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## Editorial

# The Current Rise of Artificial Intelligence and Religious Studies: Some Reflections Based on ChatGPT

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## Abstract

*In recent months, there has been a remarkable surge in artificial intelligence (AI) development, with ChatGPT emerging as a notable application. ChatGPT, an OpenAI chatbot, achieved an impressive milestone of 100 million monthly active users within two months of its launch in January, making it the fastest-growing consumer application to date. Experts predict that AI will significantly impact 50 percent of businesses in the next five years. ChatGPT has already showcased its versatility in the medical field, aiding in tasks like medical exam preparation and serving as an in-office scribe. As its potential in healthcare continues to expand, ChatGPT holds promising prospects for the future. Additionally, research on AI and religion is gaining traction, exploring topics such as ethical implications, integration into religious practices, analysis of religious texts, interfaith dialogue facilitation, and the theological impact of AI on creation. The increasing number of scholarly publications on the subject indicates a growing interest in exploring the complex relationship between artificial intelligence and religion.*

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence; ChatGPT; Religion; Religious Studies; Scopus

In recent months, we have witnessed a rapid development in artificial intelligence that has captured the attention of many. One noteworthy application is ChatGPT. It has garnered significant interest from various parties. The OpenAI chatbot, ChatGPT, achieved an impressive milestone of 100 million monthly active users in just two months since its launch in January. This rapid growth establishes ChatGPT as the fastest-growing consumer application ever. Furthermore, the study forecasts that AI will have a significant impact on at least 50 percent of businesses within the next five years. ChatGPT has already demonstrated its versatility in the medical field, aiding in tasks such as passing medical exams and serving as in-office scribes. As its potential for healthcare applications continues to grow, ChatGPT holds promising prospects for the future of healthcare and other fields.

In this editorial, we explore how ChatGPT responds to "religious challenges" and compare it to the perspectives of experts as documented in various high-quality peer-reviewed academic works. To begin, the editor presents a prompt to ChatGPT, which is as follows: "Please provide me with five popular topics of research on artificial intelligence and religion". And here are ChatGPT response:

Certainly! Here are five popular topics of research on artificial intelligence (AI) and religion:

**Ethical and Theological Implications:** This topic explores the ethical and theological dimensions of AI, including questions about the nature of consciousness, personhood, and the moral agency of AI systems. Scholars delve into how religious traditions and beliefs can inform our understanding of the ethical implications of AI technologies.

**AI and Religious Practices:** This topic investigates the integration of AI technologies in religious practices. It explores how AI is being used in the context of religious rituals, ceremonies, and spiritual guidance. Researchers examine the impact of AI on religious experiences, the role of AI in religious education, and the potential benefits and challenges of AI in supporting religious practices.

**AI and Religious Texts:** This area of research focuses on the application of AI techniques to analyze and interpret religious texts. Scholars use natural language processing, machine learning, and other AI methods to explore religious scriptures, uncover patterns and themes, and gain new insights into the interpretation and understanding of religious texts.

**AI and Interfaith Dialogue:** This topic explores how AI can facilitate interfaith dialogue and understanding. It examines how AI technologies can be used to bridge cultural and religious divides, promote empathy and understanding among diverse religious communities, and foster peaceful coexistence.

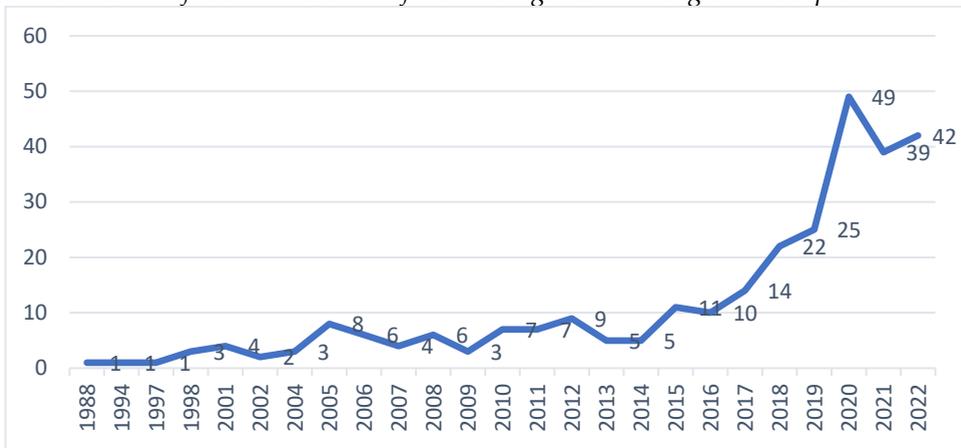
**AI and Theology of Creation:** This area of research examines the theological implications of AI in relation to the concept of creation. It explores how AI challenges traditional notions of human uniqueness, creation, and divine purpose. Scholars delve into philosophical and theological questions about the role of AI in creation and its implications for religious worldviews.

These topics represent some of the exciting and emerging areas of research at the intersection of artificial intelligence and religion. Researchers are actively exploring these areas to deepen our understanding of the complex relationship between technology and spirituality.

A search using the TITLE-ABS-KEY (artificial AND intelligence AND religion) in Scopus revealed the presence of 287 documents from 1988 to 2022. Figure 1 illustrates the research development on artificial intelligence and religion in the Scopus database. The available data shows a significant upward trend in recent years. This indicates the heightened interest among scholars in religious studies regarding the importance of artificial intelligence for the advancement of religious communities in the present and future.

**Figure 1**

*Search results of documents on artificial intelligence and religion in Scopus*

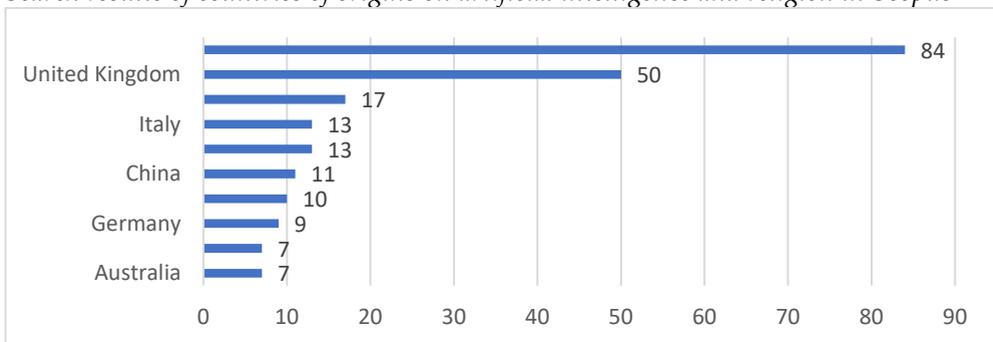


Source: Scopus, 2023.

Based on the origin of research, as shown in Figure 2, it is evident that advanced countries like the United States and the United Kingdom dominate research on artificial intelligence and religion. This is a positive indication for the development of such studies in other countries, particularly those with a strong religious character.

**Figure 2**

*Search results of countries of origins on artificial intelligence and religion in Scopus*



Source: Scopus, 2023.

The development of artificial intelligence and its relationship with religion can be considered parallel to the development of science and

technology with religion. Continuous discussions and even academic debates are normal when it comes to artificial intelligence. That is why it is necessary to expand the academic space to build a dynamic relationship between artificial intelligence and religion.

### **This Issue**

This issue features ten articles with some authors from abroad: Ghana, Hungary, Sudan, and United Kingdom. The first article views religious responses to the Covid-19 pandemic have raised critical questions with profound socio-legal implications. This article delves into the historical dynamics among science, politics, and religion, particularly in the context of global pandemics. It examines the ethical and human rights considerations that arise during health crises and explores the role of media in addressing these issues. Additionally, the article focuses on the pastoral responsibility assumed by religious leaders during times of crisis, considering its significance in a materialistic and secular modern era. The analysis is grounded in the specific context of England, building upon the author's prior research on the British Muslim community's response to the Covid-19 pandemic while expanding to encompass broader socio-legal themes within religious responses in England.

The second article assesses the growth and influence of Christianity as a missionary religion on Islamic da'wah in Indonesia, a country with a history of Muslim resistance to colonialism initiated by the Christian community. A qualitative descriptive method was employed, primarily relying on factual observations in the field of Christianization. The impact of Christianity on Islamic da'wah was analyzed through a review of documentation and reference studies. The findings revealed that Christians utilized various methods such as occupation, politics, Western influences, poverty, diseases, weakening of consciousness, self-preparation, Muslim complacency, financial support, teaching negligence, missionary preparation, and indoctrination. These methods often led to conflicts within communities as Christians sought to assert their denominations and congregations. The study underscores the

importance of fostering healthy and productive dialogue from a fresh perspective to address conflicts, foster harmony, and promote a fair, peaceful, and innovative civilization that embraces spirituality in religious understanding.

The third article argues that ensuring the quality of research and scientific publications is a crucial consideration in the management of higher education institutions. With this in mind, this qualitative study aims to explore the policies and strategies employed to enhance research and scientific publication quality in State Islamic Religious Colleges. Data for the study was gathered through library and field research. The findings reveal that each university has established regulations aligned with the Ministry of Higher Education's provisions, including the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) and External Quality Assurance System (SPME), to manage research quality. Notably, UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Samarinda, and IAIN Palangkaraya are actively improving the quality of research and scientific publications among their lecturers by allocating 30% of BOPTN funds and implementing the LITAPDIMAS system. However, challenges remain, particularly in fully realizing the outputs and benefits of these policies due to budget absorption issues that hinder the development of a research and publication culture. Addressing this challenge requires a long-term commitment and the engagement of all stakeholders, emphasizing the need to cultivate a research and publication culture from upstream to downstream aspects.

The fourth article examines the effects of Covid-19 e-learning and teaching on students' social lives, specifically their engagement in social activities post-pandemic. With the global closure of schools and the implementation of e-learning programs during the pandemic, the study focuses on second-cycle and tertiary institutions in Accra, Ghana, using multiple sampling techniques. Through extensive interviews with students, teachers/lecturers, and parents, supplemented by personal observations, the research reveals that students' social skills suffered

negative impacts during the pandemic, leading to various forms of social exclusion upon the reopening of schools. While Ghana's introduction of e-learning helped maintain educational contact hours, the study highlights the inability of students to fully recover their social skills and foster social conviviality. Based on these findings, the paper concludes that Ghana should invest in its Triple Heritage, integrating elements from Islam, Christianity, and indigenous worldviews, to reshape its educational curriculum and promote social conviviality among students. Additionally, the article emphasizes the need for further research to explore the expansion of Ghana's cultural heritage while safeguarding the inclusion of emerging minority cultures.

The fifth article discusses Yayasan Pendidikan Islam (Yapis) di Tanah Papua contribution to education. Papua region faces significant challenges in transportation and human resource development for indigenous Papuans. Yapis has emerged as a committed institution in improving the quality of human resources in the region, offering 198 educational institutions ranging from basic to higher education. This qualitative research, conducted as a case study, gathered information through interviews, observations, and documentation studies involving Yapis administrators, educational institution managers, students, and stakeholders. The analysis employed a data cross-check method to ensure information validity. The findings highlight Yapis's strategic planning, which encompasses policies for establishing and developing educational institutions, human resource planning, the provision of attractive facilities and infrastructure, the promotion of extracurricular activities, and the optimal welfare of Yapis personnel.

The sixth article examines the evolution and significance of the hijrah movement on social media. Initially, hijrah was understood as a process of transitioning from a state of misguidance (jahiliyyah) towards a more Sharia-compliant lifestyle. Over time, hijrah has come to represent the transformation of individuals from being less religious to more religious (Islamī), manifesting in various aspects such as clothing choices,

work preferences, and social relationships. The ideological propagation of the meaning of hijrah has been extensively carried out through social media platforms, evident in the greater online search volume for "hijrah" compared to other religious topics. This article investigates the interpretations and articulations of hijrah by digital activists, employing a qualitative research approach that combines critical discourse analysis with a digital hermeneutic approach. The study reveals that influential preachers with substantial social media followings play a significant role in shaping the ideologization of hijrah. Social media followers serve as both capital and means for mainstreaming discourse and ideas. The article highlights that discussions on hijrah in the realm of social media encompass not only interpretations of religious texts but also involve religious commodification. Furthermore, the dominance of conservative groups is an integral aspect of the ideological flow surrounding hijrah on social media.

This seventh article presents a comparative study of the digital media usage in two distinct religious communities in Hungary: the 777 Community (a youth Catholic community) and the Hungarian Krishna-Conscious Believers community. The research begins with a descriptive phase, documenting how these two groups depict themselves as religious communities online. Subsequently, the study explores the intersection between online and offline practices and discourses within these religious communities, focusing on rituals, community dynamics, identity formation, authority, and public presence. The investigation also examines how these religious communities shape and adapt technological platforms in alignment with their values, patterns, and the construction of their identity in the public sphere. The analysis employs a uses and gratifications approach to understand the online activities of religious internet users, followed by the Religious Social Shaping of Technology method to explore how these practices relate to their broader religious and social identities. Ultimately, the study compares the

different value-based strategies and approaches employed by the two investigated religious communities.

The eighth article delves into the examination of Islamic thought and its correlation with changes in the state structure of Indonesia during the reform era, spanning from 1998 to the present. The transformative shift in the Indonesian state order, characterized by the constitutional amendment of 1945 and increased public participation, gave rise to progressive Islam, mainstream Islam, and political Islamist thought. This article aims to explore how these three variants of Islamic thought have evolved within the changing state order of Indonesia's reformation era. The theoretical framework employed encompasses a people-centric approach, acknowledging citizens as full participants in the state, along with a socio-historical and political economy perspective. The analysis relies on political philosophy, drawing insights from official publications and decisions made by various figures and organizations that are closely associated with the changes in the state order during Indonesia's reformation era. The findings of this study indicate that these three prominent variants of Islamic thought in Indonesia have played a significant role in shaping and guiding the progression towards a just and welfare-oriented state.

Gender equality issues continue to be a subject of ongoing discussion and garner significant attention. Throughout history, women have faced numerous inequalities, perpetuated by patriarchal cultural norms, despite the increasing awareness and advocacy for gender equality. Islam, however, offers potential for gender equality within its framework. The ninth article focuses on Riffat Hassan's perspectives on realizing gender equality in the Islamic context, employing a qualitative descriptive method and narrative analysis approach. Through the analysis of various sources related to Hassan and her ideas, it is revealed that she adopts two approaches in interpreting Quranic verses: the ideal-normative and socio-historical approaches. She highlights that patriarchal culture is rooted in the belief that men were created first and

women are derived from them, rendering women as ontologically secondary. Additionally, she emphasizes that women, not men, are often portrayed as the primary agents of human fall from heaven and that women are viewed as mere instruments created for men's benefit, lacking inherent significance.

Time and space are quantities determined by mass and speed, while atoms are the smallest indivisible units of matter. The advent of the quantum revolution introduced the concept of wave-particle duality, shedding light on the nature of micro-objects and their constituents. This has implications for comparing time and the afterlife, as explored through scientific analysis and the Qur'an as a source of truth. Utilizing the library research method and analyzing connections with the Qur'an, the tenth article reveals that the Qur'an explains the comparison of worldly time and the time of the Hereafter in verses such as Al-Hajj 47 and Al-Baqarah 80. It suggests that worldly time is faster than the time of the Hereafter, drawing a parallel with quantum physics where the assumption is made that the world resembles an atom while the Hereafter represents a larger dimension, resulting in a significant difference in the perception of time. The concept of atoms is also mentioned in Qur'anic verses like Al-Zalzalah 7-8, Yunus 61, and An-Nisa 40.

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# Religious Responses to Covid-19 in England: An Analysis of the Key Socio-Legal Themes

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## Abstract

*Religious responses to COVID-19 raised several far-reaching questions with a number of socio-legal implications. How does the historical tension between science, politics and religion manifest itself in global pandemics? What ethical and human rights issues are at play as a health crisis unfolds, and what is the role of the media in mitigating such issues? Finally, how significant is the pastoral role which is thrust upon religious leaders in times of crisis, and how should this role be understood in the materialistic and secular modern era? This article addresses such questions within the specific context of England. It builds upon previous research by the author on the responses of the British Muslim community to the COVID-19 pandemic, by expanding the analysis to explore the broader socio-legal themes that emerged within religious responses to COVID-19 in England.*

**Keywords:** Community; Human Rights; Law; Media; Public Policy; Religion; Science; Spirituality.

## INTRODUCTION

Religion is one of the world's most powerful social forces. This is a fact that few people would contest. More people, however, would contest the fact that it is necessarily a force for good. To the contrary, institutionalized religion is often opposed because of the harmful social consequences it has the potential to inflict (Linders, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic reminded the international community just how powerful religion can be as a social force. It also vividly illustrated how this force can be used for both positive and negative ends. A prime example of the latter has been religious gatherings and their contribution to the spread of the virus (Quadri, 2020; Osei-Tutu et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2022). When the virus was still in its infancy, a religious gathering held by Christians in South Korea formed the locus of the outbreak in that country (Robinson, 2020). At a similar point in time, a huge throng of over 15,000 Muslim pilgrims in Malaysia were accused of spreading the virus to six other countries, with the incident being described as "the largest known viral vector in southeast Asia" (Mubarak & Zin, 2020). More recently, millions of Hindus were criticized for attending the Kumbh Mela festival, at a time when India was grappling with a devastating second wave of the virus (Shukla et al., 2021).

Religion was also used as a force for good in the pandemic, with abundant examples and wide-ranging effects. Just as some religious communities exacerbated the spread of the virus, many others helped to contain it (Barmania & Reiss, 2021). The Vatican's response is noteworthy in this regard, considering its high-profile political status and the huge number of its followers. When the virus initially spread across Italy and Europe in March 2020, the Vatican announced that "because of the current global public health emergency, all the Liturgical Celebrations of Holy Week will take place without the physical presence of the faithful" (Parish, 2020). The Pope's virtually

broadcasted Easter Sunday Mass was subsequently watched by over 8 million households, a testament to the social impact which the Vatican wields in such contexts (Parish, 2020). Another prominent example is the Saudi Arabian state's decision to cancel the annual Hajj pilgrimage in 2020 by banning all international pilgrims from attending (Hoang et al., 2020; Rahmadhanitya & Jatmika, 2021). Hajj is the largest religious gathering that takes place in Sunni Islam with millions of pilgrims usually attending and had never been cancelled since the formation of the Saudi Arabian state in 1932 (Hoang et al., 2020). Other examples of religion being used as a force for good in the pandemic include altruistic initiatives led by religious communities which sought to serve those in need (Buse et al., 2012) and the role of spirituality in mitigating the mental health crisis which spread through societies because of the virus (Fardin, 2020). More broadly, these religious responses raised some bigger and more far-reaching questions with several socio-legal implications. This article engages with such questions in a thematic fashion, focusing on the specific context of England.

### **Structure of the Article**

Section 1 begins by exploring the complex relationship between science, politics, and religion, as well as the challenges that English policy makers face when they attempt to reconcile between scientific and religious world views during a global pandemic. Section 2 examines the pastoral role which religious groups play within social crises, and the partnership that they can develop with a state to mitigate such crises. Finally, Section 3 examines how the human rights of religious communities can be affected during a pandemic, and the role of the media in this context. Within Section 3, there will be a special focus on the Chinese Christian Community in England. The effect of COVID-19 on this community is particularly interesting and

illuminating due to its special relationship with the pandemic, originating as it did in Chinese territory.

### **Limitations of this Study**

Before commencing with the main body of the article, a brief note about the limitations of this paper is required. As was noted in the abstract, this paper builds upon previous research by the author into the responses of the British Muslim community to the Covid-19 pandemic (Al-Astewani, 2020). This present article is broader in scope. It maintains a focus on England as a geographical and political region, but it involves a broader analysis of religious responses to Covid-19 in general. Such a broad analysis has the valuable advantage of observing general themes which characterize such responses. Its main limitation however is that some of the nuance which is present in more detailed studies of specific religious communities is lost. Although the focus is on England, references have at times been made to other geographical regions if this is relevant to the analysis. Finally, the analysis in this article has focused on the key socio-legal themes that have emerged within the religious responses to Covid-19 in England. The term 'socio-legal' in this context refers to legal phenomena viewed within their theological, historical, social, political, and economic contexts (Harris, 2015; Petersen, 2013). This socio-legal focus helps to enrich legal analysis of social events and ensures a more interdisciplinary and holistic study.

### **THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICS, SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY WITHIN A GLOBAL PANDEMIC**

According to a recent research study on UK attitudes towards science and religion published by the prominent think tank Theos, most young people no longer see religion and science 'at war' with one another (Spencer, 2019). Their survey, gathering over ten years of

polling data, shows that young people believe science and religion can be compatible with another. It also notes that the 'cultural zeitgeist' that science and religion are incompatible falls apart when questionnaires focus on comparing disciplines like cosmology to specific religions. Despite such findings, this 'cultural zeitgeist' which pits religion in opposition to science persists as an influential sociological trend which frames public discourse in England. Indeed, it was a subject of discussion in one of the leading English Supreme Court cases in the last decade dealing with legal definitions of religion (*R (on the application of Hodkin and another) (Appellants) v Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Respondent)*, 2013). The 2013 case of Hodkin had to reconsider older English case-law which had ruled that the modern Church of Scientology could not be considered a religion for the purposes of legally registering their buildings as places of worship. Lord Toulson, the judge who delivered the leading judgement in Hodkin, decided to overrule this precedent by adopting a more liberal approach to defining religion. His tentative definition of religion began by describing it as a "spiritual or non-secular belief system." To further clarify the meaning of this phrase, he added that "such a belief system may or may not involve belief in a supreme being, but it does involve a belief that there is more to be understood about mankind's nature and relationship to the universe than can be gained from the senses or from science." This phraseology led to several criticisms from academic commentators who suggested that the language invoked a simplistic dichotomy between science and religion (Sandberg, 2014).

So how did this historical tension between science and theology manifest in English religious responses to Covid-19? A useful socio-legal framework for answering such a question is what European scholars of law and religion describe as the three main postures of modern nation-states towards religion (Sandberg, 2011). On one side

of the spectrum is the state-church model, where a legally binding constitutional relationship exists between a state and a particular religious institution (which in Europe is usually represented by a particular Church). England is a prime example of the state-church model, with the Church of England enjoying a special constitutional relationship with the state which distinctively bestows upon it political, legal, and social privileges. On the other side of the spectrum is the separation model, which is most popularly represented by France, where no religious institution enjoys a special constitutional relationship with the state. Finally comes the hybrid model which lies in between these two models. This is represented by states such as Spain and Portugal where the state preliminarily adopts a separation stance but then goes on to make legal agreements with a number of religious groups.

The interesting observation to note based on this framework is that religious institutions which enjoy a special legal and political relationship with the state will almost always support and promote the state's health policies in a pandemic situation. Taking England as our example, the Church of England fully endorsed England's various Covid-19 policies including the forced closure of places of worship during lockdowns, various social-distancing rules and face-mask regulations (Village & Francis, 2021). Indeed, the Church of England sometimes went even beyond the state's requirements, imposing complete lockdowns on all its churches even when this was not legally required (Francis & Village, 2021). This can be contrasted with the response of the Catholic Church in England which does not enjoy any constitutional relationship with the state. Catholic Churches did not follow Covid-19 guidelines as stringently during lockdowns, and the de facto spokesman of the Catholic Church in England, the Archbishop of Westminster, pressed the English government for an early reopening of Catholic churches stressing that Roman Catholics

“wanted to get back to a fuller practicing of their faith, as long as they can do so safely” (Cranmer & Pocklington, 2020).

Other minority religious communities in England showed mixed responses to the state’s covid-19 policies. The British Muslim community is an excellent case at hand, particularly considering its status as one of the most active religious minorities in Europe (Nielsen & Otterbeck, 2016). Amongst the activist segment of the community, the Muslim Council of Britain predictably opted to fully support and promote the government’s health policies from the very beginnings of the pandemic (Al-Astewani, 2020). As the largest umbrella NGO in the community, it played an influential role in this regard with its various precautionary messages broadcasted to its huge base of members. Due to its close political ties with the government and its emphasis on political lobbying, this stance was to be expected and corresponds with the hypothesis advanced above in relation to the Church of England. Another organization which took the same stance was the British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA). BIMA’s stance was also very influential within the community. As a representative of Muslim healthcare professionals enjoying an intimate relationship with the country’s National Health Service, its medical expertise was highly valued by many segments of the Muslim community in the context of a pandemic. This was enhanced because the advice of the BIMA was combined with spiritual and theological undertones and was based on a detailed knowledge of the developments on the ground (Al-Astewani, 2020).

On the other hand, several religious leaders within the Muslim community argued that places of worship should remain open in the very beginning of the pandemic, when the UK government had still not imposed a full legal lockdown (Al-Astewani, 2020). They highlighted the sacrosanct nature of worship in Islamic law and said that precautionary measures could be taken by members of the

congregation without the need for full closure of mosques. Their arguments represent a good case of the sophisticated and nuanced ways in which scripture and theology can be used in divergent ways in response to a pandemic. Whilst worship is indeed a sacred principle in Islamic law which requires protection, human life also enjoys the same status as a sacred principle and reconciling both in a pandemic situation poses a difficult hermeneutic challenge. This is made even more sophisticated due to additional factors such as specific scriptural texts on dealing with a pandemic and engaging with state, all of which can be interpreted in several ways. This is why theological arguments were used by different religious leaders both to support and oppose state health policies during the spread of Covid-19 (Tolmie & Venter, 2021).

A pertinent final illustration of this phenomenon is the schism that occurred within the Chinese Christian community in England as a result of Covid-19 state responses (Huang et al., 2021). Cantonese-speaking Christians hailing from Hong Kong were much more strongly inclined to heavily criticizing the draconian responses of the Chinese government to contain the spread of the virus. Mandarin-speaking Christians originating from mainland China however felt that such criticisms were often overly exaggerated and unfair, quoting scriptural evidence such as Romans 13: 1-7 as biblical support for submitting to the authority of governments (Huang et al., 2021). Intense debates and discussions took place between the two sides on social media, leading to heated emotions and a distancing of ties. This vividly portrays the complex interaction between religion, politics, and sociology within the context of a pandemic, and is merely a microcosm of similar developments within religious communities around the globe.

## **WELLBEING, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY: THE PASTORAL ROLE OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES DURING THE PANDEMIC**

It is a sociological fact that religion flourishes in times of crisis (Coleman, 2001). History repeatedly shows that human societies seek refuge in religion when times become hard. Whether it is the onslaught of wars, the devastation of natural disasters or the horrors of deadly pandemics, many people will seek comfort in the unique pastoral care which religion has to offer (Snook et al., 2019). Indeed, this includes people who may not usually be inclined to religion or religiosity but are nevertheless forced to change their minds by sudden, cataclysmic turns of events. A good example of this phenomenon in England is the legal requirement which still exists for public schools to hold daily acts of worship which are 'wholly or mainly' Christian in character (Freathy, 2007). This legal requirement goes back to a piece of legislation (the 1944 Education Act) which was passed during the second World War at a time of heightened societal anxiety. The reason that religion flourishes in such situations is because of the ocean of spiritual resources which it harnesses because of its classical and historical focus on the psychological wellbeing of society (Sperry, 2013). It is true that traditional religion now competes with modern pastoral professions such as psychology, therapy, and counselling, as well as new-age wellbeing and spiritual movements such as mindfulness for example (Mueller et al., 2001). Traditional religion nevertheless shows an impressive capacity at adapting to the times and tailoring its pastoral case to adjust to societal changes, which ensures its continued relevance and popularity.

The pastoral role played by religious groups during the Covid-19 pandemic in England certainly corresponds with this historical trend and proved once again just how valued religion is during times of crisis, even in the most 'secular' and 'modernized' societies in the

world. Due to the drastic measures taken to contain the spread of the disease such as strict nation-wide lockdowns and stringent social-distancing, the health crisis precipitated by Covid-19 became coupled with an equally drastic mental health crisis (Dong & Bouey, 2020). Many people were suddenly faced with a very isolated lifestyle, separation from loved ones, and the tragic experience of illness and death amongst family and friends. A particularly tragic experience was dealing with the death of loved ones without having been able to say a final farewell or attend the funeral due to social-distancing and lockdown restrictions. This is not to mention the intense levels of anxiety and fear caused by media coverage of the spread of the virus and the subsequent severe warnings issued by governments around the world.

Religious leaders in England very quickly rose to the challenge of responding to the pandemic with pastoral support to the wider community, and an immediate sign of the positive response was the statistics of unusually high engagement with the wide variety of pastoral services being offered, the majority of these delivered virtually to abide with state lockdown policies. Churches in England for example enjoyed record numbers of attendees in virtual religious services during the early period of the pandemic (Bryson et al., 2020). Another major medium through which pastoral care was offered by religious groups alongside spiritually focused religious services was community initiatives which provided crucial support to vulnerable members of society such as the elderly, struggling families and isolated individuals. Such initiatives included providing food parcels to people's homes, offering up places of worship for use by medical authorities, recruiting volunteers so that they could contribute to the provision of key social services and raising money to support those in need (Wildman et al., 2020). In this way, a constructive partnership developed between religious groups and state authorities who

combined their respective grassroots and political resources for the benefit of the wider society.

## **THE MEDIA, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THE STIGMATIZATION OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES DURING A PANDEMIC**

The media, like religion, retained a powerful role during the COVID-19 pandemic. Entire communities could be praised or stigmatized depending on the angle of its reporting and the perspective that it chose to favor. A good example of a community stigmatized throughout the pandemic by some media outlets was the 'anti-vaxxer' community ([Mylan & Hardman, 2021](#)). Such stigmatization would be echoed by segments of the public using social media platforms and was even in particular contexts supported by social media companies themselves. Whether this stigmatization was accurate, justified, and necessary is beyond the remit of this particular article. More pertinent to this analysis is the media's stigmatization of some religious communities. A classic example of this occurring is in relation to religious groups who were accused of causing the spread of the virus, as discussed in the beginning of this article. This may have been justified on many occasions, but the media was also criticized at times for exaggerated claims which bordered on racism. In England, the Islamic Human Rights Commission for example filed an official complaint with the British Broadcasting Corporation for what it felt was unfair and inaccurate coverage of the British Muslim community's contribution to the spread of the virus ([Al-Astewani, 2020](#)).

