious knowledge on YouTube social media also marks a new trend in the transmission of religious knowledge, not only through face-to-face interactions but also through the virtual world.

The emergence of a new trend in the transmission process of religious knowledge, represented by Gus Iqdam Official, is caused by several factors. The most significant factor lies in the development of new media that aligns with its strengthened role in society. The strong influence of media in society has created cultural changes involving new media in all aspects. Based on a culture rooted in the empowerment of new media, society can actively participate as both producers and consumers in religious discourse within new media. This ultimately impacts the fragmentation of religious authority in new media, Gus Iqdam's Official demonstrates that his ability to adapt to new media reaffirms traditional religious authority amidst the rapid emergence of new religious authorities mentioned by experts, which

have the potential to shift or even replace traditional religious authority.

More detailed attention to a multi-disciplinary approach to the phenomenon of shifts in the transmission process of religious knowledge, especially towards Gus Iqdam's Official, is a recommendation for further research. The underlying aspects of his presence and content are the most significant to be considered. This is because the presentation of religious knowledge in new media plays a significant role in how societal religious knowledge is constructed. The impacts given by the process will form inclusive relationships, especially among fellow humans.

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