This was also an issue for the Chinese Christian community in Britain. This religious community found itself in a uniquely challenging situation during the COVID-19 pandemic for a number of reasons. The first is that COVID-19 originated in China, which had implications for how the community was portrayed by the media and

treated by the public ([Goodwin et al., 2021](#)). The second is the complicated and tense relationship between the UK and China, which has only been exacerbated during the pandemic due to tensions in Hong Kong, the Russian-Ukraine war, and other political developments. The third is the controversial restrictions that the Chinese government has imposed on all religious groups in China, including the Christian community.

Chinese people living in Europe suddenly found themselves to be a target of racism and xenophobia after the origin of the Covid-19 outbreak was attributed to Chinese territory. Racism has always been an issue in modern multicultural societies; however, it became particularly exacerbated during the pandemic. This is because of the intense fear and anxiety which grips societies during a health crisis and pushes people to act in inappropriate and irrational ways ([Tyagi et al., 2020](#); [Patiro et al., 2022](#)). A classic illustration of such behavior is the panic shopping which became a phenomenon in developed societies around the world, leading to severe shortages in supermarkets of certain products and resulting in unnecessary hoarding of resources. The Chinese Christian community in Britain was no exception to this racism campaign which was directed against Chinese people more generally. This was even though Chinese churches were some of the most efficient religious institutions in the country to respond to the pandemic. By early March 2020, most Chinese churches had complied with the advice of the National Health Service by moving religious services online, encouraging their congregations to self-isolate and contain the spread of the disease, and providing anti-bacterial handwash and wipes on Church premises ([Huang et al., 2021](#)). Racism of course does not pay attention to such details. The media played a positive role in this context, covering reports of increasing levels of racism incidents in schools and public transport. Chinese churches also rose to the challenge by providing

counselling to those affected and calling for support from schools and the police (Huang et al., 2021). This marked another example of state authorities and religious leaders coming together to form a constructive partnership. Overall, racism thus became an additional burden which the Chinese Christian community in Britain had to shoulder in addition to all the other challenges brought about by the pandemic.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This article has highlighted several illuminating socio-legal themes that arise in relation to religious responses within a pandemic such as COVID-19. The article began by noting that religious groups played both positive and more negative roles in their immediate responses to the emergence of the virus. A classic example of the latter was large congregational gatherings which led to the further spread of the virus. Examples of the former include the promotion by religious groups of stringent adherences to state health policies and pastoral services offered to society at large in various ways. The theme that arises from this discussion is the extremely powerful social force which religion represents in such crises, having the capacity to influence global events in different directions. This role is enhanced by the fact that religion becomes a safe haven which many people fall back upon in social crises due to the unique pastoral resources which it has historically harnessed, as was examined in Section 2.

Prior to this, Section 1 explored the complicated relationship between science and religion in the context of a pandemic. Two key themes can be deduced from this analysis. The first is that religious institutions with close political ties with the state can be expected to comply with state health policies in a pandemic situation. The second is that scripture and theology can be used in conflicting ways to respond to a pandemic, depending on the method of interpretation

and various sociological factors. In this regard, the examples of the British Muslim Community and the Chinese Christian Community highlighted the various complex decisions and emotions which all religious groups face in both similar and variegating ways during a global pandemic crisis when responding to state health policies. The final section investigated the positive and negative roles which the media played during the pandemic. The key theme that emerged from this investigation was that modern media and technology are double-edged swords which can be used for both good and bad in such situations.

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# Christianization as a Challenge for Islamic Da'wah in Indonesia

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## Abstract

The aim of this study was to evaluate the growth and impact of Christianity as a missionary religion on the Islamic da'wah in Indonesia, where the Muslim community has a long history of resistance to colonialization, which was initiated by the Christian community. Furthermore, a qualitative descriptive method was used with data predominantly obtained through the observation of facts in the Christianization field. In addition, the effects of Christianity on the Islamic da'wah were analyzed through a review of documentation and reference studies. The results showed that some of the methods used by Christians in spreading their religion and movements were occupation, politics, Western citizens, poverty, diseases, consciousness weakness, self-preparation, Muslims' indulgence, financial guarantees, Laziness in teachings, preparing the missionaries, and brainwashing. By utilizing these methods, Christians often proclaimed their denomination and congregation, ultimately leading to various community conflicts. The findings suggest the need for a healthy and productive dialogue from a new perspective to resolve conflicts, promote harmony, and create a fairer, peaceful, and innovative civilization that views religion through spiritual perspectives.

**Keywords:** Christianization; Islamic Da'wah; Indonesia

## INTRODUCTION

The current era of globalization and technology presents several challenges to the da'wah, including a lack of strong Islamic understanding among the Muslim community, the spread of misguided thinking from Western civilization, and the implementation of secular laws that contravene God's regulations. To overcome these challenges, various channels are employed to spread the message of da'wah, such as books, bulletins, social media, newspapers, and magazines. However, the development of these channels is facing challenges of its own among the Muslim population. In Indonesia specifically, the da'wah is facing challenges such as apostasy and movements towards secularization and nativization (Husaini, 2007). This condition is arguably in line with the statement of Allah in the Qur'an, indicating the following:

*“Most of the People of the Book wish that they could return you to disbelief after you have believed, because of the envy that (arising) from themselves, after the truth has become apparent to them. So, forgive and leave them alone, until Allah brings His command. Verily Allah has power over all things”* (Al-Baqarah [2] 109).

Since the inception of Islam, the People of the Book, meaning Jews and Christians, have consistently plotted against the religion and its Prophet. This is in line with the declaration made by God regarding the enmity towards Muslims, which is one of His *sunnatullah*. In Al-Baqarah [2] 217, God stated that *“They will not stop fighting you until they (can) return you from your religion (to disbelief) if they can”*. The declaration in Al-Baqarah [2] 105 also indicated that *“The disbelievers of the People of the Book and the polytheists do not wish to send down anything good to you from your Lord, And He told the Almighty that they are not satisfied with anything until we follow them in their religion”*. For Al-Baqarah [2] 120, it was then stated, *“The Jews and the Christians will not be pleased with you until you follow their religion.”*

Based on historical context, the Christians have waged war against Muslims since the Crusades. This background explains the long-standing opposition of the Indonesian Muslim community towards colonization initiated by Christian society. As a result, the Muslim community has endured deep wounds, with Muslims suffering from attacks on their religion, land, and honor. This represents a significant threat to the Islamic faith and its establishment in the hearts of Muslims (Abd Al-Wahhab, 1981; Hamilton, 1997; Christie, 2006; Chevedden, 2008). During the colonial era, Christians made significant efforts to convert the Muslim community away from Islam, using various methods and strategies. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze the goals, means, and effects of Christianization, in order to prevent Muslims from abandoning Islam. In many areas of the world, Christianization has been present for a long time (Alpyspaeva et al., 2019; Hakobyan, 2021; Melnikova, 2018; Štih, 2015) and is still actively preparing for a fierce war with Islam (Daulay, 2015).

The politicization of religion often leads to conflicts among people of different and similar beliefs, particularly in multi-ethnic and multi-religious communities (Popovska et al., 2017; Slaveski et al., 2017). This is not a new phenomenon, as religious conflicts have been present throughout the history of human civilization. For instance, the US September 11 attack, the Arab-Israel conflict, the Iraq invasion, the Military Aggression in Afghanistan, and the Moslem-Buddhist dispute in South Thailand. Several cases are also experienced regionally, such as the Moro Moslem Conflict in Mindanao, South Philippines, as well as some racial, ethnic, religious, and group conflicts in Indonesia. According to the Setara Institute, a total of 160 incidents and 202 cases of religious freedom violation were observed across the 34 provinces of Indonesia in 2018. This included the Kalimantan Tengah Sampit case, the Sulawesi Tengah Poso conflict, the Maluku dispute, the 1998 riots, the Sunni-Shia believers' hostility

in Sampang, the Sumatera Utara Tanjung Balai Case, etc (Ismail & Uyuni, 2020; Mubarok, 2015).

The conflicts in human life arise from various factors, including religion, politics, and arms trade. In the context of religious conflicts, these often stem from differing interpretations and implementations of God's teachings, as well as subjectivity, self-interest, and competition between various groups (Seul, 1999; Spiro, 1966). However, it is important to remember that there is a principle of no religious compulsion, as only God provides and dictates the different paths for people to find the truth. This highlights the reality of human plurality and the importance of avoiding the imposition of religion on others (Madjid, 1998). Although many Muslim intellectuals write about Christianity, they do not have an anti-Christian stance and instead strive to bridge conflicts between the two religions, particularly in Indonesia. The lack of harmony between Islam and Christianity is often fueled by suspicion, leading to conflicts and damage to places of worship. Therefore, this study aims to examine of Christianization as a challenge to Islam da'wah in Indonesia. This topic is very important since Islam is the major religion in Indonesia.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative-descriptive method, which is often implemented interchangeably with distinct interpretations. Based on the qualitative and descriptive analyses, a common denominator is the use of naturalistic data, implying that intervention or manipulation of variables is avoided when studying language acquisition and teaching. However, several distinctions were found between these experimental forms, such as objectives, oversight levels, and data analysis methods (Nassaji, 2015). For the descriptive method, the focus is often on characterizing a phenomenon and its peculiarities, with majority of the related analyses being more

concerned with the "what" than the "how" or "why" of the study emphasis. This showed that several techniques such as surveys and observations are frequently employed to compile information (Gall et al., 2006). Meanwhile, qualitative method was used in numerical analyses, where the results are typically examined statistically by calculating frequency distributions, averages, and other factual measures, to obtain conclusions about causal links. The method commonly employed a more all-encompassing approach and typically entailed a wealth of data collection from many sources, to acquire a deeper knowledge of individual participants, including their ideas, viewpoints, and attitudes. The information obtained and analyzed in the method is also qualitatively prioritized, leading to an inductive data analysis approach. This approach is used to describe and interpret the resulting categories that have been identified.

Quantitative method was mostly applied to the factual data acquired through a qualitative technique, where in-depth analysis was initially conducted to extract salient themes and ideas. These extractions were then transformed into numerical data for adequate comparison and evaluation (Nassaji, 2015). Based on this study, data were predominantly obtained by using factual observations in the Christianization field. Its impacts on Islamic da'wah were also analyzed through documentation and reference studies, specifically in Indonesia. The data originated from field notes, through the extended observations of official documents such as the Qur'an, Al-Hadith, and statutory regulation verses, as well as Islamic scholar analyses.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Christianization concept**

Christianization is the process of introducing Christianity to non-Christians or encouraging the embrace of the religion. This is a religious, political, and colonial movement that emerged after the

failure of the Crusades to spread Christianity among the different nations in the Third World countries, specifically the Muslims. In this case, the spread of religion emphasized the tightening of control over those people. Moreover, Christianization consists of a missionary group occupying a specific area, working to Christianize its residents, and establishing a national church. The administrative and financial responsibility of this establishment is mostly delegated to the people spreading Christianity in areas not reached by the missionaries. It is also established for the conversion of nonbelievers into Christians, with its good effect adequately sufficient to confuse them that religion is a route to humankind, joy, and happiness. Another term for Christianization is evangelism, which involves the introduction of Jesus Christ to people, to promote the abstinence from sins. It also involves the belief in God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, as well as obeying and practicing His teachings (Saleh, 1989).

Christianization is carried out by churches, evangelistic agencies, or individual Christians. Besides changing one's religious status, it also transforms the customs and associations of society to conform to Christian teachings. From this context, Christianity is only intended for atheists and those already having a specific religion. In ancient Indonesia, Christianity was mostly carried out by missionaries from the Netherlands. In this case, Christianization is considered a sacred duty in Catholicism, indicating a person's return to the right path. From a Christian perspective, it is explained as the return of the lost sheep to their shepherd. The mission of Christianization is also based on the commandment of Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:19, which stated the following, "Go, then, and make disciples of all nations, and wash them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit (Saleh, 1989).

*In addition, Christianity is widely understood as an organized, historical, and missionary religion. Firstly, as an organized religion, Christianity originally emphasized a church institution and not a*

religious practice. The "church" was selected due to being the religious institution in Christianity, where people without official cards are unrecognized as Christians ([van den End & de Jonge, 1997](#)). In 1474, Marsilio Ficino wrote a book, "*De Christiana Religione*", which implicitly marks the beginning of Christianity as a religious institution. From the book, one of the phrases indicated that "*that whoever they are, in worshiping and glorifying God, they must be as exemplified and taught by Christ*" ([Ficino, 1617](#)). In 1525, Zwingli, the leader of the Swiss Protestants, explicitly wrote about "Christian Religion" in the book, "*De Ver et Falsa Religione Commentarius*" (1525), where the span of years was quite far until Christianity was known as a religious institution ([Aulassyahied, 2019](#)).

Secondly, as a historical religion, the Christian doctrine evolved based on the experiences of its followers. For example, the doctrine was determined by the ruling authorities in that era. When Christianity became firmly established in the hearts of the Roman people, two sects, the followers of Arius and the followers of Athanasius, were in conflict with each other. The followers of Arius or Arianism believed that Jesus existed as a man ([Haugaard, 1960](#); [Lyman, 1989](#)), while the followers of Athanasius emphasized His existence as the Word of God made flesh ([Meyer, 1999](#); [Meijering, 2010](#)). These disputes prompted King Constantine to convene a Council, toward determining the appropriate belief to be established as the official doctrine. The Council ended with the election of the Arius belief by the majority of the community. Meanwhile, Constantine preferred to believe in Athanasius due to being closer to Greek mythology ([Aulassyahied, 2019](#)).

Thirdly, as a missionary religion, Christianity was essentially divided into different doctrines. In the beginning, it became exclusive teaching because the church power holders were authoritarian and dictatorial. This explained that the small states obtained from the

division of Rome were subjected to the power of the Church, which focused on economic authority. These practices were transformed after the outbreak of the French revolution, with the divisions between Christian sects continuously maintained until saturation. From this scenario, the ideology of pluralism was observed. accompanied by Evangelical Christianity with a strong character with the doctrine. This showed that salvation was unachievable except through religion, leading to the ability to persuade people toward embracing Christianity. In addition, the antithesis of Evangelism is Ecumenism, which recognizes the sects of various churches. Based on these descriptions, differences and similarities are only observed at the exoteric and esoteric levels of Christian values, respectively (Aulassyahied, 2019).

### **Christianization Fundamentals (the proposition of Christianization)**

The aim of Christianization is to Christianize or introduce Christianity to various people, focusing on only Bible verses than self-will. The following are some Bible verses emphasizing Christianization,

- a. Matthew 28:19-20: *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and make them do all things that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.”*
- b. Mark 16:15: *“Then He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.’”*
- c. John 20:21: *“Then Jesus said to them again: ‘Peace be with you! As the Father sent me, even so now I send you.’”*
- d. Luke 24: 47-48: *“Peace in His name, the news of repentance and forgiveness of sins is preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are a witness to all this.”*

- e. Acts 1: 8: "*But ye shall receive power, after that, the Holy Ghost comes upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*"

Based on these verses, Christianization is arguably an attempt to Christianize or introduce Christianity to all people, whose effort does not prioritize self-will (Betz, 1991; Stark, 1991).

### **The People of the Book**

The People of the Book is an Islamic term prioritizing Christians, Jews, Sabians (commonly identified with the Mandaeans) and Zoroastrians, which are mentioned in the Qur'an. This ideology is employed in Judaism for the surveillance of the Jewish people, with some Christian denomination members implementing it for themselves. The Qur'an also used the ideology in various contexts, from religious polemics to passages emphasizing the community of faith among possessors of monotheistic scriptures. Furthermore, the Qur'an focuses on the community of faith between monotheistic scripture possessors and occasionally considers the religious and moral virtues of early-revelation societies. In this scenario, Muhammad is called upon to ask them for information. Based on the refusal of Jews and Christians to accept Muhammad's message in His environment, the Qur'an stressed their inability to comprehend and practice the knowledge they already possess. It also showed that the Christians were unable to appreciate the appropriateness of His teaching (Vajda, 2012).

The following focuses on the People of the Book goals (Baidi, 2010):

- a. Barring from the path of God Almighty: "*Have you not seen those who have been given a share of the Book (Torah)? They buy (choose) misguidance (with guidance) and they intend for you to stray (deviate) from the (right) path.*" (An-Nisa: 44)

- b. The path of God is crooked, sloping, and straight in itself. *"Those who prefer the life of this world to the life of the hereafter, and hinder (people) from the path of Allah and desire that the way of Allah be crooked. They are far in error."* (Ibrahim: 3)
- c. Muslims follow their deity. *"The Jews and the Christians will not be pleased with you until you follow their religion. Say: " Verily Allah's guidance is the (true) guidance". And verily if you follow their will after knowledge has come to you, then Allah will no longer be your protector and helper."* (Al-Baqarah: 120)
- d. The Islamic nation apostates and returns to its roots. *"They want you to be disbelievers as they have become disbelievers, then you become the same (with them). So do not make among them (your) helpers, until they emigrate in the way of Allah. So if they turn away, take them prisoner and kill them wherever you find them, and do not take any of them as a protector, and do not (also) be a helper."* (An-Nisa: 89)
- e. Being keen on the troubles of the Muslims and their difficulties, harms, and affair spoilage. *"And whatever good they do they are never prevented from (receiving their reward); and Allah is Knowing of those that are pious."* (Ali Imran: 115)
- f. The temptation of the Muslims, the plots against them, as well as their betrayal, religious abandonment, and long-term suppression. *"If (they went with you), surely they would not increase your (strength), instead they would only create chaos, and they would certainly rush forward in the gaps of your ranks to cause chaos (in your ranks); while among you there are those who are very fond of listening to their (words)."* (At-Taubah: 47)

Based on these verses, the missionaries often aim to achieve a set of goals in Islamic countries, due to their consideration of Islam as the only religion posing a danger to them. This indicates that other religions such as Judaism, Buddhism, etc, are not feared because they are national spiritual practices not extending outside their nations and people. Meanwhile, Islam is a dynamic and influential religion extending by itself and without any force, leading to being considered a threat to Christianity.

## **Christianization goals**

Christianization is generally intensified in a large environment with massive targets and is also unlimited to small groups. This shows that the international practice can spread Christianity in the world, with the distribution of specific beliefs considered the human right of every person. However, limitations need to be implemented regarding the respect for everyone's decisions. This explains that no action should be highly observed towards coercion.

Based on the statements of God Almighty, the People of the Book were accused of disbelieving the verses of their Lord, broke His covenant, and killed the prophets. This led to their hearts being completely sealed by God. Therefore, several actions were carried out against them due to their violation of agreement, disbelief in the statements of Allah, and killing of the prophets without a true reason except "*Our hearts are closed*". Allah had also locked their hearts to death because of the disbeliefs possessed, leading to many disbelievers except a small part of them (An-Nisa:155). The following features are generally the goal of Christianity:

- a. *Conversio gentilium*. *Conversio gentilium is an attempt to convert unbelievers from their sins toward repentance. This is the first goal of Christianity, and its results are very visible.*
- b. *Plantatio ecclesiae*. *The second goal is to develop the church, where the understanding of the Bible is outwardly obtained.*
- c. *Gloria et manifestation gratiae divinae*. *Christianization aims to provide divine gifts, specifically for the followers of Calvinism, and is observed to have the highest goal record.*

## **Christianization means**

Two strategies were applied by the Dutch in carrying out colonialism and Christianization missions. Firstly, buffer areas were considered the power guards weakening the authority of the Muslim ranks, due to having high loyalty to the Dutch government, such as

the Batak, Manado, Minahasa, and Maluku (Wibowo, 2018). Besides this, the foreigners also implemented ethical politics in several areas, where the forced cultivation policy was carried out. These political ideologies were considered part of the Dutch government's reciprocation, which was manifested into irrigation and education. This ethical policy is loaded with Christianization (Aritonang, 2019).

Secondly, the Dutch strategy was carried out by separating ethnic and religious identity. This strategy emphasized an essential success known as *kejawen*, which is a circular path implemented by the Dutch to shield people away from Islam (Wibowo, 2018). In 1830, the Dutch founded the *Instituut Voor Her Javaansche Taal* (Javanese Language Institute) within Surakarta, which consisted of Javanese experts (Dutch Javanologists) on a mission to rediscover ancient native literature, language, and history. This rediscovery activity emphasized the reconnection of the native artifacts with people's lives, for traditions and culture to overshadow the Islamic teachings that were becoming valuable and customary. Besides this, the Netherlands attempted to eliminate traces of Islamic culture and civilization, toward achieving the Christianization mission smoothly (Aulassyahied, 2019). These elimination efforts included the collection of all the tombstones containing Islamic history information, which were subsequently arranged into fortresses. From this context, the removal of Islamic foundation from the historical facts of Indonesia was prioritized (Rohmah, 2019).

### **The form of the Christianization movement in Indonesia**

The Christianization movement in Indonesia is carried out by several organizations, which are specifically responsible for the distribution of Christianity. An example is the Christian organizations observed during the Dutch colonial era. During this era, the Dutch attempted to spread Protestantism by acquiring zending from the

Netherlands. Some of these protesting figures in Indonesia were Dr. Nomensem, Hernius, and Sebastian, which effectively contributed to the spread of Protestantism. This led to the present knowledge of Protestant Christianity by the wider community. They also formed many Christian organizations in various regions (Doeka, 2018; Aritonang, 2019).

Spain and Portugal obtained the blessing and mandate from Pope Alexander VI in 1493, as affirmed in the Treaty of Tordesillas 1494 (Bennassar, 1992; McCourt, 2010), when the two countries wanted to colonize the world. This essentially required explorers and merchants from both Catholic Christian countries to spread the religion. Compared to the Portuguese and Spanish, the State and The Netherlands had never physically met the people and authorities of Islam before arriving in Asia. Despite pursuing economic benefits and helping to build the Dutch empire, VOC still obtained a mandate from the Protestant Church, to spread the Christian belief under the contents of Article 36 of the Dutch Confession of Faith in 1561 (Aritonang, 2019).

To conquer and defend its power, the Dutch colonial government at that time read Islamic teachings into three categories, according to the advice of Snouck Hurgronje (Benda, 1958; Burhanudin, 2014). These categories included (1) pure religion and worship, (2) social field, and (3) the political field. Snouck Hurgronje's advice is known as "political Islam" or the government colonial policy employed to handle Islamic problems in Indonesia. This led to the authoritative provision of flexibility to Muslims based on all distributions, except in the political field. In this case, all the efforts leading to fanaticism and Pan-Islamism were also prevented (Effendi, 2012; Hasan, 2014; Khotimussalam, 2019; Hendriani, 2020).

The main issue encountered by the Netherlands was the developmental patterns of the feelings capable of pleasing the

Indonesian people about the Dutch government. This led to the development of the following two perspectives. Firstly, cultural elements, where Indonesians accept the Western culture without sidelining their native customs. This aims to tightly develop the bonds of the colony than the colonizer, leading to the provider of a colonized population with benefits embedded in the colonizers' culture. Secondly, "Christianization", emphasizing the patterns by which the religion of the population, is transformed into Christianity. According to the mission (Christian), Christianization was easier when the first sight met, leading to the benefit of the Dutch government. This was because the native population understood the close relationship between religion and government order. After converting to Christianity, citizenship is provided to the people physically and mentally loyal to the Company (Noer, 1973).

Based on these descriptions, some Christianization companies were observed in various regions during the Dutch colonial era, such as the following (McCurry, 1979):

- a. *Nederlands Zendeling Genootschap* (NZG), an organization tasked with carrying out evangelism, toward introducing and spreading the Protestant religion.
- b. Establishment of church organizations in Indonesia, such as GPM (*the Maluku Protestant Church*), HKBP (*Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*), and GKJW (*Jawi Wetan Christian Church*). This shows that GPM is an organization considered a forum to accommodate Protestants in Maluku.
- c. *The Herlege Hart Order*, an organization with the responsibility for the Christian community in Papua.
- d. *Societeit van het Goddelijk Woord*, served in Timor and Flores.
- e. *The Capuchin Group*, which covers areas in Sumatra and Kalimantan (Kristianus, 2022).

f. Christian schools playing a role in the spread of Protestantism.

Christianization flourished, as well as became intensive and expansive in Indonesia after the independence period, especially after the collapse of The Old Order. The New Order inception headed by President Soeharto provided blessings to Christianity, indirectly supporting Christian freedom than Islam. From the 1970s to the 1990s, Christianity significantly progressed because many communists converted to the religion. This led to the protection of those involved in communist activities by the Indonesian churches. The Christian development was also supported by modernization and propaganda, through service to the poor, orphans, etc. This caused suspicion, worry, and anxiety among the Muslims against the Christianization movement, leading to inharmonious and heated relationships between Islam and Christianity. In this scenario, the emergence of conflict was observed during the New Order, causing worship centre destructions and Christian losses worse than the experiences of 1995-1997 (Mansur, 2014).

**The most important means of support for evangelization and evangelists**

Among the direct measures implemented by the missionaries to reach Islamic and non-Islamic societies, some conditions prepared for the missionaries and the incursion patterns into other societies were observed. These conditions were very supportive in the achievement of missionary goals. The methods included old and contingent, renewed, and new elements. The most important supportive measures for evangelization and evangelists were observed as follows:

*The occupation*

The first and most powerful supportive measures are occupation and colonialism, with the missionaries often calling for the colonists to occupy Islamic and non-Islamic countries. When the country was

occupied, the occupiers humiliated the challenges encountered by the missionaries, leading to the easy establishment of their institutions in Muslim nations. This shows that Christianization and occupation are two sides of the same coin, with history proving that the seizure of people's lands was often accompanied by the initiatives of church development (Gray, 1982; Kahlout, 1992; Okon, 2014).

The synergy between the occupiers and the evangelists is an aspect imposed by the Church, which emphasizes revenge for those expelled from the remnants of the Crusades. Therefore, the famous phrase declared within Jerusalem in the fourth decade of the 14th century AH emphasized the end of the Crusades in the second ten-year period of the 20th hundred-year era. This phrase was launched by Lord Allenby when he walked to the heart of the holy city in Jerusalem, after the British occupied it in the late 1917 AD. When he supervised the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the following famous phrase was stated, namely "*Today the Crusades ended*". This was similar to the statement of General Gouraud to a Frenchman when he arrived at Damascus, the Levant, and stood on the tomb of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi. Based on the historical context, the General immediately went to the grave of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi at The Umayyad Mosque when the Maysaloon army was defeated outside Damascus al-Sham. Standing over the tomb and kicking him, the following statements were produced by the General, "*Here we are, Salah al-Din*". This statement was in response to the efforts of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, regarding the liquidation and expulsion of the Crusaders to their country after the Battle of Hattin (Saleh, 1989).

The missionaries and colonial politicians also had direct confrontations regarding the groups capable of advancing the other. Historically, the missionaries were the first set of people to enter the country, accompanied by the colonists. However, the missionaries wanted the armies to advance over them at the beginning of the

thirteenth (AH) to the nineteenth (AD) century, after the local rulers realized that the entry of the evangelists emphasized the occupation of the country. This led to a very massive hardship for the missionaries. Based on "Evangelist Watson", the Western governments cooperated to prevent the spread of Islam among the pagan tribes in Africa. This prioritized easier Christianization tasks when Islam was eliminated, although the evangelists had great fear for the competition (Saleh, 1989).

The missionaries also believed that Western sovereignty in an Islamic country did not mean facilitating the transition of Muslims to Christianity, although the loss of this authority mostly led to a completely reverse movement (Khalidi & Farukh, 1953). This was in line with the declaration of Father de Foucault, where a national movement, similar to the observation in Turkey, was likely to occur when the Muslim population in North African colonies are unable to be not Christianized. In this case, an elite group of intellectuals in major cities were likely influenced by French ideas, without having their unique thoughts. For example, under French colonial rule, little remained of the Algerian tradition of Islamic education and scholarship, and although a significant movement of reformist Islamic religious scholars emerged in the 1930s, religious scholars and their institutions played no significant role after Algeria regained its independence (Meuleman, 2011).

The favour of every efforts made to the missionaries were also returned when they prayed and paved the path for it. From this context, active attempts to use missionaries were only carried out for the service of colonization and slavery. These missionaries were of great help in Asia, Africa, and America, regarding the collection of information on the diagonals. Their clothing also protected them and hid any economic or political intentions (Furley, 1965; Andrews, 2009).

## ***Politics***

A supportive measure of Christianization is the Western governments, which are theoretically known as "secular" authorities due to their nonchalant attitudes toward religion. However, they commonly guarantee religious freedom and personal practices of spiritual rites, indicating that the secularism of the state does not emphasize their non-religiousness. Since the theoretical perspective does not involve religion in the affairs of the state, an impact is often served on its internal and external decisions. Despite the assumptions about the secularism of Western countries, their efforts to support missionaries through gifts, facilities, and project adoption should not be ignored. They are also responsible for the involvement of the missionaries in national news operations and the input of intelligence men among the religious groups (Khidr, 1997).

## ***Western citizens***

The missionaries are strongly supported by the Western citizens through high budgets and institutions, irrespective of their reputation as representatives of commercial and economic systems. In this case, fundraising campaigns are frequently featured in media, on the streets, and through mail, with increased activities observed on Sundays when people attend church and the spiritual aspect is heightened after enthusiastic sermons. Those not privileged to be in the church are also exposed to the sermons through linked television or local radio stations for a fee. This is because local radio and television stations often comply with the broadcast time rental system, enabling churches to rent hours on Sunday mornings and other religious occasions. In this case, a famous priest known as Billy Graham frequently use of this medium to preach to people for long hours without interruption from commercials, news, etc. Although

some Islamic centers attempted to follow this method locally, various technical and financial capabilities were still inadequate.

### ***Poverty***

The conditions of poverty and destitution left by a group of human factors and "natural" disasters are considered the situation of Muslims by God's decree and predestination. From various perspectives, the circumstances in this society highlights the means of support for Christianization campaigns, due to being a powerful assistance tool. These missionaries have the material capabilities to reach afflicted areas irrespective of the ruggedness or remoteness of the region, as long as the destitute poor eat drought from their skin. In this case, they are ready to accept any relief reaching them without examining its source and underlying goals. The thoughts about the doctrinal and intellectual affiliations are also not condoned. When the mind regains the ability to distinguish, these missionaries are often left with various questions, such as "Where are the Muslims among us?".

### ***Diseases***

The outbreak of diseases and epidemics is a fertile ground for evangelization and missionaries, as well as any invitation or direction. This highlights the use of medicine and nursing evangelization as a means of converting people. For instance, a mother carrying a pale-faced infant with prominent ribs and an enlarged abdomen is willing to seek help from anyone capable of improving the child's health, regardless of the ideology behind the aid. This highlights the use of medical treatment as a tool for evangelization.

The evangelists often exploit this situation by attributing the attempts to heal the child to Jesus bin Maryam, peace be upon them. In this case, the family of the patient was told that when God wanted the child to be cured, it was due to Jesus. This indicated that Jesus was willing to carry out the desires in exchange for their conversion to

Christianity. This tragedy is often repeated daily and shown on satellite TV screens in the painful and sad scenes developed by humans ([Bakhit, 2011](#)).

### ***Weakness of consciousness***

The weak awareness of religion and life is the “absolute” ignorance among people, where the truth is mixed with falsehood and superstition for many of them, leading to the spread of heresies. This enhances people's receptiveness to missionaries and their ideas, which are based on religion. From this context, the missionaries do not promote rejection of religion, although encourage prayer and fasting, as well as maintain the connection between the servant and the Lord. However, the missionaries promote these concepts personally, not in the natural patterns that people are born or raised. According to Zweimer, the persistence of amulet belief and its effects delayed the conditions of Islamic people and increased their misery. This showed that the existence of religious awareness, as well as the causes of civilization and civic were challenges to Christianization campaigns. It was also supported by the declaration of Zweimer, where “The corrupt and dangerous plan led to the direct broadcast of civility principles and then distributed Christianity. The introduction of civilization and civility before Christianity was ineffective and caused more negative consequences than positive outcomes” ([Châtelier & Majerczak, 1912](#)).

The result was also supported by the saying of one of them in the Colorado conference 1398 AH-1978 CE, where the majority of Muslims were likely to convert to Christianity ([Lausanne Movement, 1978](#)). This was because they were animists, believed in evil spirits and jinn, as well as understand very little about authentic Islam. Many Muslims also held strong beliefs in the spells providing them with the strength to confront the difficulties and challenges of life. Although they

believed in the existence of jinns, the beliefs in evil spirits and spells should not be accommodated in their hearts and daily lives. This is because monotheistic doctrines do not condone superstitious activities nor allow them to destroy lives. Based on these descriptions, the spread of incantations and superstition prevalence in some Muslim societies, is only an inevitable result of the distance from the pure creed. This underestimates the value of its advocates, as well as accuses them of backwardness, deviation, reaction, and fundamentalism (Hill, 1965; Ali, 1999; Khalaf & Abid, 2022).

### ***Self-preparation***

The missionaries in their entirety have the self-willingness to engage in Christianizing campaigns for distinguished motives, specifically adventure, trips, and entry into the communities different from Western society. This intended religious motives often originate initially from behind the campaigns. Despite their effectiveness, these motives are not the first self-preparedness indicators of all missionaries. This is because a limited number of them often abandon the missionary goal, and are most likely to convert from Christianity to Islam or another religion. From this context, they are likely to spread the new trend, specifically Islam, among Christians and Muslims. These are in line with previous few and limited cases, although the sentiments of these missionaries toward their call to Christianity were observed. For example, some cases were found in the United States of America, Germany, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where potential missionaries converted and became advocates of Islam. This is a phenomenon that is continuously increasing with time and awareness (McCurry, 1979).

### ***Financial guarantees***

Missionaries frequently obtain financial and social support from Christian organizations and institutions, which helps provide for

themselves, their families, and their children. This support includes securing housing, sustenance, education, and scholarship opportunities at prestigious universities. It is also in the form of subsidies for the poor and needy, such as food, clothing, and money (Shalaby, n.d) This becomes evident when societies are exposed to adversities, disasters, floods, famines, volcanoes, earthquakes, or wars. Moreover, the missionaries often capitalize on these calamities by providing material or housing services to feed and shelter the afflicted. This was to evangelize them, while providing supplies, clothes, and tents as a blessing from Jesus, peace be upon him (Ramli et al., 2018).

Missionaries use either inspirational messages, slogans, and symbols or discreet methods to attract people, to deter them from their message. The missionaries are also gradually winning over the recipients of their aids, by building friendship through their assistance and then moving on to presenting Christianity to them (Khalidi & Farukh, 1953). When the missionaries provide aid, they often communicate with each other to set a plan to organize funding programs for charity to Muslims. This showed that they are obligated to spend generously and wisely to attract Muslims to their ranks. In this process spending should be gradually reduced and stopped when they completely convert to Christianity (AlNamlah, 1993).

### *Laziness in teachings*

Christianity has been subjected to distortion since ancient times, during the intervention of the Jews, which was represented by “Shaul” or “Paul” in the conduct of Christian affairs. These constant distortions led to flexibility, which emphasized Christianity's loss of teachings. The willingness to quit some religious teachings also existed, such as those related to strictness, divorce, pluralism, tolerance, etc. Moreover, the abandonment of principles and ideals supported the missionaries

in entering the communities and establishing themselves among the tribes. These tribes were controlled by the sheik and encountered constant pressure from missionaries to adopt Christianity, while preserving their religiously unaligned local customs and traditions (Dallu, 1989). When the sheiks do not accept Christianity, most missionaries commonly attempted to encourage them to abandon Islam. In this case, no objection is observed for the missionaries to achieve the goal of sacrificing the inherited teachings of Jesus Christ son of Mary, peace be upon them. This trend does not seem to prevail among faithful Christians (AlNamlah, 1993).

### *Preparing the missionaries*

In the evangelism phase, two stages need to be passed, namely (1) the pre-evangelism phase and (2) the evangelism procession. Firstly, schools or educational institutions are often founded by the Christian activists not on a religious mission. This only emphasizes the subsequent discussion about Christianity and provides a positive impression on the matters related to the Christian community. Besides the introduction and positive imaging phase, this stage is very important in determining the success of the Christianization mission. This is due to the development of the method had been applied since the beginning of independence. In this case, several positive results were obtained after independence. Around 70%-80% of Indonesians who "converted to Christianity" had criticized and attended Christian schools between 1958-1970 although the schools did not directly convert them to Christians (Aulassyahied, 2019).

The provision of the missionaries with equipment supplies is one of the principles of Christianization and observed as an irreversible opportunity. This is because the demand of the needy causes the missionaries to succeed in their perspectives, which often emphasizes apparent and hidden Christianization. The evangelists also

understands that the field of sedition is fertile for spreading ideas and poison. This is because the truth is commonly confused with falsehood in temptation, with the soul living in confusion and turmoil. The confusion state also becomes attached to any matter deluded toward salvation and sincerity (Al-Fassi, 1973; Arifin, 2016; Ma'sa, 2018).

The institutions of evangelization of associations and organizations are found to deliberately equip the evangelists completely, capitalizing on their readiness for the journey and adventure. These institutions work on teaching them languages, temperaments, customs, prevailing religions, and the aspects of weakness. When weaknesses are not possessed, their positions on Islam are often emphasized through the fabrications of ancient and modern orientalist. In this case, orientalist and missionaries are eligible to proceed due to being familiar with the societies presented to them. They are also ready to confront difficulties and challenges about dealing, living, eating habits, or housing. Moreover, the evangelists need to share their food, livelihood, housing, and clothing with people regardless of the conditions, specifically in the areas of various customs and traditions. In Arab societies, the meat of carrots is often eaten while drinking the milk of the "relicts". Besides this, camels are also milked with cats and quails serving as food sources. Locusts and wild animals are rarely eaten in Arab societies, with camels believed to be a savage and rough animal. This pattern of evaluating situations is common in other societies in Asia and Africa, which inspires missionaries to have a psychological readiness for new experiences and a love of adventure (Shalaby, 1991; Muttaqin, 2004).

### *Muslims' indulgence*

The willingness of some Muslims, local rulers, tribal chiefs, and sheiks to tolerate the spread of Christianity is one method to support its spread. This approach often attracts missionaries and provides

them with the resources to establish mission institutions. Some Muslims also opened the doors wide for the missionaries, promising them saviors from backwardness, reaction, ignorance, and introversion (Ziegler, 1990). According to Salama bint al-Sayyid Saeed al-Busaidi, the level of tolerance for missionaries had led to the high establishment of churches in a predominantly Muslim society, such as in Zanzibar. This princess was born on 14/8/1260 AH of a Circassian mother. Her brother, Sayyid Majid, assumed power after her father's death, with she and his brother, Sayyid Barghash (Frankl, 2006), became involved in plots against him. Salama bint al-Sayyid Saeed al-Busaidi fled to Aden by sea, and was accompanied by Herr Henrik Ruete, the German secretary of the Hansing Company in Zanzibar. After fleeing by sea, they traveled to Hamburg, Germany, and settled as a married couple, where she was then known as Princess Emily Roth. When her husband died, she was devoted to writing, and came out with her diaries.

Furthermore, Salama bint al-Sayyid Saeed al-Busaidi returned to Zanzibar and died on 7/23/1342 AH, with her age well over eighty. She was survived by three sons and two daughters, including Rudolph Said Rueti, which worked as a lecturer in the history of Oman and his grandfather, Saeed, at a university in Britain. Based on these descriptions, missionaries need to be allowed to work in these societies, by confronting, warning, and restricting those challenging them. Although Salama bint al-Sayyid Saeed al-Busaidi had converted to Christianity and moved to a Christian community, her memoirs still dripped with grief in Zanzibar. Salama bint al-Sayyid Saeed al-Busaidi remained loyal to her family, country, and first religion despite converting to Christianity, living in the West for a long time, and being rejected at home. When forced to mention an issue in the East that Westerners did not like, such as women's veiling, polygamy, or slave ownership, Salama bint al-Sayyid Saeed al-Busaidi vehemently

defended and justified the idea. In this case, the ideas did not detract from the nobility of her intent, which was characterized by innocence and naivety (Bhacker, 1991; Romero, 2012; Reute, 2017).

In addition to the princess's memoirs, other Arab princes also had instances where they facilitated opportunities for missionaries to achieve their goals, even when resistance was anticipated. This was specifically observed when they disguised in the clothes of doctors, nurses, etc. This was included in the hidden phase, due to the expectation that the Arab princes and rulers were against the explicit Christianization of all Muslim societies. The history of the East African coast was incomplete, with the Sultan of Zanzibar facilitating Christian missions despite being a Muslim (Akinola, 1972; Pawelczak, 2020). This indicated democracy in Islam, which did not interfere in the affairs of any other religion. This was in line with the Qur'an, where no compulsion was found in religion. From this context, the Sultan provided all assistance and facilities to the Christian missions when contacted. This assistance was carried out in good faith and complete adherence to the principles of Islam.

The distortion of other religious communities' aqidah specifically led to divisions or frictions between fellow spiritual society in Indonesia. This indicated that the government need to protect the diverse community, specifically Muslims, from division or conflict attempts. Besides this, the emergence of deviant sects was also a causal agent of conflict. Blasphemy and the establishment of unregulated worship houses were subsequently the part of the factors causing disputes and divisions. The missionary movement also attempted to influence Muslims through educational assistance, by using charitable projects. This movement fostered relationships with local governments and residents, leading to the development of businesses in various fields. Some missionaries also pretended to be Muslim to carry out their missions (Ma'sa, 2018; Pelkmans, 2021).

This entails appointing Christian leaders over a predominantly Muslim population, reducing the majority to a minority and allowing missionaries to freely travel throughout cities, villages and rural areas, safeguarding them at the cost of the Muslim citizens. According to evangelist Kenneth Latworth, no widespread transition was observed from Islam to Christianity in a country until the Islamic government was replaced with a Western Christian authority capable of pursuing an effective policy in helping missionaries. In this case, the Western governments did not emphasize direct control, which had ended with the cessation of the occupation from Muslim countries ([AlNamalah, 1993](#)).

### ***Brainwashing***

Brainwashing is a tactic used by missionaries to undermine, divide, distort, and deceive the Islamic foundation, population, roles, and future generations of a nation. This includes casting doubt on the authenticity of the Prophet Muhammad and His message. In this case, many within the missionary community denied the Prophet's status as holy and a messenger of God. This was due to the floundering in the interpretation of the revelational manifestations. Some of the masses also attributed this denial to the epilepsy periodically suffered by the Prophet. However, they did not deny the phenomenon of revelation in human reality, due to the prophetic acknowledgment in their books ([Usudullah, 2015](#)).

The creation of minds among Christians was also apparent through the use of place or personal names. For example, some individuals often select names for their children, which reflected foreign identities. This indicated that the name found in a street was likely to resemble those found in non-Christian/infidel countries. The provision of infidel names was also a massive issue, specifically for girls. Although a name is familiar to Muslims, it is still likely to be

similar somewhere else with a huge difference. This indicated the difficulties encountered in mere name distinction. For them, the end justifies the media found to be common Islamically. This proved that the media with the rule of ends or purposes were possessed by Islam (Ismail & Uyuni, 2020).

Other methods, which are not transparent to everyone, are also used to support these efforts, such as incorporating Christian symbols and rituals, especially crosses and bells, into religious and cultural events, etc. Continuous attempts were also observed regarding the establishment of churches for missions, schools, and clubs, which are high and distinct in affecting the minds, emotions, and imaginations of the visitors. This adequately provided non-Christians closer to Christianity, according to the beliefs of the missionaries (Ali, 1999).

### **Reaction of Indonesian Muslims to Christianity**

Natsir wrote extensively about Christianization and mobilized Muslim supporters to counter and overcome the religious activity. Despite being friends with several Christian figures, Natsir did not want Muslims to become targets of the apostasy movement through Christianization (Rahmah, 2020; Rohmah, 2019; Setyani, 2008). The following is an example of M. Natsir's appeal to Christians in Indonesia (Hubeis, 1983, pp. 28–29; Mansur, 2014):

*"We only have one request: Isyhaduu bi anna Muslimuun. Watch and admit that we are Muslims and have completely embraced Islam. The people already have Islamic identities. Do not disturb our identity, brothers and sisters, do not disturb us in this matter of religion. Do not let religion become the subject of disputes, which should not be the case. Let's respect each other's identity and integrity, hence, we can stay in our place and be good friends in the "Iyalullah" environment of the one God family. We Muslims do not a priori consider non-Muslims as enemies. But Allah SWT strictly forbids us to be friends with people who interfere with our religion, Islam. In fact, we will be considered unjust if we do so (al-mumtahinah). We wholeheartedly hope that the brothers and sisters should not have desires like those of the Nashara people blamed in the Qur'an that are not happy already when they have not been able*

*to Christianize the Muslims. Hopefully not so, because when the cord of friendship is broken, the cord of love and sorrow that has been forged between us all will be broken. Lest our path will intersect with all the sad consequences. It is okay for us to be bitter, sometimes between brothers and sisters it is good for us to talk bitterly, that is, we cannot just see that while holding hands. Because, if there is one property that we love from everything it is our religion and faith. That is what we want to pass on to our grandchildren and descendants. Gentlemen do not try to cut this heritage rope either.*

According to Natsir, "The treasure highly emphasized from everything was the religion and faith." This indicated the seriousness of a Muslim that cared about the beliefs of the people. For a Muslim, maintaining the faith is the most important thing, accompanied by the performance of amar ma'ruf activities and nahi munkar, which prioritizes fighting for the truth and preventing evil. This is often known as the activity of "*binaa'an wa difaa'an*" by Natsir. As a religious person, nothing is wrong with sharing love, the truth, and good news to/with other people. However, limitations need to be practiced when sharing and conveying news only, without coercion, seduction, or curses (Mansur, 2014). God Almighty informed the People of the Book that they disbelieved in the verses of their Lord, broke His covenant, and killed the prophets, leading to their hearts being sealed. From this context, the missionaries mainly targeted Islamic countries, because they considered Islam the only religion posing a threat to them. Since the Crusades failed in their Christianization efforts, missionaries resorted to more direct methods to achieve their goals by infiltrating societies (Farhan, 2019).

The dialogue also represented a new and major effort to understand and cooperate with others in increasingly interdependent and religiously diverse countries. This proved that the newness of dialogue and the absence of conceptual clarity required experimentation. Moreover, careful consideration and collaboration are needed for questions related to planning, organization, representation, and topics. A new perspective, which suits modern

opportunities and challenges, is also needed for the present dialogue. This includes a healthy and productive dialogue with a good intention, to understand other beliefs and their problems. The economic, political, and sociocultural development of a better and more peaceful life is also emphasized (Ismail & Uyuni, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results, Catholicization, Protestantization, Pentecostalization, etc, were carried out according to the Christian perspective. This indicated that Christians did not spread their Christianity although proclaimed their denomination and congregation. In this case, their respective churches often clashing and conflicting among themselves were being preached. This was because they both claimed to be the most religious and authentic in their teachings. Furthermore, dialogue and partnership were increasingly important in this new era of globalization, where intercultural communication was essentially developing. The ability to interact with anyone, anywhere and anytime, had also portrayed communication as a crucial factor in success. Despite this, the importance of dialogue was still not a priority in a narrow, argumentative perspective. In this context, dialogue emphasized a healthy and productive form of communication. This new perspective is capable of solving conflict issues, as well as developing synergy for a fairer, just, peaceful, and civilized world. As religious people, compliance with various regulations need to be practiced, accompanied by the development of followers with being open-minded to dialogue. As a complex society, the outlines within the guidelines should be followed and obeyed, toward harmony, peace, and unity. Therefore, Islam was responsible for teaching open-mindedness and tolerance toward other religions.

Based on these results, the importance of intensifying advocacy programs is implied through the conscious readable and audio-visual media in several languages and dialects. A need is also required to raise the awareness of the public and students about the methods and means of Christianization, to avoid missionaries, as well as expose and nullify any form of suspicion. Moreover, the financial support for Islamic goals should be enhanced toward spreading the true religion and providing privileges for those working in the field. Indonesian Muslims also need to learn from some Islamic countries where intellectual colonization was enabled, with its effects highly emphasized in the educational curricula, media, and among the youth. In this case, Muslims should understand that the media is a double-edged sword and should be used optimally for both religious and worldly interests.

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# Policies and Strategies for Improving the Research and Scientific Publications Quality at State Islamic Religious Colleges in Kalimantan

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## Abstract

The quality of research and scientific publications is an essential concern in managing higher education institutions. Therefore, this research aims to examine the policies and strategies for enhancing the quality of research and scientific publications in State Islamic Religious Colleges. This is a qualitative study that gathers data from library and field research. The findings show that each university already has regulations based on provisions from the Ministry of Higher Education, including the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) and External Quality Assurance System (SPME), for managing research quality. Additionally, UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Samarinda, and IAIN Palangkaraya are improving the quality of research and scientific publications of their lecturers with policies such as allocating 30% of BOPTN funds and implementing the LITAPDIMAS system. However, the outputs and benefits of these policies have not been fully realized due to budget absorption issues that limit the development of a research and publication culture. Therefore, developing such a culture presents a significant challenge that requires a long-term commitment and the participation of all stakeholders. The culture-building process should start from upstream to downstream aspects.

**Keywords:** Research Quality; Scientific Publications; State Islamic Religious Colleges

## INTRODUCTION

The field of research and scientific publications is an essential part of university activities in Indonesia. It is one of the three core elements of the Tri Dharma (the threefold missions) of Higher Education that must be fulfilled, along with education and community service. As a result, enhancing the quality of higher education has become an important issue in many discussions at the quality assurance institutes (Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu abbreviated LPM in Bahasa Indonesia) of state Islamic religious colleges in Indonesia (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri abbreviated PTKIN in Bahasa Indonesia). LPM, which is commonly perceived as a key entity responsible for maintaining quality standards in PTKIN, is often associated with the "business" of higher education accreditation quality (Suci, 2017; Sururin, 2017; Islami, 2018). The management of the quality of a university is an LPM "business" that involves all components. Several research identified factors contributing to higher education quality as curriculum (Anih, 2015), learning (Danarwati, 2013), human resource (Indriyanti, 2018), students (Muhlisa, 2014), facilities and infrastructure (Dahlia, 2018), academic atmosphere (Susanto, 2018), financing (Abidin, 2017), research and service (Noor, 2010), scientific publications (Salam et al., 2017), and governance (Singgih & Rahmayanti, 2008).

In Indonesia, universities are evaluated based on research and scientific publications, as outlined in the National Standards for Higher Education. The Minister of Education and Culture's Law Number 3/2020 regarding National Standards for Higher Education includes eight Research Standards out of the 24 minimum standards for the Tri Dharma. These standards are part of the Internal Quality Assurance System (Sistem Penjaminan Mutu Internal abbreviated SPMI in Bahasa Indonesia) policy (Arifudin, 2019), which is complemented by an External Quality Assurance System (Sistem

Penjaminan Mutu Eksternal abbreviated SPME in Bahasa Indonesia) such as the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT) (Legowo & Indiarso, 2017). BAN-PT Regulation No. 3 and 5 of 2019 concerning accreditation instruments at the tertiary level (IAPT 3.0) and study programs (IAPS 4.0), effective from October 1, 2018, and April 1, 2019, prioritize research and scientific publications.

The topic of higher education quality has received considerable attention in recent years. Several preliminary research highlighted different aspects related to this topic, including the importance of SPMI for improving higher education quality (Fitrah et al., 2018), the role of SPMI management (Arifudin, 2019), efforts to improve education quality (Sulaiman & Wibowo, 2016), SPMI implementation (Hendrawan & Yulianeu, 2017), lecturers' resource development for quality assurance (Kusumastuti, 2001), human resource management (Primayana, 2016), university competitiveness in the global era (Indriyanti, 2018), financing management (Abidin, 2017), leadership and lecturer performance (Razak et al., 2017), leadership commitment (Gumiandari, 2016), quality improvement through tracer studies (Wahyuddin, 2016), and the correlation of alumni tracer studies with academic quality improvement (Zulhimma, 2015).

Furthermore, various dimensions of the quality topic have been addressed in the research. These dimensions include curriculum development (Anih, 2015), the quality of Islamic religious higher education curriculum (Alhamuddin, 2016), a comparison of quality management systems and BANPT Standards with Total Quality Management (Asy'ari, 2015), the phenomenon of higher education in Indonesia concerning the implementation of the Tri Dharma (Yuliawati, 2012), considerations in determining academic quality policies, such as goals, value preferences, supporting resource, human capabilities, achievement strategies and environmental factors (Wibowo, 2011). Others include policies and implementation of

research and community service, and an information management application system for scientific publications. Others include determining the policies and implementation of the field of research and community service (Noor, 2010) and information management application systems related to scientific publications (Darmalaksana, 2019).

To the best of our knowledge, there has been no research conducted to examine the policies and strategies aimed at enhancing the quality of research and scientific publications within PTKIN in Kalimantan. Notably, Kalimantan is set to become Indonesia's capital in the next few years, thereby underlining the significance of this region. This region comprises four PTKIN, namely State Islamic University (Universitas Islam Negeri abbreviated UIN in Bahasa Indonesia) Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda, State Islamic Religious Institute (Institut Agama Islam Negeri abbreviated IAIN in Bahasa Indonesia) Palangkaraya, and IAIN Pontianak in South, East, Central, and West Kalimantan, respectively. The Ministry of Religion is responsible for PTKIN, which is categorized into three types of tertiary institutions, namely UIN, IAIN, and State Islamic Religious High Schools (Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri abbreviated STAIN in Bahasa Indonesia). Currently, there are 58 PTKIN in Indonesia consisting of 29 UIN, 24 IAIN, and 5 STAIN (Wikipedia, 2023). This article discusses policies and strategies to improve the quality of research and scientific publications, which are vital for their development and progress.

## **METHOD**

This article employed a combination of library and field research. The literature review examined relevant policy documents related to efforts to improve the quality of research and scientific publications. Meanwhile, the field research component was carried out on three

locations, namely UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda, and IAIN Palangkaraya. The research process comprised three stages, including data collection, data interpretation, and writing. The resulting data and information would be qualitatively analyzed using the PPEPP cycle approach at SPMI, which covers determination, implementation, evaluation, control, and improvement. Therefore, the research employed a reflective (deductive-inductive) and divergent thinking (creative-innovative) approach to draw a conclusion.

## **RESULTS**

### **UIN Antasari Banjarmasin**

The Institute for Research and Community Service (Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat abbreviated LP2M in Bahasa Indonesia) at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin is responsible for coordinating research activities. According to the 2020-2024 research strategic plan, LP2M has prepared a 25-year program as part of the 2015-2039 UIN Antasari research master plan (Rencana Induk Pengembangan abbreviated RIP in Bahasa Indonesia) to establish UIN Antasari as an Islamic university with unique study characteristics and a research-driven spirit that will help it achieve the status of a research university (Tim Penyusun RIP Penelitian, 2018). To achieve this objective, LP2M has outlined five crucial stages that it must undergo to become a world-class university (Tim Penyusun Renstra Penelitian, 2020, p. 11).

The development plan for UIN Antasari Banjarmasin spans five phases. In the initial phase, from 2015 to 2019, the university aimed to upgrade its institutional status from IAIN to UIN and create an excellent campus environment focused on research. The second phase, from 2020 to 2024, aims to develop unique study characteristics and increase research capacity. In the third phase, from 2025 to 2029, the

university aims to become one of the top five state Islamic universities in Indonesia by improving the quality of research based on its strengths and global opportunities. The fourth phase, from 2030 to 2034, targets UIN Antasari to rank among the top 100 universities in Indonesia by emphasizing research and innovation on a global scale. Finally, in the fifth phase, from 2035 to 2039, the institution aims to become a world-class university with research as a measuring tool, striving to gain global recognition for the quality of its research (Tim Penyusun RIP Penelitian, 2018, pp. 26–27).

The LP2M at UIN Antasari implements research activities in accordance with the LITAPDIMAS (abbreviation of Sistem Penelitian, Publikasi Ilmiah, dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat in Bahasa Indonesia or Research, Scientific Publication, and Community Service System) policy established in 2017. The policy was initiated when the university chancellor appointed the research and scientific publications manager as SK No. 881/Un.14/I.4/KP.07.6/12/2017, issued on December 7, 2017. This was followed by the establishment of a Religious Research Agenda (agenda riset keagamaan abbreviated ARKAN in Bahasa Indonesia) based on scientific integration and the spirit of religious moderation by the Ministry of Religion in accordance with the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 6994 of 2018. The aim is to make Indonesia a center for Islamic studies, diversity, and the integration of religious and general knowledge in the world. The ARKAN will be developed from 2018 to 2028, with measurable stages focusing on mapping out research themes needed for national development planning and agenda. Each LITAPDIMAS manager in all PTKIN, including UIN Antasari, derives and implements this policy.

Furthermore, the policy at UIN Antasari is to allocate 30% of its Operational Costs of State Universities (Bantuan Operasional Perguruan Tinggi Negeri abbreviated BOPTN in Bahasa Indonesia) to

research in accordance with the LITAPDIMAS policy. Despite facing budget cuts during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019 and 2020, the university's Chancellor has shown a strong commitment to maintaining the research budget, except for the research support budget. In the first year of the LITAPDIMAS policy in 2018, UIN Antasari allocated approximately IDR3 billion fund for research. However, over IDR1 billion of the allocated fund was not spent, resulting in a budget reduction to approximately IDR2.3 billion in subsequent years. Even though the number of submitted research proposals increased, this has led to a reduction in the impact of the budget allocation for each researcher, which is not as significant as it was in the first year of the LITAPDIMAS policy.

The research development policy at UIN Antasari aims to foster a scientific culture in the realm of research and knowledge innovation that adheres to predetermined quality standards and is results-oriented, to generate tangible benefits for the wider community. The policy is designed to produce superior research products that offer problem-solving solutions based on research findings and benefit both the university and the community. Furthermore, the implementation of research at UIN Antasari is also aimed at cultivating national and international institutional collaborations, both financially and non-financially.

UIN Antasari possesses various research policies and regulations developed in preparation for university accreditation. The APT (abbreviation of Akreditasi Perguruan Tinggi in Bahasa Indonesia or higher education accreditation) evaluation tool mandates several essential documents related to research, which should be included in every SPMI and are part of the national higher education standard. These documents include the following:

First, the Master Plan for Research Development as stipulated by the Decree of the Chancellor of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin Number

20.A dated January 7, 2019. The Master Plan for Research Development (RIPP) is a set of long-term plans in the field of research established by UIN Antasari. The RIPP is a long-term research plan adapted from the Ministry of Religion's Master Plan for Research Development. This long-term plan is then transformed into a Medium-term Research Strategic Plan document, which outlines the milestone stages of the plan.

Second, the strategic research plan as stipulated by the Decree of the Chancellor of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin Number 23.B dated January 9, 2019. Generally, this decree contains the basis for research development, roadmap, resources, strategic program targets, and performance indicators oriented toward international competitiveness.

Third, Research guidelines as stipulated by the Decree of the Chancellor of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin Number 30.A January 11, 2019. This research guide was prepared by referring to the strategic research plan owned by UIN Antasari. The guide mainly covers the timing and technical aspects of research scheduling to ensure successful implementation.

Other derivative regulations, apart from the main documents stated above, are: 1) Research Management Guidelines stipulated by the Decree of the Chancellor of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin Number 44.A dated January 15, 2019. These guidelines are related to the management of research by UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, implemented under the coordination of the LP2M. 2) Guidelines for Monitoring and Evaluation of Research as stipulated by the Decree of the Chancellor of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin Number 51.B dated January 17, 2019.

The control mechanism for the research standards is by conducting regular monitoring and evaluation. This monitoring and evaluation are carried out by the rectorate and LP2M itself, which is the spearhead in implementing research activities. An Internal Quality

Audit is carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency (LPM), which ensures all standards implemented by LP2M, followed by audit findings of all relevant parties.

The strategic plan document is available as a reference for research development only at the implementation level. Strategic planning policies are only at the elite leadership level and are not conveyed thoroughly to all academics. However, the socialization process is for all academicians of UIN Antasari in order to achieve targets maximally.

The LITAPDIMAS has created more structure to research operations, allowing for better overall monitoring and accountability. In terms of funding, research experienced a significant increase, as it now receives 30% of the BOPTN funds, with the support of previous research. Although the outcomes and outputs of this investment are still being evaluated, there are expectations for growth, particularly concerning publications. The effectiveness of the funding allocation is yet to be determined.

Some of the developments carried out by UIN Antasari in an effort to advance its research work are as follows: 1) The need for socialization of integrated science and technology development research to every lecturer, especially those in the general field for the development of study programs and universities. 2) Campus encouragement for superior research that produces a product that can be used by industry and patented at the ministry of law and human rights. 3) Encouraging every researcher to publish their research results in journals with national and international reputation. 4) Always remind each reviewer of the duties and deadlines in each research proposal manuscript to avoid operator delay in entering the assigned value. 5) Updating the google scholar database for all lecturers at UIN Antasari by re-listing the scholar addresses of each and asking them to update their respective profiles in order to increase

their H-index. 6) Adding internet bandwidth in every faculty and study program and launching a paid subscription to a reputable international electronic journal to be used as reference material for every lecturer in conducting a research. 7) Rejuvenation of research data base and database backup every 6 six months, while maintaining the website regularly.

The research productivity at UIN Antasari has been remarkable in the last three years (2018-2020), with a total of 788 units produced through funding from universities and independent sources. This has exceeded the university's standard for research productivity, which requires over 80% of lecturers to conduct research annually. UIN Antasari's lecturers who source funds from PT/mandiri fulfill their obligation of reporting their workload every semester, which includes the Tridharma of Higher Education. However, there has been a lack of optimal funding sources for research outside of the university and abroad due to a lack of collaboration with domestic and foreign research institutions. To address this gap and improve research productivity with funding from outside universities/foreign institutions, UIN Antasari is expanding its research collaborations nationally and internationally.

UIN Antasari Banjarmasin has also provided a space for scientific publications from the service and research activities of lecturers and the public in the form of reports, books, and scientific journals published in environmental journals at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin. The research and community service results, apart from being disseminated in various scientific forums, are also published on the UIN Antasari journal portal in Open Journal Systems (OJS) format on the <http://jurnal.uin-antasari.ac.id/index.php> page.

The online journal at UIN Antasari provides easy access to information for research and community service, demonstrating the university's commitment to producing quality and credible scientific

publications that meet the needs of the community. The journals are indexed in national and international indexing institutions, and many have been accredited on the GARUDA and SINTA portals. Some journals have even been ranked as SINTA 2, SINTA 3, and SINTA 4. Furthermore, some of the journals have been indexed in DOAJ and the Copernicus International Index, signifying their high quality and capacity.

### **UIN Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda**

The initial focus of SPMI implementation at UIN Samarinda was on educational activities, followed by research and community service, covering all aspects of higher education. The ultimate goal of SPMI is to enhance the overall management of higher education, which is closely linked with organizational health. The non-academic policies of SPMI include a) Vision, Mission, Objectives, and Strategies, b) Governance and Cooperation, as well as c) Finance, Facilities, and Infrastructure (LPM IAIN Samarinda, 2020, pp. 35–38).

The SPMI organizational policies at UIN Samarinda include various units. First, the SPM-PT (abbreviation of Sistem Penjaminan Mutu Perguruan Tinggi in Bahasa Indonesia or quality assurance system of higher education) Organization, at the institutional level, is coordinated through the LPM of IAIN Samarinda. In this case, the Chancellor of IAIN Samarinda appointed the Head of the LPM. In practice, the Head of LPM is responsible for the implementation of the quality assurance program, assisted by the Secretary and 2 Heads of the Center, namely Quality Standard Development and the Center for Audit and Quality Control, the Head of Sub. Administration and several staff. Second, at the faculty level, the SPM-PT organization consists of the dean and the Quality Assurance Unit (UPM), chaired by a lecturer and assisted by several members. Third, at the department or study program level, there is a Quality Control Group (GKM) chaired by a lecturer and equipped with several members.

Fourth, the Quality Assurance Support Unit consists of 1) Information Technology Center and Database, 2) Libraries, 3) LP2M, 4) the Bureau of General Administration and Finance (AUK), and 5) Bureau of Academic Administration, Student Affairs and Cooperation (AAKK) ([LPM IAIN Samarinda, 2020, pp. 39–44](#)).

Regarding SPMI, UIN Samarinda has made 24 academic standards per national education standards, with an additional five BAN-PT supplement standards prepared according to the development needs of UIN Samarinda. In detail, the academic standards consist of eight Education Sector Standards, eight Research Sector Standards, and eight Standards for Community Service. Meanwhile, the supplementary attributes include 1) Standards of Vision, Mission, Objectives, and Strategies, 2) Standards of Governance, Governance, and Cooperation, 3) Human Resources Standards, 4) Financial Standards, Facilities and Infrastructure, and 5) Students' Standards ([LPM IAIN Samarinda, 2020, pp. 53–54](#)).

The SPMI standards are translated into quality targets during their implementation. These quality targets are based on nine accreditation quality criteria established by BAN-PT. The criteria cover the following areas: 1) Vision, Mission, Goals, and Achievement Strategies, 2) Governance, Governance and Cooperation, 3) Students, 4) Human Resources, 5) Finance, Facilities, and Infrastructure, 6) Education, 7) Research, 8) Community Service, and 9) Outcomes and Achievements of Tridharma ([LPM IAIN Samarinda, 2020, p. 55](#)).

The SPMI policy owned by UIN Samarinda is the main document and the basis for preparing more operational documents, such as the SPMI Manual, Standards and Forms. All documents intended for the purpose of implementing SPMI must be based on documents in the form of policy, the Statute of IAIN Samarinda, and the Strategic Plan owned by IAIN Samarinda.

At IAIN Samarinda, LP2M is tasked with implementing, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating research and community service activities according to the Rector's policy. In carrying out its duties, LP2M functions as follows 1) Implementation of planning, evaluation of programs and budgets, and reporting, 2) Implementation of pure and applied scientific research, 3) Implementation of community service, 4) Implementation of the publication of research results and community service, and 5) Implementation of institutional administration (LPM IAIN Samarinda, 2020, p. 43). Specific to the research area, the policies adopted are as follows: 1) Establish planning, including research direction and focus, implementation, reporting and guidance; 2) Policy on plagiarism, 3) Publication of research results both nationally and internationally, and 4) Establish collaborative policies between faculties, universities both domestically and abroad (LPM IAIN Samarinda, 2020, p. 36).

Some of the activities designed to achieve quality assurance include the Lecturer Teaching Methodology Workshop, Quality Learning Planning Workshop for Lecturers, Quality Learning Evaluation Workshop, Academic Orientation for New Students, Workshop on Evaluation of Competency Standards for Student Boarding School Programs, Workshop on Preparation of Podi Syllabus, Learning Assistance for Prospective Lecturers and Teaching Staff, Technology-Based Learning Workshops for Lecturers, Workshop on Quality Assurance Standards, Development of New Student Recruitment Methods (MABA), Workshop Seminars (Semiloka) on Higher Education Readiness to Welcome the Implementation of BHP, and other quality assurance activities.

In terms of supervision and implementation of SPMI in work units, a Quality Assurance Unit (UPM) is formed at the Faculty level and a Quality Control Group (GKM) at the Department/Study

Program level. UPM and GKM will provide reports to LPM regarding the implementation of SPMI at the Faculty and at the Department/Prodi level to be evaluated and followed up. The strategic steps for implementing SPMI at IAIN Samarinda are generally carried out through PPEPP steps, as follows 1) Determination of Higher Education Standards, 2) Implementation of Higher Education Standards, 3) Evaluation of the implementation of the Higher Education Standards, 4) Control of the implementation of the Higher Education Standards, and 5) Improvement of Higher Education Standards.

In addition to setting policies in an effort to improve academic quality in general at UIN Samarinda, which is driven by its LPM, there are also a number of policies issued by LP2M, particularly the Center for Scientific Research and Publications. According to Umar Fauzan, the Head of Research and Scientific Publications of IAIN Samarinda. Since 2015, several breakthroughs have been made to improve the quality of research and publications. This was stated during an intensive discussion session with researchers on Thursday, November 11, 2021, at the Grand Sawit Hotel Samarinda. These include the following:

First, the allocation of large enough funds for lecturers who submit research proposals through the LITAPDIMAS application, which LP2M UIN Samarinda manages. With a relatively small number of lecturers, the allocation of funds is very significant when compared to previous times. The BOPTN allocation policy of 30% for research has given its impetus for lecturers to submit research. However, when compared to PTKIN on Java Island with a very high level of competition, the areas in Kalimantan tend to be low. At the UIN Samarinda campus, almost all civil servant lecturers have structural positions, the school even had to recruit relatively new ones.

The LITAPDIMAS policy at UIN Samarinda, which is generally applied to all PTKIN, is in accordance with the determination of the Ministry of Religion's LITAPDIMAS policy, both in terms of research themes and policies on the national religious agenda, commonly referred to as ARKAN. Meanwhile, at the level of research financial policy, LP2M has provided space to ensure researchers do not get caught up in the administrative affairs of research through what is called SBK (Standard Cost of Output) instead of SBM (Standard Cost of Input). The use of SBK, focuses on the research output, namely scientific publications in the form of journal articles. Therefore, it is necessary to have a strict selection from the reviewers, to ensure the submitted proposals are truly worthy of scientific publication. However, the research culture at UIN, have not reached this level and neglecting the financial administration could led to a situation whereby it is no longer conducted.

First, the LITAPDIMAS system allows admins to prevent proposals that do not submit research outputs such as scientific publications in journals. The only problem is that at the level of policy holders at the central LITAPDIMAS, it is not really being cared for, because when implemented, the number of authors who submit research will be very limited, thereby limiting the BOPTN research budget allocation of 30%, which is considered part of the program's failure. Second, giving special awards for writers who publish their work in scopus and sinta accredited journals. Especially for articles indexed by scopus, the management of awarding rewards is determined by LP2M directly with several special criteria, namely the first author in the article, mentions the name of the campus institution as an affiliated, written within a span of two years and has not been submitted before by those on a study assignment.

The allocation of funds given is quite significant, with IDR17, IDR15, IDR13 and IDR10 million awarded to authors who publish

their work in the Scopus indexed journal Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4, respectively. Each researcher is given a maximum of two Scopus indexed scientific publications. According to Umar Fauzan, this policy is quite effective in encouraging lecturers to publish their articles in Scopus indexed journals, as evidenced by the large number of proposals submitted for the reward. In addition to providing awards in the form of financial assistance managed by LP2M for lecturers who write in Scopus indexed journals, rewards are also provided for those who publish articles in SINTA 2. This type of reward is managed by the faculty and is limited to one article per lecturer, with the aim of distributing the rewards equally among lecturers in this category.

UIN Samarinda provides special funding for its internal writers in journals managed by UIN Samarinda, which at the time this research was conducted, it already had three journals accredited with Sinta 2 by 2021. In 2022, one of them, namely *al Mazahib* indexed by Scopus published approximately 12 articles with 4 allocated to internal authors. The passion for the publication of internal writers in the journal *sinta 2* is equal distribution. Therefore, according to Umar Fauzan, editor in chief journal articles are published, only to standardize the quality of articles to comply with the provisions in *Sinta 2*, while the authors conduct consultations specifically to meet the standards set in journals within UIN Samarinda..

Another policy seen as promoting efforts to increase scientific publications among lecturers is the implementation of Permenristekdikti Number 20 of 2017, which is an obligation for lecturers with the academic position of Head Lector. This means that they must produce the following (a) at least three scientific works published in accredited national journals, or (b) not less than one international journal, patent, or monumental artwork/monumental design within three years (Article 4 Permenristekdikti Number 20 of 2017). Meanwhile, Professors must produce books and (a) at least

three scientific papers published in international journals, (b) not less than one scientific work published in reputable international journals, (c) at least one patent, and (d) not more than one monumental artwork/monumental design within three years (Article 8 paragraph (1) letter g Permenristekdikti Number 20 of 2017).

As stated by Iswadi, Secretary of LPM UIN Samarinda, the campus leadership, of UIN Samarinda in an effort to emphasize the obligations of head lecturers and professors, routinely issues circulars to lecturers emphasizing the obligations referred to in the Minister of Research and Technology. This leadership is an effort to avoid blaming the leadership when there are findings at the examination by the BPK or the Inspector General, because they have conveyed the obligation of the head lecturer and professor. This affirmation was also conveyed by the Chairperson of LPM UIN Samarinda, Nur Kholik Afandi. In several campuses within PTKIN there had been an examination of the Lecturer Workload (BKD) by lecturers with Professor status who were unable to fulfill their professorship obligations. This discourse is an important discussion in the PTKIN Quality Assurance Group WA and at the same time became a warning to other PTKIN campuses related to the implementation of the obligations of head lecturers and professors. With this spirit, the circular issued by the leadership of UIN Samarinda is addressed to lecturers with the level of head lecturer and professor.

### **IAIN Palangkaraya**

SPMI in IAIN Palangkaraya is designed, implemented, and continuously improved using the PPEPP model (planning, implementation, evaluation, control, and improvement). IAIN Palangka Raya uses this model to set the standards to be achieved through the right strategy and series of activities. Furthermore, the fulfillment of these standards is always monitored regularly, evaluated, and developed in a better direction on an ongoing basis

(LPM IAIN Palangka Raya, 2021a, p. 9). The implementation of SPMI owned by IAIN Palangkaraya, using the PPEPP formulation is as follows: 1) The Quality Assurance Institution (LPM) prepares quality standards and internal quality targets (indicators) of education programs with reference to the National Higher Education Standards (SN-Dikti), Standards of the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT) and International Standards (Asean University Network-Quality Assurance). 2) LPM prepares Guidelines for the Implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System and its supporting documents (assessment form for study program quality, study program self-evaluation checklist and internal audit forms). 3) LPM conducts socialization of the internal quality assurance system and quality standards as well as guidelines for the implementation of the internal quality assurance system to related units (study programs, faculties, and related units). 4) Faculties set quality targets for a certain period of time (four years), and 5) Faculties develop programs/activities for the implementation of the internal quality assurance system (LPM IAIN Palangka Raya, 2021a, pp. 11-12).

Based on the regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 3 of 2020 Article 50 Paragraphs 2 and 3, the minimum standard for a researcher is to have the ability to master the level of methodology in accordance with the scientific field, object, as well as the level of complexity and depth determined based on qualifications, academic and result. The inclusion of Permendikbud No. 3 of 2020 indicates that IAIN Palangka Raya is keeping up-to-date in their efforts to prepare the latest SN Dikti, given that the previous one has been revoked and replaced. The research carried out at IAIN Palangkaraya is directed towards the progress of science and technology, promoting society's well-being and the nation's competitiveness. Additionally, it is designed to have Indonesian attributes to develop knowledge in religion, science and technology,

culture, and art. The research also aims to address various life and humanity problems using various approaches, including mono, inter, and multi-disciplinary sciences. To adhere to the research code of ethics and to prevent plagiarism and manipulation, the standard includes aspects such as education, objectivity, accountability, and transparency (LPM IAIN Palangka Raya, 2021b, p. 20).

In the BAN-PT regulation Number 3 of 2019, the standard of assessment on External Quality Audits carried out for Universities, and Study Programs is known as Accreditation. Each university must have the following documents 1) Strategic Research Plan, 2) Research Guidelines and evidence of socialization, 3) Valid evidence of the implementation of the research process, 4) Research reporting documents from LP2M to the leadership of PT, 5) Fulfilling the elements of research relevance at UPPS, and 6) Involving students in lecturer research (LPM IAIN Palangka Raya, 2021a, p. 20).

Since 2018, the procedures, mechanisms and directions of research, scientific publications and community service within PTKIN have been changed into a system called the LITAPDIMAS. The online system of research, scientific publications, and community service was built and developed by the Directorate of Islamic Religious Higher Education, Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (Hamdanah et al., 2020, p. 2). This system was born on the basis of the need for a system capable of accommodating all services for research activities, scientific publications, and community service in a more manageable, transparent, and accountable manner by the Ministry of Religion and those managed by PTKIN.

To manage research implementation, PTKIN follows the guidelines outlined by the LITAPDIMAS, which has an online submission system. The LITAPDIMAS system at PTKIN, including IAIN Palangkaraya, adheres to the 2018-2028 ARKAN established by

the Indonesian Ministry of Religion. ARKAN sets research themes and policy directions for PTKIN, which provides a clear and aligned roadmap (Hamdanah et al., 2020, p. 5). During an interview session on November 9, 2021, the Secretary of LP2M IAIN Palangkaraya, Ali Iskanadar, and the Head of Research and Scientific Publications of IAIN Palangkaraya, Akhmad Supriadi, stated that the LITAPDIMAS at IAIN Palangkaraya adheres to the policies established by the LITAPDIMAS of the Central Ministry of Religion and the 2018-2028 ARKAN. However, like in the management of the LITAPDIMAS across PTKIN institutions, various technical issues can arise in the field, such as securing funding for international collaborative research with different allocation sources or determining research team members. The development of the LITAPDIMAS system is a positive sign for the future.

The condition of scientific publications in IAIN Palangkaraya, both in journals of national and international repute, from 2016 to 2020, 33 articles international conference papers, 7 articles on national proceedings, 28 articles indexed on Scopus, 15 articles contained in the Sinta 2 accredited journal, 30 articles contained in the Sinta 3 accredited journal, 30 articles contained in the Sinta 4 accredited journal, and 4 articles contained in the Sinta 5 accredited journal. Furthermore, there are publications in the form of 18 books with the number of lecturers at IAIN Palangkaraya comprising of 150 people (LP2M IAIN Palangka Raya, 2021, p. 6). As mentioned earlier, the policy of awarding researchers and authors was implemented in 2020, but due to budget cuts and refocusing, it was delayed until 2021. However, this policy provides an official guideline for awarding lecturers to incentivize the increase of scientific publications within IAIN Palangkaraya. One significant outcome of this policy is the increase in the number of professors at IAIN Palangkaraya, which has risen from 2 to 3, according to the Secretary of LP2M IAIN

Palangkaraya. Furthermore, data from various sources stated that another professor was added to the faculty at IAIN Palangkaraya on the day after the interview.

LPM IAIN Palangkaraya also aims to increase scientific publications by establishing policies that accommodate the three-year obligation for lecturers. This is in accordance with the BKD guidelines III printed in August 2021, ratified by the Decree of the Chancellor of IAIN Palangkaraya Number 316 of 2021 concerning Guidelines for Lecturer Workloads ([LPM IAIN Palangka Raya, 2021b](#)). According to Sudarmanto, Academic Quality Assurance of Palangkaraya, in an interview conducted by researchers on Monday, November 8, 2021, the proposed BKD Guidelines for IAIN Palangkaraya have a long-term orientation. Currently, the general resistance to PTKIN by professors does not occur at IAIN Palangkaraya because of the number of professors this campus has at the time these guidelines were released. During this period, there were only two professors with additional assignments, hence, they were not subject to a special three-year obligation for professors as stipulated in Permenristekdikti No. 20 of 2017 concerning Lecturer Professional Allowances and Professor Honorary Allowances.

## **DISCUSSION**

The managers of PTKIN, particularly those in the Kalimantan region, such as UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda, and IAIN Palangkaraya, prioritize the quality of research and scientific publications. This is considered an essential aspect of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education. SPMI and SPME from each university have made it a point to pay special attention to the research standards and scientific publications produced by their lecturers. The three PTKIN in Kalimantan, namely UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Samarinda, and IAIN Palangka Raya,

each have a special SPMI related to research. As stipulated in the SN Dikti, eight standards in research are the minimum limit, which must be accommodated in the SPMI of each campus in Indonesia.

Furthermore, each is given the mandate to carry out the SPMI quality process through the PPEPP cycle, which is based on a study of some related documents. The three campuses already have the SPMI document, which is the result of benchmarking from other institutions in Indonesia. Each campus website provides access to quality documents, policies, manuals, standards, and forms. These documents, which offer an overview of the quality standards implemented on each campus can be easily read and studied by those willing to have an overview of the quality on each campus, both within the UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Samarinda and IAIN Palangka Raya. Each PTKIN in Kalimantan already has a Research Master Plan, Strategic Plan and roadmap, guidelines and some other policy provisions in the form of technical derivative guidelines, SOPs, and many quality forms. However, the problem is that LPM often handles documents related to research rather than LP2M, thereby creating a gap between them.

As generally applies to the relationship between LPM and LP2M in PTKIN, there are fewer "harmonious" patterns, as well as the 3 PTKIN in Kalimantan. Generally, LPMs are very concerned about policy, guidelines, and document issues because it works with concepts and theories. Therefore, LPM is equipped with SPMI with a number of accompanying quality documents, in the form of policies, manuals, standards, and quality forms. At the time, those at LP2M, which incidentally are essential partners of LPM, were more focused on fieldwork programs and were less concerned with quality documents. Often, LPM pressures LP2M to produce the policy documents. However, it is only effective when there is an external stimulus in the form of having to procure goods because it will face

Accreditation by BAN-PT. Considering that the documents in question were prepared based on external 'demands', the problem at 3 PTKIN was that the quality policy was merely a formality and lip service, existing due to demands, and had not become the primary reference in implementation activities in the field. The socialization was only limited to postings on the website. Findings in the field becomes part of the realm of LPM.

Based on this aspect, LPM is also tasked to ensuring that there are many items in the form of documents related to policies on strategies for improving the quality of research and publications, while ensuring that the content is prepared as expected. Next, ensure that what is prepared in the form of Master Plan research Strategic Plan or research Roadmap, research Renop, and research guidelines refer to SPMI and must be implemented in the field with the steps as prepared, not activities that are just habits or routines carried out by the center research and scientific publications on LP2M. The field implementation is the second part of PPEPP after the establishment of policies for the quality of research and scientific publications. This often becomes a problem, considering that the theoretical documents sometimes coincide with the real practice in the field. Several aspects can be read in this aspect, including funding and supporting policies.

First, real conditions related to the quality of research and scientific publications at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Samarinda, and IAIN Palangkaraya must go through the LITAPDIMAS application of the Ministry of Religion, which is a form of realization of the Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology, and Education Higher Education of Indonesia. This is in accordance with law Number 12 of 2019 concerning Operational Assistance for State Universities Article 2 paragraph (2), stating that BOPTN used for the implementation of Research and Community Service related to Research in PTN and PTS is allocated at least 30% of the BOPTN

budget. This condition significantly impacts the research conditions at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Samarinda, and IAIN Palangkaraya. This amount is very significant when compared to research assistance in previous years.

In general, the level of competition among PTKIN lecturers in Kalimantan is relatively more accessible than those on Java island. This is because the number of lecturers owned by PTKIN is much higher even in the City, hence, the impact on the level of competition for research assistance is much more difficult. The data of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin lecturers who are registered at PD Dikti as of November 2021 are 359 people comprising 1) 358 NIDN and 1 NUP, 2) 82 expert assistant positions, 159 lecturers, 95 head lectors, 9 ordinary people, and 14 professors, and 3) 265 master and 94 doctoral degree holders. The data of UIN Samarinda lecturers registered with PD Dikti as of November 2021 are 207 people with explanations are as follows: 1) in the registration category with NIDN 206 people and NUP 1 person, 2) in the category of functional positions with 45 people as expert assistants, 29 lectors, 55 head lectors, 74 people without positions, and 4 professors, 3) in the category of master's education there are 163 people and 44 people for doctoral degree. At the time this data was collected, the name was IAIN Samarinda, because the data with the UIN nomenclature had not been updated. The data of IAIN Palangkaraya lecturers registered with PD Dikti as of November 2021 amounted to 155 people with explanations: 1) in the registration category with NIDN 154 people and NUP 1 person, 2) in the category of functional positions with 36 people as expert assistants, 78 lectors, 30 head lectors, 8 people without positions, and 3 professors, 3) in the education category, there are 123 people for master's degree and 32 people for doctoral degree.

The situation at PTKIN in Kalimantan is characterized by relatively low competition levels, which provides the advantage of

high acceptance rates for research proposals submitted by lecturers. However, this also leads to lower standards of research quality. There may be difficulties in utilizing the substantial BOPTN research funds, when its requirements become too complicated, with an absorption rate of around 30%. This poses a distinct challenge for BOPTN managers. This problem also arises when it relates to the achievements and outcomes that must be fulfilled. The LITAPDIMAS manager can 'block' the concerned lecturer's account when needed, with an official circular presented in advance regarding research outputs and benefits in the 2021 fiscal year. Examining the regulations set forth by the Ministry of Religion's LITAPDIMAS with regard to research outputs and benefits may serve as a catalyst for improving the quality of scientific publications among lecturers at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, UIN Samarinda, and IAIN Palangkaraya. Furthermore, the substantial funding allocated for research can potentially result in a significant increase in the number of publications produced by each campus. There are still some obstacles to be overcome, as not all of the requirements outlined in the guidelines have been fully realized. In addition to addressing funding issues, a culture of academic writing at the international level must be fostered and shared among scholars at each institution.

IAIN Palangkaraya is fast in responding to the BKD Operational Guidelines as stated by Chancellor of IAIN Pa Palangkaraya Number 316 of 2021 concerning Guidelines for the Workload of Lecturers of the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) Palangkaraya. In the initial clause of the third edition of the August 2021 Lecturer Workload Guidelines, it is stated that the previous BKD guidelines contained in the Decree of the Chancellor of the Palangkaraya State Islamic Institute (IAIN) Number 569 of 2019 concerning Guidelines for the Workload of IAIN Palangka Raya Lecturers must be adjusted to the Director General's Decree. Higher Education Ministry of Education and Culture Number

12/E/KPT/2021 concerning Operational Guidelines for Lecturer Workload. In this case, IAIN Palangka Raya has taken quick action for long-term anticipation, UIN Samarinda is still using its outdated 2015 BKD guidelines, which do not comply with the provisions of Permenristek (Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology and Higher Education) No. 20 of 2019 on the provision of Lecturer Professional Allowances and Professor Honorary Allowances, including the recent circular of PO BKD, as specified in Director General of Higher Education's Decree No. 12/E/KPT/2021. To address this issue, the university's administration has issued a unique circular mandating the publication of research in reputable international journals. However, there is still a need to increase the number of professors with the appropriate titles. Presently, there are only four active professors, hence, there is no opposition to the policies, including circulars that may conflict with higher regulatory policies from the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education.

In 2018, UIN Antasari, under the guidance of its LPM, made revisions to its BKD guidelines, which were documented in the Decree of the Chancellor of UIN Antasari Number 477 of 2018. These guidelines pertain to the workload and assessment of lecturers based on the Tri Dharma of Higher Education at UIN Antasari and Kopertais Region XI Kalimantan. One of the new provisions in the 2018 BKD Guidelines is the requirement for Head Lectors and Professors to provide accommodation, as stipulated in Permenristek No. 20 of 2019. This regulation concerns the allocation of Lecturer Professional Allowances and Professor Honorary Allowances, with technical instructions provided for their implementation.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, First, the policy is a derivative of the provisions regulated by the Ministry of Higher Education related to research management which includes the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) at each PT and the External Quality Assurance System (SPME) in the form of Accreditation by BAN PT. LPM handles this issue at the three PTKINs in Kalimantan, which with several benchmarks carried out, already has SPMI which, in addition to accommodating the minimum standards as mentioned in the SN Dikti, also has additional standards. UIN Antasari Banjarmasin and IAIN Palangkaraya have their standards, while UIN Samarinda refers to the nine criteria of BAN-PT. Another policy related to research is that each PTKIN already has a research roadmap, while UIN Antasari has complete RIP policies, Research Strategic Plans/Roadmaps, Renop, Research Guidelines and other policies prepared as an effort to deal with accreditation visitations in 2021. The only problem is that what is compiled needs to be fully correlated with actual conditions in the field. Considering that the preparation mechanism has not been based on the visions and missions proclaimed by the institution,

Second, all lecturers already have the spirit and steps towards improving the quality of research and scientific publications. The aspects of concern are through SPMI, especially in the field of research dharma and preparing campus accreditation through the completeness of SPME data. The PPEPP process carried out is a breath of fresh air to advance the quality of research systematically. LPM must also ensure all existing documents follow the proper provisions and what is prepared in the form of policy documents are implemented properly. Another aspect is the assessment of lecturer workload (BKD), that can be an instrument to control research activities and scientific publications, followed by the policy for allocating 30% of BOPTN funds and the LITAPDIMAS system, which

gives excellent hope in improving the quality of research and scientific publications of lecturers.

Coordination and cooperation of all levels, especially between LPM and LP2M, need to be improved to accelerate the quality of research and scientific publications. However, the most important thing is that there must be a strong will at the campus leadership level to mobilize all available resources, including all relevant stakeholders. The ability of lecturers to research and compile academic writings using the latest development tools needs to be continuously carried out, in addition to preparing other aspects that can encourage the improvement of the quality of research and scientific publications at PTKIN in Kalimantan.

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# Covid-19 and the Philosophy of Education: Recuperating Africa's Triple Heritage

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## Abstract

*The Covid-19 pandemic mandated the closure of all schools globally. E-learning programmes were introduced to promote learning throughout the crisis. This paper, therefore, investigates the impact of Covid-19 e-learning and teaching on students' social life, indexed by their practice of social conviviality after the pandemic. The study employed multiple sampling techniques in selecting students in the second cycle and tertiary institutions in Accra, Ghana for the study. Using data collected from extensive interviews with students, teachers/lecturers and parents, backed by personal observations, the study found out that the social skills of students were negatively impacted by the pandemic, as several of them suffered multidimensionality of social exclusion when schools were re-opened after lockdown rules were liberalised. The e-learning approach that Ghana introduced to stem the debilitating impact of the pandemic yielded some positive results – helping the education sector to retain contact hours. Nevertheless, the outcome of the pandemic had some negative social consequences. Students were unable to effectively recuperate their social skills in fostering social conviviality. Considering the outcome of the study's findings, the paper concludes that Ghana needs to invest in its Triple Heritage – through the synthesisation of human ontological dignity -- embedded in Islam, Christianity, and indigenous worldview. This approach will help the country to restructure its educational curriculum as part of rejuvenating social conviviality among students. The paper contributes to knowledge by providing evidence of the social impact of the pandemic. However, it also recommends a need for further*

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*research to explore how Ghana can broaden the frontiers of its heritage without provincializing or marginalisation emerging minority cultures.*

**Keywords:** Covid-19; Ghana; Philosophy of Education; Social Skills; Triple Heritage

## INTRODUCTION

The current coronavirus has intensified social exclusion which had progressed since the internet revolution in the 1970s. Morphing into the social media revolution at the turn of the millennium, several social offline activities have migrated online. With this, the idea of "selfie" has aptly captured the near collapse of human sociality – leading to a complex form of human dissatisfaction with online surfing (Turkle, 2012). In Ghana, therefore, long before the coronavirus, youngsters who were savvy in the use of the internet and social had reconfigured their sociality in such a way that they had more comfort with their computers and smartphones than talking to the person sitting next to them. It could be surmised that long before the eruption of the pandemic, "social distancing" was already taking place (Campbell & Lövheim, 2011). But even that, the author has observed that marriages, funerals and festivals were concurrently featured offline and online to broaden the range of options available to participants. But the pandemic safety rules of social distancing and face covering exacerbated human sociality. It disrupted the *unwritten* code of individuals unmasking their faces in public (Prempeh, 2021). Concurrently, the public sphere became an extension of the private sphere where individuals cover their phases, while usually speaking through their noses with all incomprehensible nasal sounds.

Nevertheless, one major aspect of life that the pandemic similarly registered significant impact is in education. Globally, the spread of the Covid-19 made 160 countries or more, mandated provisional school closures. The extended school closures was expected to cause not only loss of learning in short-term, but also further loss in human

capital and diminishes economic opportunities in the long-term (Kundu & Ngalim, 2021). Also, because of the sudden shift to online schooling, concerns were raised about whether education systems were equipped for such a quick scale-up in digital learning (Kundu & Ngalim, 2021, p. xiii). This concern was concretised in the fact that a deficit in technological supply to sustain e-learning and teaching created a huge loss in the learning process and that might continue for a longer period than expected. It may also ruin the gains made in the adoption of e-learning and teaching practice. Millions of children and youth from pre-primary to tertiary may drop out or not have access to schools in the next year or so due to the pandemic's economic slowdown (United Nations, 2020). In Ghana, studies have revealed that several students could not study effectively from the house – undermining the effectiveness of the online system of learning; parents were incapable of assisting their wards on how to access online learning platform and could also not supervise them without complications (Owusu-Fordjour, Koomson & Hanson, 2020). E-learning system was also complicated by skills deficiency on the part of technicians, inadequate infrastructure, and limited electronic readiness – all burdening information communication technologies (ICTs) (Amihere, 2022).

Additionally, the closure of the educational institutions also obstructed the provision of the essential services to children and communities (United Nations, 2020). Millions of children worldwide missed out on early childhood education in their critical pre-school years. They missed a stimulating and enriching environment, learning opportunities, social interaction and in some cases, adequate nutrition through daily snacks and food that is provided in many educational institutions (Kundu & Ngalim, 2021, p. 2). The pandemic-induced interruption of in-person instruction in schools and universities limited opportunities for students to learn, causing disengagement

from schools and, in some cases, school dropouts (Reimers, 2022, p. 2). It further increased existing inequalities: children from private schools and children from higher socioeconomic status households engaged in remote-learning at higher rates and received more support from their schools and caregivers. Children in households that experienced economic hardships during the pandemic engaged in fewer remote learning activities and had lower literacy and numeracy assessment scores (Wolf et al., 2021). Even so, the impact of the pandemic was not entirely gloomy. The Covid-19 is said to have positively and significantly strengthened the adoption of e-learning strategies across higher learning institutions in Ghana; revealed academic innovativeness, technological growth and development (Adzovie & Jibril, 2022).

Again, dealing with the pandemic in Ghana, there was a policy shift by school leaders led to the adoption of multi-track year-round education (MT-YRE) system to promote social distancing (Adarkwah & Agyemang, 2022). Students were provided with personal protective equipment (PPEs), teachers educated students on Covid-19 prevention and fostered good relationships with their students. Students adhered to institutional protocols to study. Parents also provided psychological and financial support. Policymakers in education were task to provide clear guidelines, resources, funds and recognition to school stakeholders as they collectively tackled the virus to ensure economic, health, and education recovery post-Covid-19 (Adarkwah & Agyemang, 2022). The consequent of these measures was that despite the challenges caused by the pandemic, the public higher education institution was able to complete the 2019/2020 academic year fairly well (Tsevi, 2021).

Against the background of the lessons learned from the pandemic and the assessment therefore, some solutions have been proffered. To forestall the negative impact of the pandemic and pre-

empt future disruptions to the education section, several recommendations have been made. From the financial perspective, recommendation is made that huge financial investments, beyond the scope of the Ghanaian government, are required and multi-stakeholders' collaborations seem to be viable funding options (Amihere, 2022). It is also suggested that students should be introduced to innovative and offline e-learning platforms to supplement classroom teaching and learning and also be of benefit to students who may not have access to internet connectivities (Owusu-Fordjour et al., 2020).

At the continental level, it has been suggested that African universities that have experienced the radical shift from face-to-face learning to e-learning should reinforce the building of quality e-learning infrastructures and adequate staff and student capacities on online teaching-learning innovations (Ngwa & Lawyer, 2020). Such measures, it is anticipated, would ensure that institutions are adequately prepared for easy adaption in teaching-learning during future lockdowns or emergencies like the Covid-19 (Ngwa & Lawyer, 2020). Also, others have suggested a need for a culture-driven public health education strategy and the re-creation of a robust educational system that uses blended learning approaches in Ghana (Adom, 2020). Assessing the determinants of students' acceptance of the electronic learning (e-learning) system of education after the Covid-19 emergency indexed several disclosures. It was revealed that students' attitude to e-learning is significantly influenced by perceived usefulness and moderately affected by perceived severity, whereas, students' intention is moderately affected (Amankwa & Asiedu, 2022). In sum, the general recommendation was that future studies should focus on how to establish a crisis-management framework for higher education (Adarkwah & Agyemang, 2022).

Certainly, the effect of pandemic-induced social distancing has been greatly felt in the field of education. Nearly all the recommendations to stem and pre-empt the impact of the pandemic revolved around what I may refer to as the “how” – or technical – answers of life. Undoubtedly, it could be said that e-learning and teaching has come to stay and that more needs to be done to cultivate the benefits associated with it. The need for a technological reform is insightful. Even so, education is also a sociogenic activity which involves close communication between learners and teachers in the sharing of knowledge. Meanwhile, the pandemic-driven social distance has rendered multilayers of social exclusions pervasive on school campuses in Ghana. The author will then reflect critically on the re-formulation of the philosophy of education alongside the recuperation of the country’s Triple Heritage. By Africa’s Triple Heritage, the author leans on Ali Mazrui’s framing of postcolonial multicultural lived reality of Africa as an interplay between Western culture (Christianity), Africinity (traditions of African beliefs) and Islam – the homogenising of multiple perspectives (Mazrui, 1986, p. 21) to reform educational philosophy towards social conviviality. Indeed, Ali Mazrui borrowed and advanced this concept from Nkrumah’s philosophy of conscience which is a synthesis of Euro-Christian, indigenous cultures, and Islam in the construction of African personality. For this reason, Ali Mazrui expanded the idea of Africa’s Triple Heritage as the encompassment of the full diversity of African identities and life-styles (Mazrui, 2002, p. 100). The author finds Mazrui’s idea of Africa’s Triple Heritage an enduring legacy in Africa. For this reason, the author deploys the concept to contribute to the re-structuring of the philosophy of education in Ghana. This motivation comes against the background that the author wants to understand the cross-sectional effect of digitised education on the social skills of pupils and students in these communities.

Considering that the author's goal is to discuss the nexus between human quest for gregariousness (social identification) and the philosophy of education, the author's intention is to recuperate the premodern social orientation of human beings as critical in reformulating educational philosophy to rebuild Ghana's economy. For this reason, the author concludes with a reflection on reformulating the philosophy of education, based on the idea of human ontological dignity – that every human being has worth that must be protected and served by a community. The article will contribute to the broader discussion on the nexus between the pandemic and education.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN CONVIVIALITY**

Education remains very critical in socialising people to live meaningfully and also contribute to human flourishing (Nucci, 2001). Through education, the older generation passes on the values and virtues as well as skills to the younger generation (Chetan, 2011). Gleaning from Plato's "Allegory of the Cave", I argue that education is very important in transitioning people from a state of ignorance to a state of enlightenment to appreciate the nexus between sociality and sustainable development (Nikolopoulou et al., 2018). An African scholar who has, in my estimation, properly defined the idea of education as reorienting human beings away from hubris and tension is Francis Nyamnjoh. For more than a decade, Nyamnjoh has developed the ground theory of incompleteness and conviviality (Nyamnjoh, 2020). Using this concept, Nyamnjoh argued that human beings are socially incomplete and need to complement and work with others as part of fostering conviviality for the collective good of society.

Historically, therefore, education has been designed to orient people to appreciate social conviviality. Serving as a form of socialisation structured through school culture such as pupils' common use of uniforms and reading similar books, education provided the values, virtues and skills for people to cherish group living and collaboration (Okrah, 2003). Through that, education is expected to help curtail human ontological selfishness, a fact discussed in Charles Darwin's theory of "the survival of the fittest" (Darwin, 2003). From the philosophical perspective of the survival of the fittest, Darwin provided an insight into why human hubris has served as the anchor of their survival. On the contrary, the work of Alexis de Tocqueville, who was also a contemporary of Darwin, both stepping out in the 1830s, stated that society prospered through the deflation of self (de Tocqueville, 2002). Studying the role of religion in the formation of America's civil society, de Tocqueville argued that religion, particularly Judeo-Christian values, helped shape Americans to appreciate selflessness. The idea of selflessness contributed to what succeeding generation of academics, including Robert Putnam, referred to as social capital (Putnam, 2004).

Indeed, long before Darwin and de Tocqueville, Ibn Khaldûn, the great fourteenth-century Arab scholar and philosopher had observed that societies thrive based on collectivism. Ibn Khaldûn referred to the idea of sociality as *asabiyah* (Khaldûn & Lawrence, 2015). As one of the foremost thinkers also in the area of sociology, Ibn Khaldûn argued that selflessness, expressed in group consciousness, a sense of shared purpose morphed into the formation of social solidarity. According to Ibn Khaldûn, the progression of society from desert life to sedentary life also result in a linear progression of society from collectivism to individualism. Life in the desert is largely about individuals satisfying their basic needs, as opposed to the search for luxury. For this reason, life in the desert is

usually not encumbered by selfishness and human hubris. Solidarity helps people to work hard to overcome the various challenges that burden life. Solidarity helps people to ward off internal and external threats.

Importantly, solidarity spurs people toward "civilized" or urban. It is here that *asabiyah* produces its antinomy. Civilized life takes people away from their mere dependence on basic needs to a quest for luxury. Luxury then leads to human hubris where people provincialize themselves as opposed to group solidarity. Apart from Ibn Khaldun, the French anthropologist, Emile Durkheim also made a similar observation. Durkheim in his theory of mechanic solidarity and organic solidarity reflected on the complex nexus between individualism and collectivism in the establishment of the state (Durkheim, 2014).

Mechanic solidarity is the kind of *asabiyah* where individuals just depend on one another in a natural state for subsistence. On the other hand, organic solidarity is a move away from the "primitive" state of interdependence for subsistence to individuals honing their unique acquired skills and idiosyncrasies to complement the other for human flourishing. The balance in both mechanic and organic solidarities is to curb the propensity of individuals from focusing on themselves alone at the expense of society (collectivism/communalism). Indeed, Ibn Khaldûn understood this from the problems that civilized life brings to people. As the rulers search for luxury, they impose taxes and other oppressive measures to achieve their interests (Alrefai & Brun, 1994; Weiss, 1995). Society, as it progresses from simple to complex results in the reconstruction of human relationships on instrumental lines, where human beings are a means to an end, instead of an end in themselves. Without going into details, Karl Marx referred to this as commodity fetishism (Ripstein, 1987; Sherlock, 1997), where the lack of any kind of social relationship between the labour and

consumer results in the elevation of money as more important than human beings. The value of money takes precedence and weighs higher than human beings.

To choreograph society from the challenges of human hubris, a new approach to the philosophy of education needs to be incorporated. My argument is based on the extent to which the coronavirus pandemic has affected the importance of sociogenic activities. Indeed, until the pandemic, much of the human sociogenic activities were gradually moving online, particularly business. Since business, historically the market served as the heartland of group solidarity, the pre-pandemic migration of economic transactions affected human affective relations. The pandemic has rather exacerbated the migration of human activities offline to online. Religious practices, marriages, festivals, and funerals, in the Ghanaian environment have been highly represented online. These days, it is very common for these sociogenic activities that, in the past required no special invitation for people to attend, to have defined boundaries over who could participate. The offline ones are strictly anchored to special invitations. Such special invitations cut off the socially downtrodden, who again in the past would have walked into such organisations to benefit from free foods, from group solidarity.

The impact of degeneration in social life has impacted the philosophy and direction of liberal education. Prior to the modern era, possibly since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, liberal education, usually religion, philosophy, and astronomy, were directed at helping individuals to appreciate nature and human conviviality ([Marrou, 1982](#)). Often organised by religious institutions, individuals were trained not to develop their own “truths” but rather work along the conventional truth of society for human flourishing. This system may have had its own difficulties, including the imperialistic tendency of mugging individual creativity. But on the whole, it kept society together and

significantly curbed the spill overs of the *sui generis* of individuals that hardly supported sociogenic activities (Pals, 1987; Phelan, 2012).

Nevertheless, since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, education has progressed from individuals adapting the conventional truths of society to finding their own truths. Backed by the post-structural and postmodernism theories of western philosophers such as Sartre (2007) and Foucault (1982), social institutions and conventional truths are framed as oppressive. More recently, the emphasis on education has been more about economic enhancement than human development – compelling a justifiable defence of the humanities (Nussbaum, 2010). With all this, as the pandemic-driven online activities have taken human beings further away from offline group activities, my paper will provide an intervention. The intervention will focus on the need for the Ghanaian state to recuperate the indigenous wisdom of Ghana's Triple Heritage to rebuild the nation. But before then, I discuss below the experiences of Ghanaian pupils and students during the pandemic-driven online teachings

## **METHOD**

The author's interest in writing about the impact of the state's introduction of digital technology as a critical intervention to mitigating the impact of the pandemic on education was a result of what the author had observed with the surge in the "selfie" culture in Ghana. By "selfie" culture, the author is referring to the scenario where human beings are becoming more self-centred as they spend time in the virtual world and less in the social world. Given the author's reading of the pre-pandemic social map of Ghana as putting the social orientation of life, especially in Accra in recession, the author picked an interest in finding out how the pandemic is affecting education in some communities in Accra. But because Accra is highly segmented socio-geographically, reflecting social status, the author carefully

selected my respondents to reflect the segmentation of the city. The author, therefore, focused on Maamobi, which is one of the oldest urban slums (inner-Muslim community) in Accra that has been in existence since the early twentieth century. The author also selected respondents from East Legon, one of the middle-income communities in Accra.

As stated above, the motivation for the author's article is to explore another philosophical approach to Ghana's education. Concurrently, the author deploys a phenomenological approach to this study, "bracketing" the author's biases to interview and reflect on approaches Ghana could adopt to restructure its post-Covid-19 philosophy of education. To achieve this aim, the author organised in-depth interviews with pupils and students, their teachers/lecturers and parents/guardians for this paper. The author uses pupils to refer to pre-university individuals, while student refers to those in the university. The author's study was more about eliciting stories about the experiences of these pupils/students than gathering figures. The author wanted to analyse the lived experiences of these students to be able to gauge the needed reforms that Ghana needs to introduce to fashion new teaching approaches and reconfigure the philosophical foundation of education. The author focused on the philosophical approach to learning and technological mediation in education because they have had a double-sided effect on pupils/students – which then tends to impact the worldview of learners. The author, therefore, designed my research qualitatively, with an open-ended interview guide that focused on key thematic areas such as the reason for education, teaching methodology, and a new philosophical foundation of education. With this, the author organised in-depth interviews with the author's respondents. Occasionally, when the author needed to follow up on some interviews over the phone.

To incorporate ethical considerations in the research, the author first spoke with the parents of learners under the age of 18 years for their consent. This is because, in Ghana, a child under the age of 18 years is treated as a minor. But depending on mere figures to determine age was also problematic. Because the author interviewed university first-year students who were under the age of 18. So, instead of rigidly applying the quantitative logic of 18 years as a determinant of maturity, the author also relied on social status, in the case of university students to curate my ethical consideration. Thus, because university students were unsure of their safety from the pandemic in the public, and also sought to conceal their perspectives from their parents – part of fostering their socially autonomy as young adults, the author did not have to speak to their parents in collecting data.

Since the author designed my research qualitatively, and informed by interest in stories, the author used multiple non-probability sampling to gather my respondents. This non-probability sampling included snowballing and purposive sampling techniques. With the snowball sampling approach, the author identified persons within the author's circle to reach individuals who were not in the author's immediate social network or reach. Because the author has resided in Maamobi-Accra since 1984, the author readily identified all the categories of my respondents for the paper. For East Legon, the author relied on friends in the community to reach select respondents. Through this approach, the author interviewed 20 respondents – made up of 10 boys and 10 girls at the senior high schools and 10 male and 10 female young people from the tertiary institutions. All the second circle pupils were in the final year of their schooling, while those at the tertiary level were in second and third years. It was difficult getting the final year students, as several of them were preparing for their long essays – a requirement for their undergraduate graduation.

From the perspective of socio-demographical information about respondents, none of them was formally working and none of them was married. Religiously, the respondents were made up of Muslims and Christians, belonging to the different strands of either Pentecostalism, historic churches, or Sunni-Tijaniyya Islam. None of them claimed identified with indigenous religion nor came across as religious *non*. At the East Legon, 7 out of 10 of the respondents were Christians; while the remaining 3 were Muslims. At the Maamobi community, 6 of the respondents were Muslims, while the rest of them were Christians.

The respondents were also actively involved in religious activities with a few of them occupying influential positions in their campus faith-based associations. As people of faith, the respondents shared a non-binary worldview that mainstream life as an interlock between the material and spiritual worlds. This non-binary cosmogony is also a characteristic of indigenous religion ([Prempeh, 2022b, pp. 269–291](#)). For this reason, it was not very difficult for the author to explore their responses through the perspective of Ghana's Triple Heritage, minted out of these three religious' traditions. More important, that all the respondents believed in God as the ultimate source of all human beings was important for the author's analysis. They all gave interesting and revealing accounts about the social impact of the pandemic on their social skills. Nevertheless, because of the similarities in the stories respondents shared, the author rather sampled those that speak generally to their collective experiences. The author also sampled a few of the responses from teachers, lecturers and parents. Interviews were recorded and transcribed manually and analysed based on the objective of the study – the social impact of online teaching. The author adopted qualitative thematic analysis, providing thick description and reflections. The author's aim was to establish a seamless correlation between the social impact of the

pandemic, social skills of students and a need for restructuring Ghana's educational reform, based on the country's Triple Heritage.

## **COVID-19 AND ONLINE TEACHING: THE EXPERIENCES OF GHANAIAAN PUPILS/STUDENTS**

Following the coronavirus pandemic, the government of Ghana, rightly, introduced online teaching. This was part of the global practice of ensuring that gaps were not created in the educational needs of pupils and students (Reimers, 2022). Leveraging the media, radio and television, Ghana's Ministry of Education provided countrywide education to citizens of the country (Edumadze et al., 2022). Aside from the traditional media of communication, radio and TV, the Ministry also invested in social media handles. This usually involved a merging of the two mediums of teaching where offline teaching in a studio is streamlined currently on social media handles, especially Facebook.

Through the above strategic interventions, several students and pupils readily accessed online teaching without feeling left behind. But a majority of those who accessed online teaching were middle class city and town dwellers, who had smartphones and other electronic gadgets, such as computers (Kwapong, 2022). Several of the pupils in the countryside, who lacked smartphones, hardly had access to online education. The government, however, did well in ensuring that such children did not lag as the Minister is reported to have collaborated with some IT industries to provide alternative means to such pupils (Kwapong, 2022). But on the whole, the Ghanaian state deployed the liberalisation of the media since the country's re-democratisation in the 1990s, to use the radio and TV to reach most of the village dwellers (Adom, 2020).

Since the liberalisation of Covid-19 social distancing and safety protocols by the end of 2021, pupils and students were allowed to go

back to school for in-person classes. But after a few months of lockdown and social immobility, several parents were concerned about their children contracting the virus (Obeng et al., 2022). Given that several Ghanaians had not been vaccinated at the end of 2021, any report of a student contracting the virus results in a spike in panic and anger among parents. An example was the massing up of parents at the Accra Girls' Senior High School built by the country's first president, Kwame Nkrumah in 1953, to take their children home (GhanaWeb, 2020). The media's sensational reporting of such cases increased the anxiety of parents and students.

In all this, the focus of my paper is the social impact of online teaching. Without limiting the psychological impact of the lockdown on pupils, I want to focus on the social aspect. The social aspect is as critical as the psychological because the human sense of gregariousness is needed to reconstruct Ghana's post-Covid economy. The author's study revealed that students converted and practised the social distancing rule as physical distancing -- imperilling conviviality on post-lockdown campus life. The few weeks of lockdown reoriented students away from their sense of social conviviality, which was also borne out of the lingering fear that they may contract the virus should they close social gaps with their friends. The general impact of this was that the social distancing reinforced the implicit practice of socially marginalising persons considered to have some form of physical deformity. As the author shall extensively discuss in the course of this paper, the social distancing rule revitalised the social ostracization of the blind and persons with visibly unique physical outlook. Consequently, when the author interviewed the pupils and students, the author elicited the following as samples:

A female second year Junior High School pupil at the Kotobabi 11 said as follows:

During the lockdown, I felt the world was collapsing on me. That I couldn't see my friends and teachers was not good. There were times I felt the world was coming to an end and my schooling would shortly also end. But after depending on TV and smartphones for my education, there are times I feel I shouldn't go to the class, but rather learn on my own. This is because, with online teaching, we had great teachers with more expertise than several of my teachers.

The *othering* of persons who physically looked different proved quite difficult for the visually challenged. Already, the Ghanaian community, with a certain of "wholeness" of person have selected socially marginalised the visually impaired. The pandemic deepened the anxiety and social *othering* of the blind. As the author gathered from the study, the *othering* of the blind was quite challenging that it re-structured the social interactions between visually impaired persons and those with no such challenge. A case of this was expressly articulated by a third year visually impaired student at the University of Ghana. He said as follows:

The lockdown wasn't easy at all. Our lecturers migrated several of our courses online. But the challenges for me were basically two: First, the frequent power outages and second, the irregular internet supply. The erratic supply of energy and the internet were a challenge to me. But more importantly, I missed the company of my friends, including those who are not visually impaired. In school, finding myself in a gathering of people who shared my attribute or empathise with me and offered unsolicited but needed help made life more exciting. But now, even when we are back to school, the fear of a surge in Covid-19 has strained all social relations. People are rather more careful, so unlike pre-pandemic days when people were willing to help, these days, even when I am running into a ditch, because of taking a wrong step, I notice people only speak in giving instructions, instead of holding me.

Beyond the social altercation that the pandemic and its attending social distancing rules mandated, the author's observed mixed impact of the pandemic. The schools' incorporation of e-learning and teaching methods broadened the base of students who participated in academic work. Nevertheless, in terms of approaches to teaching, the online teaching and learning practice undermined the social dimension of teaching, which often involves a dialogical, face-to-face interactions. Consequently, e-learning and teaching temporarily reversed the significance of education as student-teacher-centred approach to teacher-centred approach. This development obviously frustrated teaching as it also potentially impeded teachers' objective of teaching as a means of stimulating critical thinking in students and social conviviality. A lecturer at the University of Ghana, who pleaded anonymity said about his experiences as follows:

With the coming introduction of online teaching, the university succeeded in reducing the deficit that students would have suffered. Nevertheless, online teaching had its own impact. It is either students who could not join because they had no smart gadgets or erratic energy and internet supply. But for me, that I couldn't see the face of my students was worse. It was always as if I was speaking to a room of an empty audience. Sometimes, I ask questions or seek their opinion to be sure my students were following. But usually, for 5 minutes, I get no response. When I take the initiative to mention names, I realised that several of them had joined for formality's sake and left to do their own thing. The issue was also complicated by the fact that students couldn't put on their video without disrupting the strength of their internet connectivity.

## **ANALYSIS OF DATA**

As the author has previously said, the author collected several similar responses from respondents, but upon transcription, the

author sampled the above for space. Meanwhile, the author will be referring to a few other respondents that are specific to a specific comment the author makes. We could glean a few social impacts of the pandemic-induced online teaching on a student. First, social cohesion among students suffered during the pandemic. As the visually impaired student said, because of the global and local imposition of lockdown rules, students returned to school with a new understanding of bodily contact. A lot of students have become more aware of the extent to which they got close to their friends than ever before.

Indeed, in the Ghanaian social landscape, social distancing is very crucial; it is gendered and also based on age and social class (Salm & Falola, 2002). Men and women who are not kin members are expected to keep a reasonable distance when talking (Koduah, 2010). A distance is also expected to be kept between those in authority and followers; similarly, distance is kept among students, usually between seniors and juniors. For all this reason, moral issues are usually judged on social distancing. For example, the author has observed that a young man who keeps touching a young lady deliberately is considered immoral and sexually lustful. Two men who walk holding hands in public; or male and female adults who openly kiss in public provoke the moral concerns of several onlookers. Often, they are profiled as sexually perverse.

Nevertheless, a social relationship is also based on distance. Shaking hands, as opposed to hugging, is a common practice among Ghanaians (Naylor, 2000). Among students, both men and women shake hands and snip when they meet or when driven into an exciting mood because of an ongoing conversation. Hugging, which is becoming more common, is treated as an elitist practice among students and middle-class constituencies. All of this points to the issue

of touching and social distance as part of the cultural practices of human beings (Simmel & Levine, 1972).

Regrettably, as the study discovered the public conflated physical distancing social distancing, which created problems for a visually impaired student. In Ghana, the idea of a “whole” person is embodied in the person of a chief (Busia, 1951). As the representative of ancestors, the chief is expected to be physically and mentally sound and impeccable (Busia, 1951). Any person who is blind, for example, can hardly be considered for chieftaincy. While the logic of physical and mental impeccability may have been informed by the role of premodern chiefs as warriors, the idea of physical “wholeness” has persisted in 21<sup>st</sup> century Ghana.

In 2013, the government of Ghana, under Mr John Dramani Mahama appointed Dr Henry Seidu Daanaa as the country’s first visually impaired Minister to mediate the affairs of chiefs (GhanaWeb, 2017). Unfortunately, some chiefs made recourse to the primordial idea of a “whole” person as a leader to protest the appointment of Dr Daanaa. The issue nearly divided the chieftaincy front. This was a sad incident, but following the social impact of the pandemic, the experience of a visually impaired student, who feels socially isolated needs a relook at Ghana’s philosophy of education.

Next is the issue of students exercising conviviality in learning. The basic school pupil, referred to above, said she is losing interest in group learning. This issue needs to be taken seriously by the education sector. Historically and traditionally, children often learn in a group, sharing ideas and critiquing one another. In traditional societies, education was oriented along sociogenic pathways such that children observed and participate in learning the basic values of social life (Prempeh, 2022a). Often, gathered around the fire when the full moon appeared, children participate in the communal activity of folklore, including storytelling. The social structure of folklore was such that an

elderly person tells a story to the children, or the children engage in the social practice of benign form insults, called “*mess mess*” or playful invectives – when the author was growing up in the 1980s in Accra. While insult has a complex and arbitrary role in social cohesion, among children, trading insults at one another as part of folklore was healthy for building social resilience and tolerance (Nii-Dortey & Nanbigne, 2020).

At universities, students form study groups to help one another. The transition from senior high school to the tertiary level could be very disruptive for several students. This is because, until the government of Ghana’s introduction of the junior secondary school concept in 1987 (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008), several people went to university, relatively in their late adult lives. This implied that most of them may have had a stint in the world of work and formed a complex understanding of conviviality and social ties. They had also acquired enough experience to live as quasi-autonomous persons on university campuses. But since the late 1980s and more recently the turn of the millennium, several students pursue tertiary education while they are still in their early days of young adult life. Many of them, therefore, struggle with both the independence they enjoy on university campuses and the pressures associated with academic work. At the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and the University of Ghana where the author both schooled and worked as a teaching assistant, the author observed that several students from the secondary schools who moved to the universities had enormous challenges adapting to those who had had pre-university work experience. The author also observed that at the UCC in particular students who are often dismissed for non-academic performance are those directly from secondary schools, as opposed to those who had gone through the college of education.

Consequently, study groups are one of the key avenues for students to survive both the academic and the stressful life on campus. So, with students reorienting themselves away from study group practices, the consequences could be challenging for not just academic performance but nation-building. Given the endemic problem of ethnocentric and religious fanaticism that continue to burden Ghana's development (Faanu & Graham, 2017), the collapse of social cohesion and conviviality would certainly deepen nepotism and worsen the already social canker of corruption.

Already, the eruption of social media in Ghana and the concurrent pervasiveness of smartphones since the turn of the millennium had undermined sociality. Social media has had multiple benefits to the Ghanaian and global human constituency. Young people have mobilised online to challenge political corruption and misgovernance (Agana & Prempeh, 2022). As to whether such online activities which sometimes translocate to offline street demonstrations have had the desire of altering systemic injustice does not take away social media as broadening the frontiers of communication. But the social media regime has contributed to the progressive evolution of human beings from Ibn Khaldûn's "desert" life to the virtual world of cyborgs. In the cyborg world, the language is "selfie" where Durkheim's organic solidarity has progressed into extreme forms of self-sufficiency, self-determination, and self-motivation. The result has been the near collapse of temperance and measured tolerance in the world of imperfections. More so, it has deepened a cancel culture or extreme intolerance where persons who disagree with others are cancelled and reduced to pariahs.

Parents are lecturers are all complaining about extreme forms of social exclusion and tension on the campuses. At the time of writing, male students at the campuses of the University of Ghana and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology had taken

student rivalry to the point of extreme violence. In 2021, a senior high pupil who felt discontented with an examination he had written recorded himself in a video, brazenly berating the president of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufu-Addo. While insulting leadership is not new, social media has given visibility and wide broadcasting of what would have otherwise been limited to a particular space.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the discussion, the author argues that the responses elicited from the study point to the need for recuperating human society through re-working the philosophy of education. The author's argument stems from the fact that students developed several deficits in their social skills. The result of which was the complex multidimensionality of social exclusion. Meanwhile, education, as the author has established is sociogenic that is highly significant in a social context of interpersonal exchange of ideas. That sociogenic disposition of education implies that, both indigenous and western, it is the basic means of socialisation. Concurrently, much as the technical answers to reforming education is very important, a complement of it would be the philosophy of education that emphasises social conviviality to affirm human dignity. I mention education as the basic unit of recent socialisation in Ghana because, as part of the breaking down of gendered roles, several families have outsourced the early nurturing and socialising of their children to schools. As a result of the modern regime of work, urbanisation and short maternity leaves, several parents send their babies to school, soon after six months of birth of babies. For this reason, schools and the state have become key institutions for socialising people. Indeed, religious institutions are also playing a role, but the schools are by far more influential, in my estimation, following the growing trend in boarding houses for even children of less than 18 years.

The impact of outsourcing of early childhood care to institutions rather than parents, almost a necessary “evil” in the neoliberal economic world has arguably robbed children of affective relationship between them and their parents. This situation, as the author surmises, has been exacerbated by the dislocation of social relationship among students that the pandemic has engineered. It is against this background that the author recommends a need for retooling the philosophy of Ghana’s education to upset the impact of pandemic-driven social exclusion. It is also to enforce the idea of human ontological dignity. Considering that the author’s goal is to complement to the “how” answers with the “why” answers, the author incorporated Ghana's Triple Heritage as a response. Ghana’s Triple Heritage was part of the state formation strategies that the nationalists, particularly Kwame Nkrumah, cultivated to enjoin the idea of African personality. As part of constructing Ghana's nationalism and patriotism for nation-building, the country's first leader, Kwame Nkrumah (1964) developed the philosophy of consciencism. *Consciencism* is a complex philosophy that would require a separate paper to elucidate (Boadi, 2000; Nkrumah, 2016). But for this purpose, I align with Nkrumah's *consciencism* as the creative synthesis of Africa’s heritage, indigenous cultures, Islam and Christianity, for social cohesion.

Ali Mazrui has referred to Nkrumah’s *consciencism* as Africa’s Triple Heritage. Deploying the Triple Heritage, the author argues that the various religious traditions in Ghana enforce human dignity. The author has already discussed Ibn Khaldun to significantly represent the Islamic position (though not theological). So, instead of repeating anything about Islam here, the author discusses indigenous cultures and Christianity.

The indigenous cultures in Ghana, focusing on the Akan for convenience's sake, are oriented towards the oneness of the human community. The Akan axiom says that "Every human being is a child of God." With this, the Akan society has a nationwide shared philosophy that endorses the evolution of culture towards communalism and a sense of social cohesion. This was captured by the Ghanaian philosopher, Kwame Gyekye as follows:

Culture, thus, comes into being as a result of people looking for ways of dealing with the various problems that arise out of human beings living together in a society. The problem of how to survive collectively, and relate to and help one another leads to the formation of a communal way of life. The problem of regulating the behaviour of the members of society and bringing order, social harmony, stability and peace to society leads to the establishment of legal and moral codes. The desire to express their creative talents and communicate their feelings leads to the creation of such art forms as music and dance forms. The way people look at the universe may lead to questions about its origin and beliefs in some ultimate being (or beings) beyond the universe as worthy of reverence and worship: herein lies the beginning of religion, or religious practice. The ideas or beliefs of the people concerning death and the hereafter lead to the kind of ceremonial practices or funerals that are instituted for the dead (Gyekye, 2013, p. 141).

The above shape the Akan idea of communalism which according to Kwame Gyekye "immediately sees the human as inherently (intrinsically) a communal being, embedded in a context of social relationships and interdependence, never as an isolated, atomic individual" (Wiredu & Gyekye, 1992, p. 104). Reducing all this to Christianity, the Christian idea of God creating human beings in His image is also important for the philosophy of education. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, racism or W.E.B. Du Bois' colour line, which he identified as

the problem of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Du Bois, 2015), – has undermined and battered the human family. Africans are considered ontologically and genetically inferior to whites, while in Ghana some ethnic groups have looked at others as inferior. Consequently, the issue of how to live with differences remains a major challenge. For this reason, the philosophizes the Christian idea of God creating human beings in His image as an endorsement of the ontological dignity of every human being. While human beings may have different abilities, none is naturally superior to the other.

In conclusion, the author argues that the incorporation of Ghana's Triple Heritage into the country's philosophy of education will help overcome the debilitating effect of pandemic-driven social exclusion that could be a major and disruptive pandemic in mediating social relations. But the author also admits that the recommendation has major limitations. One of these challenges is the resources it would take to develop an appropriate curriculum that would investigate further to invest in the nuggets of wisdom embedded in Ghana's multiculturalism. Another challenge is how to ensure that one particular worldview does not swamp other perspective in Ghana's overwhelming Christian demographical reality. As a suggestion, the author recommends extensive research to explore the strategies that the state and other stakeholders could adopt to recuperate the importance of Ghana's Triple Heritage to formulate a socially convivial philosophy of education.

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# Experiences of the Yayasan Pendidikan Islam (Yapis) di Tanah Papua in Extending Human Resources

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## Abstract

*The territory of Papua has many obstacles for transportation and human resource development for indigenous Papuan. In this situation, Yayasan Pendidikan Islam (Yapis) di Tanah Papua emerges as one of institutions committed in helping the people and government in Tanah Papua to improve the quality of human resources intensively. Yapis has contributed significantly to improve quality of human resources is 198 educational institutions have spread from basic education to higher education in Tanah Papua. This research was carried out with a qualitative design with a case study format. Information containing data and facts was obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation studies from main sources, such as Yapis administrators, managers of educational institutions (UPT) under Yapis, students, and stakeholders. Analysis of the validity of the information obtained in this paper using the data cross-check method. The results show that Yapis's strategic planning in the development of human resources in Tanah Papua includes the decision on policies regarding the establishment and development of UPTs under Yapis, planning for the availability of human resources, attractiveness of educational facilities and infrastructure to the existence of extra-curricular activities (extracurricular), cadre and fulfilment the welfare of Yapis human resources optimally.*

**Keywords:** Development; Education; Human Resources; Tanah Papua; Yapis

## **INTRODUCTION**

Papua is the second largest island in the world after Greenland and the largest in Indonesia ([Pemerintah Provinsi Papua, 2022](#)). Papua Island has an area of about 421,981 km<sup>2</sup>, the island of Papua is at the eastern end of the Indonesian territory, with the potential for natural resources of economic and strategic value. More than 71% of Papua's territory is a stretch of tropical rain forest that difficult to be reached, because it consists of steep valleys and high mountains, and part of the mountains is covered by snow. This condition becomes an obstacle for transportation and human resource development for indigenous Papuans ([Ismail, 2012](#)). The lack of infrastructure and teachers are still a major problem. The low attention to education impacted the achievement of the human development index (HDI). For example, the HDI in Papua in 2022 is 61.39 or the lowest in Indonesia ([Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022](#)).

It is the right of every citizen to receive education and the right is also considered important in Indonesia ([Affandi, 2017](#); [Sujatmoko, 2010](#)). The 1945 Constitution of Indonesia, Article 31 paragraph (1) states that every citizen has the right for their education. Confirmed and detailed in the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 Article 5 Paragraph (1) (Government, 2003) that every citizen has the same right to obtain quality of education. Paragraph (5) states that every citizen has the right to have the opportunity to improve lifelong education. For the government, the rights granted to its citizens are stated in the 1945 Constitution and Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System is an obligation. The government must facilitate education for every citizen with the specified quality. Therefore, a budget for education was then issued at 20% of the APBN (state revenue budget).

To realize the development of the education sector, the Regional Government of Papua Province has issued a policy through the

Regional Regulation (*Peraturan Daerah* abbreviated *Perda* in Bahasa Indonesia) of the Province of Papua Number 5 of 2006 concerning the Development of Education in the Province of Papua. This is accordance with Law Number 17 of 2007 concerning the National Long-Term Development Plan which has clearly established the vision and mission of national development for the period 2005-2025, namely an independent, advanced, equity, and prosperous of Indonesia. To realize the vision, it is described through eight national development missions, including realizing equitable and just development ([Amtu, 2014](#); [Slamet PH, 2014](#); [Samsudin, 2019](#)).

Papua Province Regional Regulation Number 5 of 2006 concerning Education Development in Papua Province contains information that education development includes the preparation of quality human resources and educational infrastructure in Papua. Educational development aims to develop and prepare indigenous Papuans who are qualified in knowledge and faith, as well as capable, creative, independent, healthy, democratic, virtuous, and responsible. The implementation of education in Papua in addition to implementing a national education pattern, also applies a special education pattern ([Tabuni et al., 2016](#); [Oktavian & Adi, 2021](#)). The concept of education as an investment has developed rapidly. It is increasingly believed that the development of education sector is a key prerequisite for the growth of other development sectors. This concept is believed after scientific evidence was found of the vital role and function of education in positioning humans as the main force as well as a prerequisite for development progress in various sectors ([Blöndal et al., 2002](#); [Sun et al., 2018](#); [Ershova et al., 2019](#)).

Although on the one hand the community or citizens have the right to get quality education, but on the other hand citizens are also obliged to assist the government in providing quality education itself. Confirmed and detailed in the National Education System Law No. 20

of 2003 Article 6 paragraph (2) states that every citizen is responsible for the continuity of education. This means that the implementation of education is not only the responsibility of government, all citizens are obliged to assist the implementation of quality education. And Article 4 paragraph (6) of the National Education System Law emphasizes that education is carried out by empowering all components of society through participation in the implementation and quality control of education services (Nadziroh et al., 2018; Khunaifi & Matlani, 2019).

This research is intended to analyze how Yayasan Pendidikan Islam (Yapis) di Tanah Papua (Islamic Education Foundation in Papua Land in English, henceforth is called Yapis) participate in improving the quality of human resources in Papua. Yapis has highly committed in helping the community and government in *Tanah Papua* to improve the quality of their human resources intensively. Yapis has contributed significantly in improving quality human resources through education in *Tanah Papua*. Yapis is currently managing about 198 educational institutions from basic education to higher education. This research is also aimed to contribute to existing literature on Islamic education in Papua (Murtadlo, 2016; Wekke et al., 2018; Dute et al., 2021).

## **METHOD**

The current research can be categorized as exploratory. According to George (2021), Investigating research questions that have not been thoroughly examined in the past is the goal of the methodology known as exploratory research. Research that is exploratory in nature is frequently qualitative and primary in character. Previous studies (Wagner et al., 2010; Lassoued et al., 2020; G. Oliveira et al., 2021) also employed exploratory research in education context. The method used is qualitative method with case study type. Data and facts were obtained through interviews,

observations, and documentation from main sources, such as Yapis administrators at both the central and branches, managers of educational institutions (*Unit Pelaksana Teknis* abbreviated UPT in Bahasa Indonesia) under Yapis, students, and stakeholders. Analysis of the validity of the information obtained in this paper using the data cross-check method.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The History of Yapis**

Yapis is an Islamic education foundation engaging in education as main core of organization in *Tanah Papua*. The existence of Yapis is certainly a partner of the government in the context of forming and providing quality human resources. Educational institutions established under Yapis cover all types and levels of education. The informant, General Chair and Secretary 1 of Yapis in Jayapura (Period 2012-2017) recounted that it was generally known that Yapis was founded based on the urgent circumstances of the Muslims in Papua at that time ([Helmawati & Ismail, 2018](#)). The employees who were sent to Papua (at that time called Irian Jaya) both civil and private employees who were Muslim were confused when they were going to send their children to school. Because during the Dutch colonial era, educational institutions that developed at that time were educational institutions founded by the Christian Foundation.

After Irian was liberated, the first Muslims who tried to realize Islamic education were in Kaimana. For the first time the government of the Republic of Indonesia helped Muslims in Irian Jaya, and it happened in early 1963. The Elementary School in Kaimana belongs to the first Yapis school. Meanwhile developments continued, another Islamic organization, Muhammadiyah, also developed, followed by the entry of various political streams into Irian Jaya. It is fact that schools are owned by either Catholics (YPPK), Protestants (YPK) or

YPPGI, while the number of government owned until the time of Yapis was born has not reached one hundred school. By the sponsorship of Anwar Ilmar, in 1967 the Muslims in Merauke took more action, especially establishing the Islamic Education Foundation, abbreviated as YPI (Yayasan Pendidikan Islam). Islamic elementary and junior high schools were established. YPI was trying to fight for subsidies, but it was blocked by the fact that YPI was local, so that government subsidies could not be obtained ([Yayasan Pendidikan Islam \(Yapis\) di Tanah Papua, 2018](#)).

The explanation from the Head of education and culture Province of Irian Jaya at that time, Mr. Solihin Sumowardoyo, directed Anwar Ilmar to establish a foundation that covers all of Muslims in Irian Jaya. The recommendation was communicated by Anwar Ilmar to Muslim leaders in Jayapura. Coincidentally, Anwar Ilmar was assigned by the government from Merauke to Jayapura, so with the help of Islamic leaders, he tried to create a foundation that was engaged in formal education for the benefit of Muslims in Irian Jaya. Because of the support of all Muslim in Irian Jaya, on 24th Ramadan 1388 H coincided with 15 December 1968, the Islamic Education Foundation established, which is called Yapis (Yayasan Pendidikan Islam) in The Land of Papua. The central domicile is in the capital city of Irian Province.

The Islamic Education Foundation (YAPIS) in Land of Papua is located at the center, region, and branch in the Land of Papua. YAPIS center is domiciled in Jayapura City as the Capital City of Papua Province; YAPIS Region is domiciled in the Capital City of the Provinces in the Land of Papua; YAPIS Branch is domiciled in the Capital City of the Regency/City and the District Capital ([Yayasan Pendidikan Islam \(Yapis\) di Tanah Papua, 2018](#)). Its vision is the realization of intelligent, skilled, healthy, prosperous, and faithful people in the Land of Papua. And its missions are: (a) educating the

life of the nation with Islamic nuances in developing science, technology based on faith and piety to Allah SWT; (b) prepare intelligent and skilled human resources who can apply Islamic knowledge and technology for the welfare of mankind; (c) develop the potential of human resources who are independent, have noble character, have noble character, and can overcome problems in society and the environment; and (d) realizing a balanced attitude of physical and spiritual life in the life of society, nation, and state. Meanwhile, Yapis' goal is committed to advance education in Indonesia, especially in Land of Papua.

From the founders' experience, in establishing an educational institution that is managed by the community, it is necessary to involve or participate in the community itself. The participation of all existing stakeholders is the main support for the development of YAPIS in Tanah Papua. Including government support for human resource development. And the fact is that all Muslims in the Land of Papua are involved in managing this educational institution under YAPIS. The progress of YAPIS in Land of Papua, of course, cannot be separated from public trust, including non-Muslims. This fact is the most valuable asset to achieve the goals. And this is a very good management strategy in achieving the goals that have been set together.

### **Yapis Strategic Planning in Development of Human Resources in The Land of Papua**

YAPIS is showing progress as qualified foundation. Various plans are discussed through conference every five years and meetings every year by all Muslims under YAPIS. So, the plans under YAPIS have been systematically arranged well. And from the results of the conference, several policies and decisions are taken, including the following.

### ***Establishment and Development of UPTs under Yapis***

There are several foundations of religious institutions in Tanah Papua that establish educational institutions and provide educational services to the community. Yapis is one of the institutions that provides educational services to the community. People in Tanah Papua are very tolerant and do not differentiate if the education is under a certain religious institution. There are 22 Yapis branches and 224 UPTs throughout Papua. Since its inception in 1968, Yapis has been a media for providing education in all corners of the Irian Jaya region (currently known as Tanah Papua) consisting of the Papua Province and West Papua Province with the motto *Ilmu Amaliah dan Amal Ilmiah*. Yapis currently manages 224 schools spread throughout the districts/cities of Papua and West Papua Provinces from kindergarten to higher education ([Yayasan Pendidikan Islam \(Yapis\) di Tanah Papua, 2018](#)).

The Central Foundation makes regulations which implemented in YAPIS branches in Tanah Papua. Based on data from all YAPIS branches, there are up to 224 UPTs in Tanah Papua. In its development, there was a change in the number of UPTs from various branches because several UPTs separated themselves. Up to 2017, there are 198 UPTs under the Islamic Education Foundation (YAPIS) in Land of Papua. This condition occurs due to several factors, including the lack of optimal coordination and communication between YAPIS Center and UPT-UPT in all cities/districts in Papua ([Yayasan Pendidikan Islam \(Yapis\) di Tanah Papua, 2018](#)). The new UPTs are in Jayawijaya Regency.

The significant contribution of human resource comes from the manager of UPTs under Yapis. In good management and leadership, Yapis graduates have taken part in many local areas, cities/districts, provinces, and countries. Many of the graduates have become government employees and private employees both in Tanah Papua

and outside. This means that graduates who have competency are compatible as government officials, members of the House of Representatives, employees at Freeport, Amicom, and others. Through quality education, finally many indigenous Papuans are able and ready to compete in this era of globalization (Helmawati & Ismail, 2018).

### ***Human Resources Availability Planning of Yapis***

Yapis already has qualified resources in developing educational institutions. Based on the information obtained from the interviews, the employees who were sent to Papua (at that time called Irian Jaya) especially those with the status of civil servants, initiated the implementation of Islamic education. Until now, most administrators and educators are state civil servants assigned to Yapis.

At the beginning of the establishment of the UPTs from basic education to tertiary education, the majority were civil servants. In carrying out educational activities, of course, these human resources are ready to be used in moving the wheels of the organization and carrying out their main tasks. In addition, the founders of the foundation no longer need to be confused about their honorarium, because their welfare has been paid by the state. Based on these existing professionals, Yapis in Tanah Papua can develop. This strategy is the key of Yapis human resources and certainly being the right management strategy. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of strategic management for educational institutions (Jelenc & Vrdoljak Raguž, 2010; Cheng, 2013; Rudolph & Steffens, 2013; Wahab et al., 2013; Usman et al., 2019; P. H. de Oliveira et al., 2022).

### ***Attraction of Infrastructure Facilities and Extracurricular Activities***

Attractions such as the fulfilment of educational facilities and infrastructure to extra-curricular activities, such as drum bands, have

made non-Muslim communities entrust their children's education to educational institutions under YAPIS. Based on several studies, it is confirmed that educational and extracurricular facilities and infrastructure are among the attractions of an educational institution, so that the community and students choose the institution in their education process (Ho et al., 2017; Abisuga et al., 2020; Gumulya & Adiputra, 2020).

### ***YAPIS HR Recruitment and Welfare Fulfilment Strategy Optimally***

Cadre of human resources is carried out In the YAPIS organization. The regeneration is prepared by recruitment. They are provided adequate facilities to work totally. Through this strategy, YAPIS can carry out its activities professionally. Good human resource management helps the growth and development an organization (Bedford et al., 2017; Analoui, 2018; Reyes & Redoña, 2021). The cadres are directed to the development their human resources based on the paradigm of building a complete Indonesian human being. The cadres function as subjects who have the capacity to actualize their potential and human dimensions optimally in helping to build Indonesian people in accordance with educational goals. By support from the leader, the cadres can improve their quality and competitiveness of the Human Resources.

The young generations (cadres) are essential for an organization, because it is the core of the continuation of the organization's struggle in the future. Without regeneration, it is difficult to imagine an organization can move and carry out well and dynamically. Regeneration is a necessity and necessary in building an independent and sustainable work structure (Falah, 2019; Mashuri & Sulaiman, 2021). The best thing of regarding the human resources at Yapis, including all UPTs, is that they manage how the UPTs can provide proper rights for the driving forces or educators at the UPTs. So that with a decent life, they (HR) can work more optimally to manage and

advance educational institutions in their respective UPTs. This condition is in accordance with the results of research that the level of welfare has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance and organizational commitment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (Acar, 2012; Celep & Yilmazturk, 2012; Mark & Smith, 2012; Pan et al., 2015; Pavlovic et al., 2020).

### ***Knowledge-Based Economic Strategy in the Development of UPTs in the Era of Globalization***

There is something interesting in the current economic era, an economic system created by Yapis called Knowledge Based Economy. The knowledge-based economy is an expression coined to describe trends in advanced economies towards greater dependence on knowledge, information and high skill levels, and the increasing need for ready access to all of these by the business and public sectors. This is a good idea that Yapis is currently developing. That knowledge-based economy is needed in organizational management. With good economic conditions and having a good entrepreneurial spirit, managing human resources becomes very easy. A good economy supports the quality that will be developed by UPTs under YAPIS. As an example, Universitas Amal Ilmiah Yapis Wamena built a creative economy, which not only focuses on students to earn profits, but also how to build a creative economy in areas the UPTs are located.

The creative economy can be found in this university for example fostering housewives in making taro chips products in community service programs in the target villages. Lecturers and students facilitate household traders to create e-commers and campus mart accounts. Institutional or organizational framework and economic incentives generate efficiency in the use of knowledge and the development of an entrepreneurial spirit. Knowledge-based economy

is defined as an economy that is directly based on the production, distribution, and use of knowledge. One of management expert, Peter F. Drucker, stated that information and knowledge will be the main keys to future economic success (Drucker, 1992). The World Bank (The World Bank) states that the knowledge-based economy is an economic model that stimulates creativity, creation, seeding, and the application of knowledge and information to increase economic growth and prosperity.

### ***Autonomy Strategy in UPTs Management under Yapis***

Yapis is different from a private foundation which is managed privately for personal gain. Yapis is a people's foundation, managed by the people, for the benefit of the people, and to advance the existing togetherness. There is one thing that really excited the UPTs management, namely the autonomy policy given by the foundation to UPTs. This opens opportunities for UPTs managers to manage, develop, and improve the quality of institutions and education, whether it through physical development, human resources, and others. This motivates the UPT managers to always make changes, developments, and improvements to the UPTs.

This strategy is informed by the foundation, that autonomy can help the improvement and development of education under Yapis, especially how to raise human resources in Tanah Papua. Higher education institutions have the autonomy to manage the implementation of the Tridharma (education, research, dan community service). Article 64 paragraph (1); The autonomy of higher education management as referred to in Article 62 covers the academic and non-academic fields. Policies are enacted to develop the world of education to produce quality educational management (Nurhayati, 2014; Adam & Lanontji, 2021; Diyanto et al., 2021).

### ***Educational Quality Strategic Planning***

Based on documentation sources, as an educational system, every school under Yapis must fulfil various components. The targets for achieving the educational goals consist of an accreditation component includes curriculum standards, learning process, graduate, assessment, personnel, facilities and infrastructure, and management component, as well as education financing component. In practice, all these components standard are objects of education quality assurance. The point is that the quality of education is about fulfilling the components of those educational standards. The Yapis Education Commission program in the Tanah Papua is trying to improve facilities and infrastructure, increase the capacity and competence of human resources for educators and staffs, strengthen school literacy, improve health, and school hygiene services, strengthen students' skills, and procure business units ([Yayasan Pendidikan Islam \(Yapis\) di Tanah Papua, 2017, 2018](#)).

The interesting ones is the vision and mission, goals, and strategies' UPTs of Yapis to achieve the quality standard of education. Educational components such as curriculum is packaged in a syllabus that is more focused on personality development, and the availability of professional educators and staffs become the driving force in an organization. To maintain the quality of learning, various efforts and programs have been carried out by the UPT and the foundation leaders. Improving the quality of educators and educational staff have been noticed by the managers to comply with the government standards, such as going back to school (continuing to the relevant level of education or higher); cross between teachers between branches or UPT, teachers learn from other teachers in other branches or UPTs who have more competence or excellence. Adequate abilities and competencies affect the quality of the knowledge transfer process to students.

When educators and educational personnel are regulated and managed professionally, it will have an impact on their maximum performance. And finally, professional performance has an impact on public trust in educational institutions under Yapis. When it comes to the administration of an institution's operations, a "learning organization" is a type of institution that encourages and supports the personal growth and professional development of its employees as proposed by [Senge \(2006\)](#). Because of the pressures that contemporary organizations are under, learning organizations may emerge as a result of these pressures; this enables these organizations to remain competitive in the business environment ([Senge, 1990](#)). Yapis and its UPTs have shown ability to improve the quality of educational institutions which was part of their effort to become a learning organization.

The quality of the education offered is what attracts the public to entrust the education of children in Papua to the UPTs under Yapis. And people will pay for quality of the educational offered. Parents will provide support to their children to get a higher quality education. They hope that their children who graduate from Yapis educational institutions will be able to compete in the business or industry world or work in the government after graduation. The developments under Yapis are very encouraging in managing and providing services to the community.

### ***UPTs Supervision and Control***

This foundation is the people's foundation, the management is chosen from the people, supervised by them, and then supervised by the foundation as an institution that has a legal entity providing education which is carried out by Yapis. The period of supervision is carried out continuously every quarter, semester, and/or every year through a work meeting, UPT deliberation, and central Yapis deliberation as an accountability of each UPTs. Supportive monitoring

helps improve outcomes or goals. For maximum results, supervision can be carried out in various ways. It has been proven that the key to controlling the process is to control as much variation as possible. Public accountability and supervision is very necessary. The human resources under Yapis have good professionalism, because Yapis is owned by the public, accountability and supervision are carried out hierarchically through the community, and then the Foundation's management. Higher than that, accountability is also addressed to Allah SWT.

### **Collaboration and Communication as Key to Development**

Collaboration and communication are the keys to success for many educational institutions in different programs ([Donert et al., 2011](#); [Thune, 2011](#); [Haugland et al., 2014](#); [Serbezov et al., 2022](#); [Stoltz et al., 2022](#)). In developing and improving the quality of human resources, UPTs collaborate and communicate, both with internal UPTs under Yapis and external Yapis. Collaboration and communication are carried out by UPTs at the level of education at the same level or at other levels. An example is exchanging educators who have certain competencies to share many useful things.

At the UPT which manages universities, communication and collaboration are carried out with several well-known private universities in Indonesia for the implementation of the *Tridharma Perguruan Tinggi* (three main activities, namely education about teaching and learning process, research, and community service). One of the things that is often done is building networks in implementing the MBKM (abbreviation of *Merdeka Belajar Kurikulum Merdeka*) curriculum which is being adopted by several universities that are currently running. Development of human resources for educators and staffs are held through joint research, conducting workshops, and seminars both domestically and abroad ([Kabar Papua, 2020](#); [Republika Online, 2020](#)).

In addition, the strategies that UPT have taken in facing global economic challenges are how to build entrepreneurship, how to collaborate with stakeholder (DU/DI), how to persuade the community to give zakat, infaq, and sadaqah to foundation. It is realized that the challenges are getting tougher day by day which cannot be separated from the influence of economic globalization and this condition is felt by UPT administrators in remote areas or the central mountains of Papua which are far from access transportation. Leaders of UPT try to involve all actors, how to promote and respect local wisdom. This is the key in improving human resources through education ([Yayasan Pendidikan Islam \(Yapis\) di Tanah Papua, 2018](#)).

### **Realization of Values and Attitudes**

In the process of developing the Islamic Education Foundation in Tanah Papua managers or leaders of Yapis have open mind attitude and believes in several values and attitudes based on Islamic values. The development of knowledge and technology are growing fast and affect the order of human life, including in managing educational institutions. An open mind attitude towards development accompanied by a good and appropriate mental attitude can bring educational institutions to meet the demands of education in Land of Papua. Previous research showed the importance of having open mind for Muslims living within larger portion of Non-Muslim societies ([Pedersen et al., 2009](#); [Kanwal, 2015](#)).

Tolerance and respect are important to be upheld for managers who are immigrants ([Hamid, 2019](#)). Tolerant of differences in ethnicity, religion, language, culture or local wisdom, a positive way of thinking provides opportunities for the development of Yapis in Papua. The attitude of responsibility is the key to the survival of Yapis. Responsible for the mandate to manage the UPTs in various areas in Papua, which of course not all migrants are able to survive in Papua. The sense of responsibility in carrying out state duties and the

development of Islamic education in Papua is what fosters a sense of responsibility and enthusiasm from the managers.

The attitude of ownership and totality are also shown by the managers. The sense of belonging makes the Yapis Foundation and UPTs managers in Papua manage and run the UPTs as if it were their own educational institution. This attitude makes the managers work totality in establishing and developing the UPTs in their area. The newcomers who founded and managed Yapis in Papua would certainly not be as successful as they are today without teambuilding. Migrants who migrate to Papua, both civil servants and entrepreneurs communicate and help each other in various ways to survive and succeed. This attitude of togetherness provides strength in developing Yapis in Tanah Papua. In developing human resources in this area, of course, it is not just the transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Everyone learns together and accommodates the changing, respecting and appreciating each other. Various ways are carried out in the development of education and human capacity development, especially in Tanah Papua, not only by changing the people's ability in literacy and numeracy, but also through the process of forming and developing a positive and responsive mental attitude to change. Human resources who added value to the production of goods and services absolutely were studied from their education process.

The world is a place where humans learn throughout their lives. Humans learn to always improve their abilities so that they will be useful both for themselves and for others or mankind. The attitude of lifelong learning in improving competence is carried out by both Yapis and UPT managers as well as students in Tanah Papua. With geographical conditions that are difficult to be reached, of course human resources must have the courage, creative, innovative, and appreciative attitude towards all parties who have helped the establishment and development of Yapis in Tanah Papua. There is a

change in the paradigm of education and learning from behaviouristic to constructivist, making Yapis human resources managers, especially UPT managers, think more critically and creatively in managing education so that graduates are more ready to compete. These creative and innovative human resources will be able to manage their area to be more advanced and developing (Salas et al., 2015; Hamadamin & Atan, 2019; Rasool et al., 2019).

## **CONCLUSION**

The role of Yayasan Pendidikan Islam (Yapis) di Tanah Papua in helping the community and government in Tanah Papua to improve the quality of human resources intensively is unquestionable. YAPIS has made a real contribution in improving quality human resources through education in Tanah Papua, with indicators of the spread of educational institutions from basic education to higher education as many as 198 UPTs in Papua. In building and developing human resources in the Land of Papua, Yapis has done it with seriousness and a systematic plan through a jointly formulated vision and mission. High commitment and involvement of all parties is the strength of Yapis development. Yapis's strategic planning in the development of human resources in Tanah Papua includes the decision on policies regarding the establishment and development of UPTs under Yapis, planning for the availability of human resources, attractiveness of educational facilities and infrastructure to the existence of extra-curricular activities (extracurricular), cadre and fulfilment the welfare of Yapis human resources optimally. Implementation of a knowledge-based economy strategy, an autonomy strategy in the management of UPT under YAPIS, strategic planning for the quality of education, supervision, and control of UPT promote YAPIS become more develop. Furthermore, in building and developing the Islamic Education Foundation in Tanah Papua, it depends on collaboration

and communication, as well as the realization of good values and attitudes.

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# Ideologization of Hijrah in Social Media: Digital Activism, Religious Commodification, and Conservative Domination

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## Abstract

*This paper studies the development of the movement and the meaning of hijrah in social media. Hijrah was originally understood as a process of leaving the past misguidance (jahiliyyah) and towards conditions that are in accordance with syariat. In its development, hijrah refers to a transformation of individuals who are less religious to more religious (Islami). The form of this transformation can be seen from the choice of clothes, work preferences, and social relations models. The ideological process of the meaning of hijrah was carried out massively through social media. This is based on the search results on the internet about "hijrah" is more than other religious topics. This article answers how and why hijrah is interpreted and articulated by a number of digital activists. This research is qualitative research with a critical discourse analysis method combined with a digital hermeneutic approach. Based on research, digital activists who carry out the ideologization of the meaning of hijrah are preachers who have many followers on social media. Followers on social media are capital and modal in mainstreaming a discourse and idea. This article reveals that religious studies regarding hijrah on social media are not only related to understanding religious texts but are also part of religious commodification. In addition, the dominance of conservative groups is a fact that cannot be separated from the ideological flow of hijrah on social media.*

**Keywords:** *Conservative Domination; Digital Activism; Hijrah; Ideologization; Religious Commodification; Social Media*

## INTRODUCTION

Social media has become a new space for the spread of various discourses, including religious discourse. The development of information technology requires Muslims to use the media to disseminate their religious understanding. This certainly affects the development of contemporary religious discourse as well as changing the traditional religious landscape towards an impersonal religious pattern (Jinan, 2013). Media users will determine their own choice of media and discourse according to the characteristics they understand.

The shift in the religious orientation of the Muslim community in the digital era is explained quite clearly by Slama (2018) and Jinan (2012). For Slama, an Indonesianist and Anthropologist, it is difficult for Indonesian Muslims to be separated from the role of the media in their lives. Media is a primary need not only as a means of fulfilling enjoyment and entertainment, but also as a reference in religion (Slama, 2018). Meanwhile, Jinan (2012) views that the presence of the media as a means of spreading discourse is seen as the cause of the waning of authority in religion (Jinan, 2012). Whereas the issue of authority is the key in the construction of Muslim religiosity (Turner, 2007). This is so that the product of religious understanding is not trapped in an authoritarian religious understanding (Fadl, 2001; Juliansyahzen, 2019a).

The reality of contemporary Muslim spirituality and religiosity in relation to social media has been a focus of many researchers (Hew, 2012, 2018, 2019; Lengauer, 2018; Prakasita & Marijan, 2021). Hew elaborated a lot on the role of Chinese preachers in Indonesia with various da'wah media, including using social media. One of them is Felix Siau who is a popular Chinese preacher who is widely considered controversial (Hew, 2018). According to him, the da'wah model carried out by Chinese preachers tends to be conservative and in contrast to the plural Indonesian context. He called the

development of Islamic da'wah by Chinese preachers with the term "Conservative Turn" (Hew, 2014a, 2014b, 2019).

Lengauer (2018) and Prakasita & Marijan (2021) study the phenomenon of spirituality and religion in community-based modern Muslim societies. Lengauer did a lot of research on the Muslim community in Bandung, while Prakasita & Marijan studied the Muslim community in Surabaya. Lengauer analyzes the role of the media in shaping religious understanding and expression for the Muslim community, Lengauer calls it the sharing of the spirit of taqwa (*sharing Semangat Taqwa*). In addition, Lengauer looks at youth movements in particular and urban Muslims in general that are community-based in Bandung. Specifically, Lengauer saw how the peace movement was initiated by young people in the midst of a multicultural and pluralistic reality (Lengauer, 2021, 2022).

Prakasita and Marijan's findings are actually not too different from the focus of Lengauer's study regarding how social media is used by certain groups, in this case Surabaya Hijrah, to dominate the discourse of faith in the new public space. This argument is supported by the application of Micheal Foucault's power relations theory to explain how Surabaya Hijrah managed to shape the understanding and practice of diversity in the middle-class Muslim community in Surabaya (Prakasita & Marijan, 2021). Religious orientation in the digital era certainly cannot be separated from a paradigm that develops in society that religious authority is now measured based on the number of followers on social media. The more followers he has in the media, the more he is seen as having the authority to speak on religious matters. This kind of view is quite developed, especially among young people who are active as users of social media (Yusdani et al., 2020). Therefore, the role of the media is quite large in contemporary human life.

The significant role of the media in people's lives in general is also studied by [Happer & Philo \(2013\)](#) who show the media plays a role in public faith and can even change the social order in a society. The finding is also supported by other researchers, such as [Ahyar \(2017\)](#) and [Ahyar & Alfitri \(2019\)](#) who found that the media can change the order of social-political life with a number of digital activities carried out massively, called Islamic clicktivism. Furthermore, digital activism carried out by certain groups is intended as a propaganda effort and mobilization of certain understandings ([Ahyar, 2017](#)). In the context of gender, the media becomes an area of commodification and perpetuation for dominance and gender discrimination ([Muttaqin, 2020](#)).

Therefore, the role of the media is quite significant in mobilizing and ideologicalizing a discourse. One of the discourses that is quite massively disseminated through the media is the discussion of hijrah. Hijrah has become a topic discussed more frequently by social media users compared to other topics such as Islamic law, gender, Islamic politics, and Islamic economics. This can be confirmed from the number of impressions regarding the hijrah discourse on media channels delivered by preachers on social media such as Ustadz Khaled Basalamah, Ustadz Syafiq Riza Basalamah, Ustadz Hanan Attaki, and so on. The understanding of hijrah conveyed by the preachers and understood by young people as most digital users has actually shifted. Shifting the understanding of hijrah from a process of moving the situation to a better and Islamic one, to a process that is more political, symbolic, and tends to be literalist. This can be seen from how the interpretation of Muslim clothing models that are considered Sharia, work preferences, to the model of social relations.

Several studies on hijrah have basically been conducted. [Sunesti et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Lyansari \(2018\)](#) examine how hijrah is understood by young people and urban Muslims. Their research concludes that the

diversity of young people who make choices using the *niqāb* while maintaining the identity of the youth is the result of a very strong religious *manhāj* negotiation with modern reality. [Nonaka \(2021\)](#) adds that the choice of dressing using the *niqāb* cannot be separated from the influence of studies disseminated through the media. [Qomaruzzaman & Busro \(2021\)](#) examine urban Muslim musical practices and found that some urban Muslims understand music is haram based on the normative-theological basis. However, other hijrah communities understand that music can be a means of preaching, namely by Islamizing the music.

Another study by [Dewi \(2020\)](#) focuses on seeing how artists are dealing with Salafi religious groups and the Tablighi Jamaat. Her finding shows that the religious model adopted by artists is not passive and does not always accept what is, but they carry out a selection process for religious discourse. Based on a number of studies above, how the transmission and process of ideologization is carried out through the media is carried out by a number of digital activists. Therefore, the researcher reveals how the ideological process of the hijrah discourse is carried out by conservative groups as the group that has so far dominated the media.

## **METHOD**

This research is a type of qualitative research using a discourse analysis model. Researchers examined a number of social media accounts both on Youtube and Instagram. The selection of the two platforms is based on the media that are often used by the Indonesian people in general ([Kemp, 2021](#)). The accounts that are used as material objects are the accounts of lecturers who have a number of followers on social media such as Khalid Basalamah, Syafiq Riza Basalamah, Hanan Attaki, Felix Siau, and so on.

In the process of analyzing discourse regarding hijrah that developed in the media, researchers used digital hermeneutic theory. This theory is used to analyze the discourse motives that develop in social media. As for the analysis process, the researcher carried out a number of stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data display, and ended with drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2018).

### **Digital Hermeneutical Framework**

To read the phenomenon of interpretation of hijrah on social media, researchers use digital hermeneutics as a tool to dissect the motives and intentions behind the narratives conveyed through social media. Digital hermeneutics as a theory requires a cross-text reading. This means that researchers do not just stop at the level of text delivered through studies on Youtube or narratives written or described through Instagram. Among the functions of hermeneutic digital reading is how to narrate a serious discourse in a method that is easier for readers to understand (Lukman, 2018).

The concept of digital hermeneutics is a development of hermeneutic theory. Hermeneutics is a theory regarding reading texts that are general in nature, including religious texts by trying to understand, interpret, and analyze several possibilities that appear behind the text. The reader tries to understand all these possibilities with the aim of revealing the author's intended purpose. In a hermeneutic perspective, the possibility of the truth of an issue is plural (Faiz, 2011, p. 40). In its development, the study of hermeneutics was included in the realm of Islamic studies. There have been Muslim scholars who have developed hermeneutic studies in Islamic studies such as Muḥammad Shahrūr (Shahrur, 2000a, 2000b); Muhammad 'Ābid Al-Jābirī (Jabiri, 1991, 2009; Juliansyahzen, 2019b); Khālīd Abou El-Fadl (Fadl, 2001) to Jasser Auda (Auda, 2007).

The development of the concept of digital hermeneutics is a demand as well as a response to the times where narratives and

discourses are not only found in texts written in books, books, or something physical material, but develop into something abstract through digital platforms. The study of digital hermeneutics has actually long been introduced by Malley et al. (Mallery et al., 1986, 1987). Digital hermeneutics studies were developed by researchers such as Lukman (2018), Rahman (2020), and van de Ven & van Nuenen (2020). Lukman focuses on seeing the development of interpretation on Facebook. For Lukman (2018), this approach necessitates the democratization of interpretation in the media so that anyone can interpret the Qur'an. But on the other hand, this is a challenge to the issue of religious authority. The same thing was expressed by Rahman (2020) that digital hermeneutics seeks to reveal the meaning tucked behind the narrative conveyed. van de Ven & van Nuenen (2020) emphasize more on the dialogical process aspects of various entities, such as media characters, narratives delivered, and social worldviews.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Hijrah in Social Media**

Social media has become a new public space for the nursery of various discourses. Therefore, it is not surprising that there is a contestation of ideas and discourses that develop in the media. The meaning of public space is growing. The concept of public space was originally proposed by Habermas as a private space of people who gather and form associations that communicate with one another. Furthermore, he positions the public space between the economic community and the state, in which rational, discursive communication occurs, which in turn can monitor government performance (Singh, 2012; Jacobson, 2017). In the digital era, public space has developed into a space for communication, the exchange of ideas, social construction and even the ideological discourse (Tricana, 2013).

Linguistically, ideology is a process of interpreting understanding and interpretation that is closely related to the socio-political problems of society with the aim of dominating the discourse adopted (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2022). In the context of ideological hijrah, it is a process of interpreting the meaning of hijrah which is often understood politically, symbolically, and conservatively. The interpretation of hijrah is interpreted by various attitudes such as the dress model that is considered more syar'i, such as the *cadar* (*niqāb*), work preferences, to the pattern of social relations (Nonaka, 2021).

In the matter of clothing, Khalid in his lecture on Youtube with the title "Wanita Muslimah Inilah Surgamu" (Muslim Woman, This is Your Heaven), with its calling presented in **Figure 1**, explained that one of the things that perfect the hijab for Muslim women is to use a *niqāb* (*cadar*). This is based on the main purpose of covering the aurat so that Muslim women are not disturbed. Therefore, the perfection of a Muslim woman is to use the *cadar*. Khalid's opinion is based on the opinion submitted by Syaikh Muhammad bin Shalih bin Utsaimin (Khalid Basalamah Official, 2021). Syaikh Utsaimin is known as a Wahhabi scholar who is the successor of the Saudi scholar, namely Shaykh Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah bin Bazz.

**Figure 1**  
Screenshot of Instagram post calling on online dakwa on Cadar, Burqu', & Litsam



Source: <https://www.instagram.com/khalidbasalamahofficial/>

Khalid conveyed the various opinions of madhhab scholars on hijab. Starting from the opinion of the Hanafiah to Hanabilah, although at the end of the conclusion, Khalid chose the opinion that the *niqāb* is a protection for women as well as a perfecter of the faith of Muslim women who have used the hijab (Khalid Basalamah Official, 2021). An explanation of Muslimah clothing was also given by Felix Siauw in the title "Teruntuk Muslimah" (for Muslimah). Felix did not come to the question of the encouragement for Muslim women to wear the hijab, but rather the advice for women who are and will migrate to wear the hijab. According to him, the parameter of a pious Muslim woman is to wear hijab because it is a command of Allah. It criticizes women who think that "the most important thing to wear hijab is her heart first". For her, the view is wrong, wearing hijab is the minimum limit of a Muslim woman in carrying out her religious teachings. In fact, according to him, his heart was opened and he was

not given a hijab so that he could always receive guidance ([Felix Siauw, 2019](#)).

Meanwhile, in the matter of employment submitted by Syafiq Riza Basalamah which was uploaded in his official account with the title “Gaji Pekerja Bank Halal atau Haram” (The Salary of a Bank Employee is Halal or Haram). This explanation was based on a question from one of his friend's related audiences who argued that working in a bank was not illegal because he also sacrificed time and energy, then asked if his friend's opinion was correct. Syafiq replied by relying on the hadith that the Prophet cursed not only the usurer, but also the usurer. Therefore, salaries earned from places that attract usury become haraam. Furthermore, Syafiq questioned the term “bunga” interest in Indonesia which is actually riba ([Syafiq Riza Basalamah Official, 2017](#)).

In the context of social relations, the restriction of relations between men and women is a matter of great concern. A number of media accounts campaigned for a model of limited relationships between men and women. This is marked by the emergence of matchmaking agents and anti-dating movements ([Nisa, 2021](#)). This movement was born on the basis of moral panic that occurred in society, especially young people. The massive campaign effort through social media was seen by Sulaiman as part of the propaganda effort ([Sulaiman, 2020](#)).

### **Digital Activism of the Preachers**

The media has become a new space for the seeding of various kinds of ideology and religious understanding. Open space that can be accessed by anyone necessitates that the nursery process can take place quickly and broadly. In turn, the media not only has a positive impact, but also has the potential to produce negative ones. Religious fragmentation is an unavoidable consequence of media and technological developments. Those who control the media indirectly

control the discourse. This is elaborated in more detail by the approach of Foucault's power relations theory by [Prakasita & Marijan \(2021\)](#).

The development of digital technology is used by a number of lecturers in spreading their religious understanding. Lecturers who are actively involved in the use of media generally have a large number of followers. Khalid Basalamah Official's youtube account has 2.020.000 subscribers, while on Instagram there are 2.600.000 followers. The Syafiq Riza Basalamah Official Youtube account has 1.070.000 subscribers, while the account on Instagram has 1.700.000 million followers. In addition, there is Hanan Attaki's Youtube account which has 2.150.000 million subscribers, while his Instagram account has 8.800.000 million followers. Not much different, Felix Siauww's account is also widely followed by media users, namely he has 1.100.000 subscribers and 4,800,000 million followers on Instagram.

Felix Siauww, for example, is a figure from the Chinese diaspora who has influence on social media. Ideologically, Siauww was affiliated with the Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) organization which is currently banned in Indonesia. Siauww uses a number of creative da'wah strategies in spreading religious ideas, for example with visual images which are disseminated through social media networks. In addition, the methods used are often entertaining yet conservative, relaxed but dogmatic. Through these various strategies, he succeeded in influencing the religious understanding of the Muslim community, especially among youth towards the religious ideology of HTI ([Hew, 2018](#)).

The number of followers on social media is a capital in the ideological process of understood religious discourse. The preachers use various digital platforms to convey their religious teachings, especially Youtube and Instagram. This is in accordance with the data that the platforms widely used by the Indonesian people which were

released in early 2021 are Youtube and Instagram (Kemp, 2021). Meanwhile, when viewed from social media users, it turns out to be more dominated by the millennial generation (generation Y and Z) (Kemp, 2022).

In addition to the use of these various platforms, the lecturers also used a number of strategies to encapsulate religious and ideological understandings. The ideological process was carried out not only through one-way lectures, but also through a question-and-answer system both on-offline, using short videos, short narratives, caricatures, and quotes. This strategy in the perspective of digital hermeneutics can be understood as an effort to bring religious discourse closer to readers who are generally the millennial generation. The lecturers tried to adjust the millennial character so that the study material could be better received.

Figure 2

A screenshot of Instagram post on a dakwah for calmness in live



Source: [https://www.instagram.com/syafiqrizabasalamah\\_official/](https://www.instagram.com/syafiqrizabasalamah_official/)

**Figure 2** shows that the lecturers strategically accommodate the culture and character of each media and also adapt to the readers who mostly come from the millennial group. In addition to using cartoons, digital activists also deliver short lectures uploaded on Instagram. This is quite effective because users can download and easily distribute it to various other media platforms. In this regard, a da'wah model that adapts to the character of the media as a bridge to religious values for Indonesian Muslims. The lack of religious understanding due to a scientific background that is not based on good religious education makes it an opportunity for preachers to convey their understanding according to the character of the social media users themselves. These characters and principles are part of a digital hermeneutic approach that carries a semantic function for social media users (Lukman, 2018). Therefore, the presence of a digital hermeneutic approach to bridge between religion and the media. In addition, this approach also seeks to become a religious media and even a mediated religion at the same time (Hosseini, 2008).

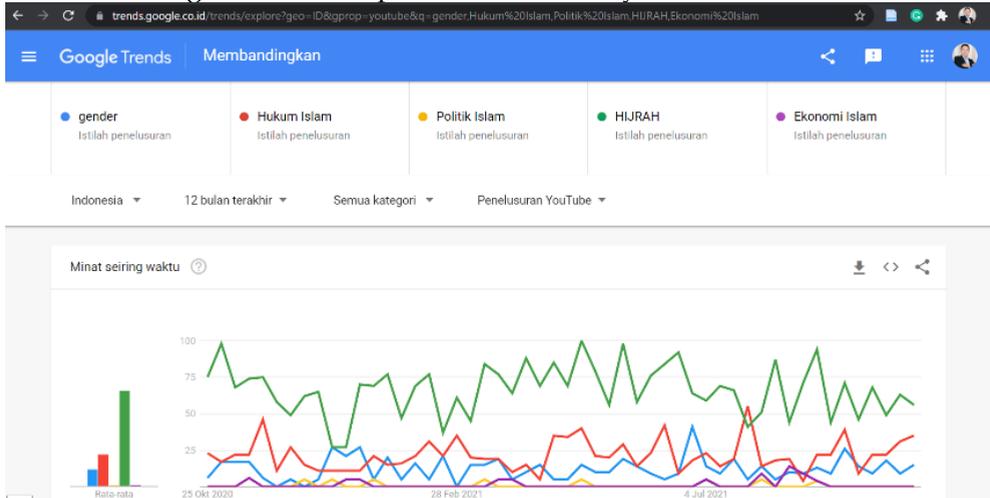
This further confirms that digital activists understand the characteristics of direct and simple delivery on social media. This becomes the basis and principle of digital hermeneutics and carries a significant semantic function from sources of Islamic law. In the end, the Muslim community will find it easy to understand religious teachings through light language accompanied by illustrations, rather than having to read primary texts in Islam directly (Al-Quran, Hadis, Tafsir, Fiqh, etc).

### **Hijrah and Religious Commodification**

Just like goods, religious discourses and values are ultimately positioned like commodity goods. Indonesia, with the largest Muslim majority in the world, makes products and services related to religious symbols something that is in great demand by the public. Religious identity becomes a means to fulfill their interests and bring benefits.

This practice became known as the commodification of religion. In more detail, that this is a transformation of values in religion which are positioned as goods that can have exchange value by using these functions adjusted to human needs for religion (Husna, 2018).

**Figure 3**  
Results of Google Trends comparison for some keywords on Islam



Source: Google Trends (2022).

The development of digital technology as a medium for disseminating discourse has also been actively responded to by religious digital activists. Various religious studies delivered through media channels were watched in large numbers up to hundreds of thousands in a relatively short time. One of the good religious discourses sought and watched by the Muslim community is about hijrah. When compared to other themes of the year, the search for hijrah exceeds other Islamic themes.

Based on the data in **Figure 3**, the search difference between hijrah and other themes is quite far and relatively enduring. Many young media users want to know more about the basic concepts of hijrah, migration strategies and challenges and so on. For example, the theme presented by Khalid Basalamah Official which was broadcast

with the title “Kiat-kiat Hijrah” (Tips of Hijrah) has been viewed 158.026 times. Both accounts, as shown in [Figure 4](#), are quite massive in providing an explanation of the concept of hijrah and its application in the context of contemporary youth. In the perspective of digital hermeneutics, this is in response to titles that are often used by platforms in the media in addition to the characteristics of titles that are easier for young people to understand.

**Figure 4**

A screensot of Khalid Basalamah and Syafiq Riza Basalamah Youtube videos on hijra



Source: Youtube (2022).

In terms of commodities, capitalism is not only the ideologicalization of commodities, but also the commodification of ideology ([Muttaqin, 2020](#)). Based on this, the massive dissemination of discourse by the preachers using various media platforms and being disseminated repeatedly will certainly have implications for the affirmation of the preachers as parties who have religious authority recognized by their followers, of course also with various other benefits.

The term commodification is reinforced by Al Makin, for example, who explains that the term is not only intended for goods that are material in nature, but also something that ultimately has economic value and interests ([Makin, 2017](#)). The interest in

disseminating ideology and religious understanding of the version of the groups and streams adhered to is also a form of effort to commodify religion. Therefore, preachers who have many followers become capital in spreading understanding more broadly and massively. In detail, the form of commodification can take many forms, such as the commodification of values, style, and commodification through a number of certain rules ([Hisyam et al., 2019](#)).

### **Conservative Domination in Populer Religious Lecture**

As an open space, social media is accessed and used by various religious groups. The digital rush as a mode of religious transmission has also led to the birth of a new religious authority. This is a developmental challenge for traditional religious authorities. In addition, the media is a nursery for various religious beliefs. [Kirana & Garadian \(2020\)](#) stated that the media is dominated by conservative groups. Conservative group is a group that understands religious doctrine rigidly ([Richards, 1991](#)). In [Saeed's \(2007\)](#) terms, this group is called the textualist group.

Conservative understanding has a style of understanding that often dichotomizes a discourse on two sides (binary opposition), namely right and wrong, black, and white. For example, the discourse regarding the illegitimacy of working in a bank because the salary earned comes from usury that was conveyed by Syafiq Riza Basalamah. In fact, the issue of whether bank interest is equated with usury itself, the scholars have different opinions ([Muhammad, 2012](#); [Kasdi, 2016](#)). However, the various opinions of scholars regarding this issue are not explained. Even though it is included in the realm of fiqh studies which necessitates differences of opinion.

On the hijab issue, Felix Siauw, for example, tends to reason unsystematically on Islamic law. The claim that Muslim women who do not use the hijab as not pious because they do not carry out Allah's

orders seem to be concluded in a hurry. Before discussing the hijab, in fact, it is necessary to first explain the limits of the *awrah* from the perspective of the scholars. The study above further strengthens [Hew's \(2018\)](#) analysis that the media is controlled by conservative groups. Although the da'wah method is entertaining, even reaching the conclusion of normalizing religious radicalism ([Hew, 2018](#)).

The dominance of conservative religious understanding on social media is both a challenge and a threat to moderate religious groups in Indonesia such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah ([Jubba et al., 2022](#)). There was a struggle over religious discourse and efforts to claim religious understanding became one thing that was inseparable. [Akmaliyah \(2020\)](#) even called it "the demise of moderate Islam" which will not happen if the two mainstream religious groups who have moderate religious understanding take a role through social media as well. In addition, efforts to instill a moderate religious understanding should not always be initiated by these two largest religious organizations, but also by growing awareness among all elements of Indonesian society.

## CONCLUSION

The role of media in human life is very important, including in religious matters. Religious discourse in contemporary public spaces cannot be separated from the spread of discourse that develops on social media. Currently, the media has become a new public space for discourse contestation. Whoever controls the media, then he will control the discourse. One of the religious discourses that many preachers respond to is about hijrah. The understanding of hijrah conveyed by the lecturers on social media tends to be understood from a partial point of view and is binary opposition. This is due to the dominance of conservative groups in social media. Nevertheless, the search for discussion on hijrah occupies the highest position compared

to other religious themes. In the perspective of digital hermeneutics, the strategies carried out by the lecturers succeeded in making an interpretation of the meaning of hijrah that could be understood by readers or media users with various strategies.

The position of the research complements a number of previous researchers such as Slama, Hew, Prakasita and Marijan and Lengauer. However, the difference in this research is that researchers elaborate on the phenomenon of Muslim diversity, in this case the issue of hijrah, more specifically with the perspective of digital hermeneutics theory to see the function of the media as a bridge to Muslim understanding of primary sources in Islam. This research also needs to be followed up with various approaches and theories, for example by looking in more detail and analytically at the contents of lectures with the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Foucault's theory of power relations, symbolic interactionist theory, and so on.

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# Comparative Analysis of Digital Media Usage in Hungarian Religious Communities

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## Abstract

*The article demonstrates comparative research of the digital media usage of a particular Hungarian youth Catholic community (777 Community) and a Hungarian Krishna-Conscious Believers community. The first step is the descriptive stage which tends to focus on documenting how the investigated two groups were described or described themselves as religious communities online. After that, the intersection of online and offline religious communities' practices and discourses will be described (highlight – rituals, community, identity, authority, and presence). How religious communities shape and renegotiate technological platforms according to their values, patterns, and the construction of their identity and presence in the public sphere will be observed. Attention should be given first to what religious Internet users do online, which will be revealed by the uses and gratifications approach. Following this, by using the RSST method to identify how these communities interpret and perceive these practices in relation to their broader religious and social identities. In conclusion, we can compare different value-based strategies and approaches within these two investigated religious communities.*

**Keywords:** Digital Media Usage; Religious Communities; Religious Social Shaping of Technology; Social Media

## INTRODUCTION

The following overview of current literature provides both a framework and a context for the study beginning with exploring the RSST theory and the Uses and Gratifications Theory which serve a foundation to the work as they help to unfold the relationship between social media usage and religious communities.

### **Religious Social Shaping of Technology**

The formation of religious communities is influenced but not determined by contemporary social contexts and traditional and new media. Modifying the theory of technological determinism we think that the media technology only encourages certain new community forms and sense of presence but doesn't determine them strictly (Cheong et al., 2012; Hoover, 2012). The theory of *Religious-Social Shaping of Technology* (RSST) provides a useful analytical frame for the research. Within the *Social Shaping of Technology Theory* (SST) the technology is seen as a social process and the possibility is recognized that social groups may shape technologies towards their own ends, rather than the character of the technology determining use and outcomes. The *Religious-Social Shaping of Technology* (RSST) approach to technology as Heidi Campbell argues, involves asking questions about how technologies are conceived of, as well as used, in light of the religious community's beliefs, moral codes, and historical tradition of engagement with other forms of media technology (MacKenzie & Wajcman, 1999; Barzilai-Nahon & Barzilai, 2005). The RSST emphasizes that religious communities do not outright reject new forms of technology, but rather undergo a negotiation process to determine what the technology may affect in their community. Identifying the process by which religious groups evaluate a technology's potential benefits or hindrances is important because it

helps uncover the group's patterns of moral life and their visibility in the public sphere (Campbell, 2006, 2010, 2013).

The religious-social shaping of technology offers a new research method, suggesting four distinctive areas that should be explored and questioned to deeply understand a religious community's relationship towards traditional and new forms of media. These four stages of the religious-social shaping of technology approach are (1) investigating the history and tradition - setting the stage for contemporary negotiation with media, (2) social values - identifying the dominant social values of a religious community and their contemporary meanings and relevance, (3) negotiation process - during this process religious communities decide which aspects of a new technology they will accept, reject, or need to reconstruct in order for the technology to be compatible with the community's beliefs and way of life and finally (4) communal discourse of religious communities. During the evaluation of interviews a combination of reception and ritual theories of communication and media will be used (Andok, 2016a, 2016b, 2017; Carey, 2009).

### **Uses and Gratifications**

The uses and gratifications approach was introduced in the 1970s in the media studies by Katz et al. (1973) to enable researchers to uncover how users actively seek to meet their needs from different media contents. Uses and gratifications research is particularly fruitful because it can also be adapted to the Computer Mediated Communication and social media. Social media is also used to reveal religious identities and religious communication and to encourage people to talk about their beliefs and spirituality. As a result of media convergence, digital media usage continue to be explored specifically using a uses and gratifications framework (Ratcliff et al., 2017). In their research, Papacharissi & Mendelson (2011) found nine distinct motives for using Facebook.

After the new Millennium, several scholars conducted uses and gratifications research on digital media among religious community members. In the religious content, scholars found people engage with religious websites for (1) religious entertainment and information, (2) to donate money and (3) to be involved, and (4) to explore and reinforce faith (Laney, 2005). Brubaker & Haigh (2017) also conducted a uses and gratification examination of religious content. Their findings indicate that the desire to minister to others drives Facebook to use it for religious reasons. Users accomplish this by sharing their faith-based beliefs and offering spiritual and emotional advice and support to those who share their faith and those who do not. Other motivations for engaging with faith-based material include personal benefits such as spiritual enlightenment, religious knowledge, and relaxing entertainment. Other researchers also investigate this topic from different user perspectives. Riezu (2014) investigated the topic with Spanish content, while Ratcliff et al. (2017) for US users. The presented research executes a systematic exploration of how religious communities engage with and respond to various media technologies, highlighting how views of religious authority and community influence these interactions and their social presence.

## **THE 777 YOUNG CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

Attention should be given to the so-called 777 community; first, we will show something about the background of this community, and after that will evaluate the media usage in this religious group. The interest of the research is focused on the process of meaning-making viewed through an interpretive cultural studies framework and seeks the intersections between individual and social creation of meaning through media usage (Bögre, 2016). During the evaluation of interviews, the reception and ritual theories of communication and media were used (Andok, 2017; Carey, 2009).

The 777 group is an online community deriving from a blog site and still based on it. It presents current issues from a Christian viewpoint but is not connected officially to a particular church. The 777 blog was launched on April 4, 2016, by Zoltán Martí. The blog's name has a theological reference; the 777 symbolizes the Holy Trinity. The blog does not connect directly to a historical church; among the editors, we can also find Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Presbyterians. The blog operates as an association which can be financially supported. Their work is voluntary; everybody posts from their home. On Facebook, 35 thousand people like and follow them. They post 5-6 different content (texts, pictures, prayers) daily. Their YouTube channel was started on January 20, 2017, and they have 4,100 subscribers and from one thousand to twenty thousand viewers per video. On Instagram, they have 3,500 followers.

The 777 blog and community exist not only online but offline, too; the editors organize one event a month which is called OFFLINE. From this practice, we can see the phenomenon we mentioned and described previously as the intersection between offline and online surfaces of everyday life. As a founder suggests: "Let us break down the virtual walls." Technically it is a blog written by a group of Christian youth and two Catholic priests. All of them do this as volunteers, so although it is a second job, they are not paid for it. They are writing blog posts about the Bible, happiness, being a father, preparing for marriage, faith, everyday life, and so many other topics. The slogan is "Faith is not a private matter."

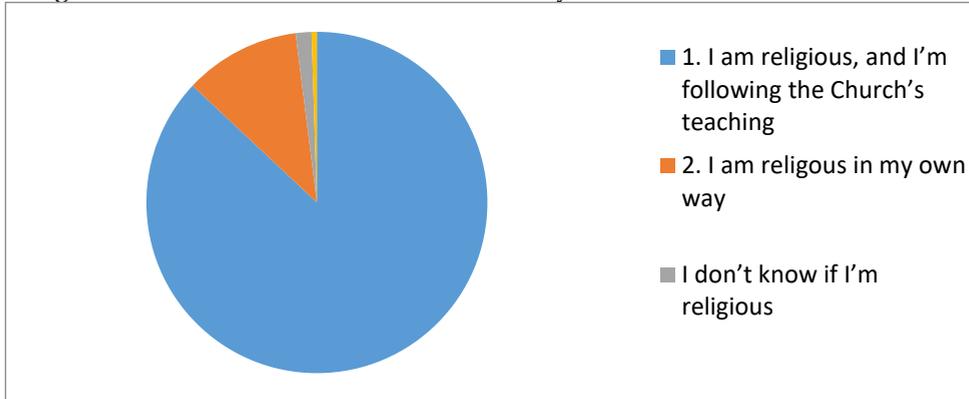
We carried out two research about the digital media usage of 777 community, one in February 2018, and the other in February 2019. Firstly, in-depth interviews were done with six bloggers; these interviews were semi-structured, containing both open and closed questions. The results were evaluated according to the methodology of the RSST theory (Campbell, 2010). Following this, two uses and

gratifications questionnaires were set up, the former contains 30 while the latter contains 44 questions. In the current article, the results of the second questionnaire will be presented. Participants ( $n=604$ ) took on an online survey by Survio. The final sample was 63.4% female and 36.6% male. The median age of respondents was 32.7. The most significant number of participants are Roman Catholic Church (85.6%), followed by Reformed Church (5.3%), Unitarian (2%), Orthodox (1%), other (4.6%), and no answer (1.3%).

At first, the followers were asked about their religious self-classification and how they see their religiosity, using the categories suggested by Tomka (2002), although, in international surveys, Davie's (1990) categories are mainly used. While evaluating the religiosity of the 777 community members, the study relied on two other relevant articles by Bögre (2016) and Rosta & Hegedűs (2016). In the survey, the respondents were asked to choose one option from these four:

1. I am religious, and I am following the Church's teaching - 87% said that
2. I am religious in my own way (Davie's category: believing in but not belonging to a specific group) -11% picked this option (Davie, 1990).
3. I do not know if I am religious - 1,5% said that
4. I am not religious - 0,5% picked this option

**Figure 1**  
Religious self-classification in 777 community



Source: Primary data.

**Figure 1** shows that primarily those who follow the Church's teaching are the most interested in the work of the 777 blog. Furthermore, the research has also shown that the followers are mostly single, Roman Catholic, graduated, and urban women. This data is exciting in the Hungarian context because in 2016, the Hungarian Youth Research surveyed 8000 young people, and the survey revealed that in Hungary, only 6% avowed themselves as religious and following the Church's teaching, while 43% said that they are religious in their way.

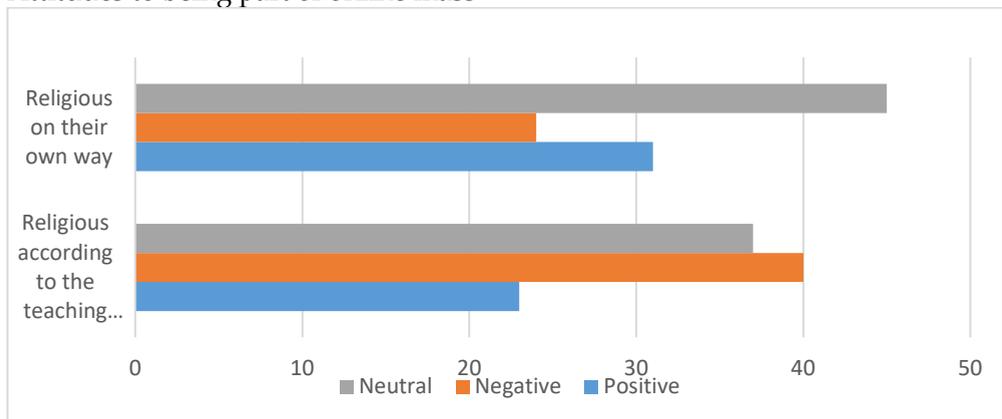
### The Digital Media Usage

A hundred percent of the respondents have Internet access in their homes, 86.2% have a laptop, and 92.8% have a smartphone. Among the social network sites, Youtube is the most commonly used, with 97.1%, followed by Facebook with 89.7% and Instagram with 35.2%. Regarding the question of what purposes they use the Internet for, the most frequent answers were to keep in touch with friends (52.6%), general information seeking (51.8%), for work (46.02%). The least frequent answers were for dating (86.7%), following trends (47.6%), searching for a job (46.9%), games (42.5%), and looking for

new friendships (42.3%). They often search for religious content (75%) but do not search for esoteric content (86%). Another critical question was what kind of content and how regularly they upload their own Facebook site. The most popular activities were sending birthday wishes (32.6%), posting spiritual or religious (21.6%), or artistic content (7.9%). They hardly ever upload marketing messages (84.6%), pictures about their homes (83.2%), pets (80.4%), food (80.2%), and political issues (76.1%). From the results, we can see that belonging to a religious community is more decisive regarding what purpose they do not use the Internet for and what sites they avoid.

The attitudes of the bloggers and surveyees were studied from the aspect of how they are willing to live their faith by the opportunity of doing it in the digital world. Three of them are demonstrated in the following passages. These three aspects are: what group members think about (1) being part of the online mass, (2) using a confession app, or (3) being part of a digital pilgrimage. From now on, the article aims to show the differences between the answers of the “religious in their own way” and “the religious according to the teaching of the Church” groups.

**Figure 2**  
Attitudes to being part of online mass

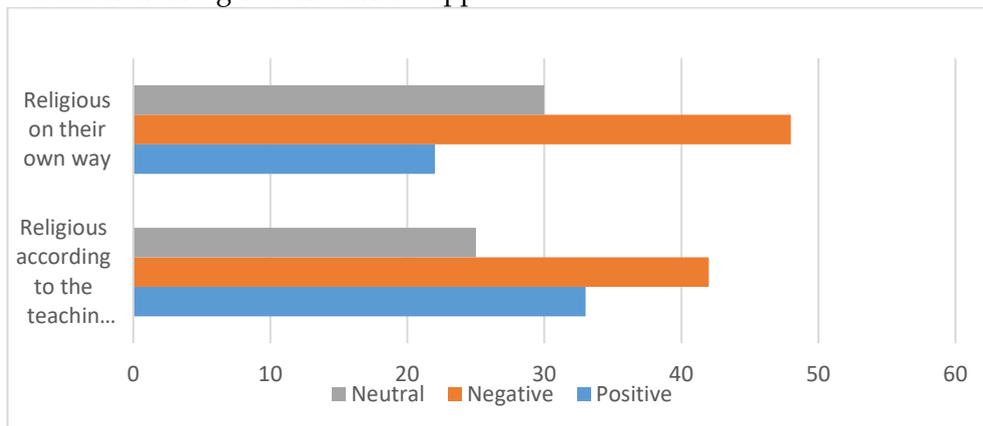


Source: Primary data.

As **Figure 2** shows, the attitude to being part of an online mass is more favorable among the group of young people who are religious in their way. How can this data be interpreted? In the offline categorization of religiosity, the first important marker is how frequently somebody attends mass. If they go every week, they will be categorized as “I am religious according to the teaching of the Church.” So, these people are essential to participating in an offline mass. They said that online mass is good because, in this way, they do not have to travel a lot to a church, it can be an exciting experience, everybody can get the Good News from anywhere, and last but not least, it is a perfect option for those, who cannot leave their home. On the other hand, most of the people in the two groups said that online mass is impersonal. They miss the group experience, miss praying together, and the most important reason is that they cannot receive the Eucharist.

There are different kinds of confession applications; for instance, somebody downloads one, showing them the Ten Commandments to choose from depending on their sins (<https://catholicapptitude.org/confession-apps/>). After that, the app gives them a penitential prayer. It will offer other options to refer directly to the sin that somebody committed.

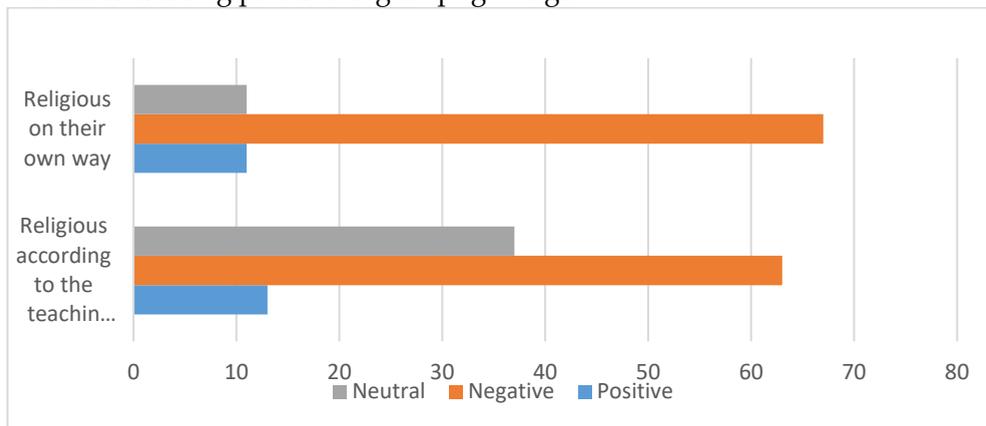
**Figure 3**  
Attitudes to using of a confession app



Source: Primary data.

It can be seen from **Figure 3** that the primary attitude within both groups is negative toward using a confession app. But the group of “religious according to the teaching of the church” is more tolerant of using a confession app. Presumably, this difference is in the offline attitudes to confession as a religious practice. Both groups think that sacraments like confession shouldn’t be digitalized; they are afraid that the app is not anonymous. Those who are positive about it said that they would use it, or are already using it and that it is necessary, beneficial, and would come in handy because it is always with them on their smartphones. So this data shows primarily not the negativity about the technology but the confession as a religious practice.

**Figure 4**  
Attitudes to being part of a digital pilgrimage



Source: Primary data.

The attitudes of those being part of a digital pilgrimage as presented in **Figure 4**. Those who are “religious in their own way” and “religious and following the Church’s teaching” were mostly negative about this because the pilgrimage is about dedication, being there, doing the steps, and being together. Practicing faith using digital applications removes the effort made for God, the intention to worship in God’s house, and to be present in reverence and devotion.

These results prove the theory of RSST because both the community and the bloggers were either rejecting the technology or using it only under certain conditions. If a religious group thinks that technology is beneficial for them, but they recognize that the use of it could cause changes to their faith or behavior or that it is against their religious values, then they reject that aspect of the technology. For instance, they are pleased by online mass, but only when they are sick or too old and cannot leave the house. The reason for the rejection of the online mass is the aspect of not being able to receive the Eucharist. The great mass of the young community of 777 does not agree with the digitalization of faith and religion. They are using these new forms of technology carefully and adapting them to match their traditions.

## **THE HUNGARIAN KRISHNA - CONSCIOUS BELIEVERS**

The Church of Hungarian Krishna-Conscious Believers has been officially registered in Hungary since 1989 with 10,000 members. Within the Church's leadership, the spiritual leadership and the management are separated from one another but work together during the decision-making (Kamarás, 1996). The Church of the Krishna-Conscious Believers has a Communication Department that keeps in touch with the community members and sends messages outside. In-depth interviews were made with two Church communication leaders in their Hungarian spiritual center in Budapest on December 6, 2018. The center consists of a temple, a college, a restaurant, and a shop. After the interviews, a questionnaire was composed and shared with the results to be presented later in the article.

The members of the Church follow four main rules derived from the principle: "We are not the same with our body; we are spirits." The four commandments are: (1) They do not eat meat, eggs, or fish they eat only vegetables. (2) They do not use drugs and other intoxicating agents. (3) They do not have sexual relationships except within

marriage to have children. (4) They don't gamble (about core Hindu / Krishna- Conscious Believers concepts) (Scheifinger, 2017). The Church of Hungarian Krishna-Conscious Believers doesn't reject any forms of technology including communication technology such as Internet, smartphone, or CMC. "We can use anything provided that it serves Krishna." - states one of the communication leaders. However, they make differences between the use of communication devices and the contents of mass communication and CMC. The usage of these devices is permitted but they are careful with the contents. In the international literature several scholars deal with the research of online Hindu rites and religious practices (Helland, 2010; Hervieu-Léger, 2012; Balaji, 2017).

The official website of the Hungarian Krishna-Conscious Believers is krisna.hu. They also have a Facebook site with 8,200 followers, a Twitter account with 1385 followers and a YouTube channel with 1980 subscribers. The most well-known Hungarian spiritual leader Sivarama Swami Guru's Facebook site is followed by 290,000 people. In their religion respect and hospitality are the most emphasized values. They are careful not to say anything or post on SNSs that the other party cannot exactly understand, has not been prepared for or has not received enough points to understand it accurately. For this reason, they post unique religious content within closed Facebook groups rather than in public ways.

Their religious self-categorization is how they see their religiosity within the Krishna faith, and it is connected to two rites of passage. These rituals separate the phases of the deepening of faith. In the first period, the candidate becomes a disciple; the relationship between the master and the disciple is crucial during the whole process. Every disciple has to find their authentic personal spiritual leader. The name of the ritual for becoming an official disciple is "Hari Nama Diksha." During this ritual, the so-called "Diksha guru" gives

an invitation in front of the community, which functions as encouragement, and the Diksha guru gives the candidate a new spiritual name. Since that time, they have used this name on their SNSs too. Being a disciple involves both obligations and opportunities. Obligation means that they have to meditate in 16 circles with the help of the so-called guru (*mala*) beads. After the initiation, the disciple will be entitled to serve within the Krishna temple. This service can be carried out only by purified members. This means external (washed hands, face) and internal (keep the four main rules) purity. The name of the second rite of passage is “Brahmana initiation.”

In the questionnaire, the participants were asked about their religious self-categorization according to their own stages: whether the filler stands before the first initiation or has received a Hari Nama Diksha title, or has become a Brahmana. In the study, this religious self-categorization is compared with the categories used within the Catholic community: religious in their way or religious according to the teaching of the Church. The Krishna-Conscious Believers call the “see the God” practice *darshan* and the common community religious service *sanga*. They highly appreciate the common service, because members affect each other by their state of mind. They like different forms of religious entertainment: “We like dancing, singing, music is crucial for us. We emphasize the vibration of sounds, a tool for moderating our mind. We believe that words are filled with energy.” – said the communication leader.

Presumably, it will be reflected in their digital media content usage as well. To the question whether it is acceptable for them not to participate physically in a ceremony or pilgrimage but only to watch them live stream via social media they answered: “Krishna appreciates the effort. It is good to see God on the screen, but we won’t perceive the real experience.” They broadcast their religious ceremonies via social media in a closed group. On the one hand they

accept that not every member can participate physically in these rituals due to their daily activities or work. On the other hand, they would not like people who cannot understand the meaning of these rituals to see the stream.

Their outstanding religious practice is saying mantras which have different levels: the mantra said in solitude is called *japó*, with playing music together is called *bajan kintan*. In this research and article, the word *avatar* has two different meanings. The first meaning is well known in the CMC research community: on the Internet, the different virtual embodiments are called avatars. The other meaning is related to the religious language of the Krishna-Conscious Believers. For them, the word *avatar* refers to the different embodiments of Krishna.<sup>1</sup> The teachings of the spiritual leaders are emphasized in the Krishna-Conscious Believers community. With the help of the Internet, they write blogs where they upload lectures and meditations either in the form of podcasts or videos.

In their temple, there are several sacred God sculptures for the Krishna-Conscious Believers. They are sacred means that God exists within the sculpture. These sculptures are dressed up every day as a part of members' religious service. In this regard, they say: "Whom you love, you care about." In their homes, the Krishna-Conscious Believers live with their God in actual physical proximity. A similar phenomenon can be mentioned within the Catholic community. In an interview, Judith Zoebelin – who was a significant person in launching the Vatican website in the mid-90s, says that: "... for me, it was an experience of how the virtual made a person in a relationship to others ... he (Pope John Paul II.) became virtually someone like part of the family, part of the neighborhood. I think it was an excellent move of

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<sup>1</sup> In the article I am going to index the different meanings avatar<sup>1</sup> means the virtual embodiment avatar<sup>2</sup> refers to the embodiment of Krishna.

the Church to see how much people were interested in what the Pope had to say.”<sup>2</sup> That is, for the Krishna-Conscious Believers and the Catholic community as well, it is crucial to have their religious leader or God in their home.

### **The Digital Media Usage**

The survey was carried out between January 5 - February 5, 2019, among 64 participants. It contains 55 questions based on [Ratcliff et al. \(2017\)](#). The first part focuses on the demographic data, the second part deals with the members' supply with digital tools, and the final part reveals the religious purposes the Internet is used for by them. The final sample was 55.6% female and 44.4 % male. The median age of respondents was 36,3. Besides the general summary, the data according to the gender differences and the differences in religious self-classification of the members were filtered. In the community of Krishna-Conscious Believers, religious self-classification concerns if the members stand before or after the first (Hari Nama Diksha) or second (Brahmana) initiation.

The data show us that according to the Religious Social Shaping of Technology theory, the norms and values of the Krishna - Conscious Believers community are reflected in their digital media usage. On the other hand, no significant differences were noticed among the patterns of the members' digital media usage depending on their religious self-classification. They use the Internet almost the same way. On the basis of their religious self-classification, however, divergences can be revealed in the level of the expression of religious identity. Among the SNSs, YouTube (95.2%), and Facebook (92.1%) are the most popular, followed by Instagram (23.8%). In general, they have had a Facebook

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<sup>2</sup> Up Close with Sister Judith Zoebelin - available at 7:22: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPnttsjU\\_cc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPnttsjU_cc)

profile for more than one year, they have between 200-500 friends, and they belong to 1-5 Facebook groups that are connected to their religious community.

The data show us that the norms and values of the Krishna - Conscious Believers community are reflected in their digital media usage. Questions 14, 28, 29, 33, and 38 from the questionnaire are related to this point. Question 14 is a typical uses and gratifications question and sounds like this: What purposes do you use the Internet for? The general results are the same as what was filtered based on the religion's self-classification. The most used functions are work (64%), general information seeking (37.5%), keeping in touch with friends (31.25%), colleagues (31.25), and religious or spiritual activity (34.3%). The least used functions are dating (82.8%), gaming (79.6%), following trends (64.6%), escaping from everyday life (50%), and seeking a job (48.4%). Question 28 sounds like this: "What content and how frequently do you upload or share on your own website?" The most typical answers are sharing religious content (54.6%) and motivating and self-helping content (21.8%). The least typical answers are: sharing pictures of pets (82.8%), sharing political issues (81.25%), and sharing pictures of own home (75%).

Question 29 is the following: "Which is the most frequently used activity by you on Facebook?" The most common activities are: using the messenger function (57.8%), and giving likes to friends' content (39.06%). The least common activities are video streaming (90.6%), expressing emotional status (82,1%), and using hashtags (78,1%). Question 33: "What religion-related activities do you pursue online?" The most frequent activities are: seeking information about Krishna - Conscious gurus (59.3%), watching religious lectures (50%), listening to religious music (48.4%), and news and information seeking about the Krishna - Conscious Believers community (42.1%). The least frequent activities are meditation in the group (74%), using religious

applications (60.9%), and taking part in online pilgrimage (59.3%). Question 38 asks: "What do you use the krishna.hu webpage for?" The top answers are: reading spiritual leaders' or gurus' blogs (43.7%), and information seeking about the programs of the Krishna - Conscious Believers community (38.8%). The least popular activities are: donating money for the Krishna - Conscious Believers community (57.6%), seeking yoga (56.2%), and following the food-giving program (53.1%).

As it is seen, the Hungarian results largely differ from the Americans in the point of donation (Laney, 2005). In the American religious uses and gratifications research, the fifth most popular activity is donating money to a religious community. The lectures and ceremonies broadcast via the Internet are considered authentic and close to the offline experiences, while online meditation and online pilgrimage are less. The Krishna-Conscious Believers refuse the digital meditation. As they say, the streamed event would divide their awareness and it would lead to the failure of the meditation because they are not able to reach the final goal, the full spiritual concentration.

They listen to spiritual lectures in their free time (90.5%) while using public transport (52.4%) or waiting for scheduled events (41.3%). The sequence of Facebook contents related activities is as follows: they give likes primarily, rarely share content, and rarely make comments. The Krishna - Conscious Believers community sees digital media as an opportunity to coordinate the life of their offline group, so these devices only support and supplement offline activities and never replace them. Their Facebook group is characterized as a religious (76.2%), spiritual (63.4%), and cultural (53.9%) community.

Although there were no differences in the pattern of digital media use according to religious self-classification (the members stand before or after the first or second initiation), there were differences in the articulation of religious identity. In the concept of religious

identity, Lövheim’s (2013) work was followed (see also [Chetty, 2017](#); [Neriya & Shahar, 2017](#)). Although an in-depth evaluation of this field was not conducted, it raised some interesting questions about their online religious identity. In the questionnaire, they were asked whether their Facebook profile or background pictures refer to their religious identity and what name they use on SNSs, official and/or spiritual name. On the Facebook site of the members who stand after the first or second initiation the references to religious identity appeared in higher proportion both in the use of the name (official name / spiritual name) and in the profile and/or background pictures ([Table 1](#)).

**Table 1**  
References to religious identity

Questions	Members before the initiation	Members after the first (Hari Nama Dikhsa) initiation	Members after the second (Brahmana) initiation
What name do you use on your Facebook profile? (Q23)			
I have only one Facebook profile and I use my spiritual name, or at first my spiritual name after the official name.	12.7%	23.5%	28.6%
Do your Facebook profile or background images refer to your religious identity? (Q25) Yes	61.9%	70.6%	71.4%

Source: Primary data.

Comparative research conducted by [Elmasry et al. \(2014\)](#) can be mentioned here in which he found that the expression of religious identity occurs in higher proportion among Egyptian and Qatari

students than the Americans. According to gender comparison significant differences in the purpose of digital media usage could not be identified. Both women’s and men’s digital media usage is based on the values and norms of the Krishna - Conscious Believers community. Minor differences emerged in the following points:

Men’s access to digital media is more dominant - Question 9: “Do you have a PC or laptop?” Answer – yes, among men was 92.9%, and among women was 88.6%. Question 10: “Do you have Internet access in your home?” The answer yes among men was 100 %, and among women was 85.7%. The following chart shows the SNSs’ preferences (**Table 2**).

**Table 2**  
Gender differences within the preferences of the SNSs

Social Network Sites	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	YouTube	Snapchat
Woman	94.3 %	20%	0%	94.3%	0%
Men	89.3%	28.6%	14.3%	96.4%	0%

Source: Primary data.

The expression of religious identity is more characteristic among women (**Table 3**). The men belong to more Facebook groups (6-10 groups) than women (1-5 groups), which are connected to their work. (Q30, Q31) Women give fewer donations, men upload more videos on the YouTube channel of the community, and men are less interested in searching for vegetarian recipes.

**Table 3**  
Gender differences in the expression of religious identity

Questions	Woman	Man
What name do you use on your Facebook profile? (Q23) I have only one Facebook profile and I use my spiritual name. or at first my spiritual after the official name.	23.7 %	17.8%
Do your Facebook profile or background images refer to your religious identity? (Q25) Yes	62.9%	60.7%

Source: Primary data.

## CONCLUSION

In the Internet age, people do not just belong to one community online and another offline. They often belong to multiple or multisided online and offline communities. So religion online is much more personalized and catered by the individual rather than the institution. The Internet allows people to express their religiosity in new ways. We were interested in how religious rituals are being transported online and how they were either changed or modified because of the digital environment. The study evaluates how religious user communities actively negotiate and shape their technologies in light of their values, norms, and self-interpretations concerning public presence.

The following similarities and differences were found in comparing these two religious communities (777 community and Krishna - Conscious Believers community). In both groups, the most used digital functions were: for work, keeping in touch with friends, general information seeking, keep in touch with colleagues. The least used functions were: gaming, dating, and following trends. Both communities are the most reluctant about digital pilgrimage. From the

results, we can state that belonging to a religious community is more prescriptive in terms of what purpose the community members do not use the Internet for and what sites they should avoid.

For the members of the 777 community, the Internet sites function as digital meeting points that they frequently visit. So as a result, much more respondents were collected here in a much shorter time than in the Krishna - Conscious Believers community. The Facebook profile and/or background pictures of the 777 community members reflect their religious identity less (29.3 %) than that of the Krishna - Conscious Believers' (61.9%).

So in sum, although some differences were found between the two communities, these results reinforce the theory of RSST because both groups were either rejecting the technology or using it only under certain conditions. If a religious group thinks that technology is beneficial for them, but they recognize that the use of it could cause changes in their faith or behavior or that it is against their religious values, then they reject that aspect of the technology.

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# Islam and Prosper Indonesia: Contestation and Fragmentation of Contemporary Islamic Thought

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## Abstract

*The following article examines Islamic thought and changes in state structure in Indonesia since the reform era from 1998 to the present. The fundamental change of state order in Indonesia is marked by the amendment of the 1945 Constitution and the wide space open for the people to participate in the life of the country. In this situation, progressive Islam, mainstream Islam, and political Islamist thought emerged. The main problem in this article is how Islamic thought is transformed by three variants of Indonesian Muslims in changing state order in the reformation era of Indonesia. The basic theoretical framework that is used to explain Islamic thought and changes of state order above, in addition to using the people's approach as full citizens before the state, also uses a socio-historical approach, political economy. Then the analysis used in this article is political philosophy. The main sources used are the official publications and decisions of each figure and organization related to changes in state order during the reformation era in Indonesia from 1998 to the present. The results of the study can be concluded that three variants of Islamic thought in Indonesia that are very prominent in responding to and directing the changes in state order in Indonesia become a just and welfare state.*

**Keywords:** Contemporary Islamic Thought; Mainstream Islam; Political Islam; Progressive Islam; Welfare State

## **INTRODUCTION**

After the fall of the New Order regime (1998), the development of Islamic thought in Indonesia found a new medium to express it. Massive liberalization in this country makes almost no obstacles to expressing the thoughts of citizens. In this context, there are thoughts and movements of various Islamic communities. There are those who try to continue the ideas of Islamic figures and organizations that have become mainstream before the reformation. In addition, new movements that carry different ideas have emerged, such as the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI).

This article is driven by anxiety about scientific segregation. There is a separation between Islamic studies, especially studies on the level of thought on the one hand, with studies on political change and dynamics on the other. Obviously, there are researchers who depart from Islamic studies, depart from the internal situation of Muslims with their own theological reference culture, assuming that the thoughts of Islamic leaders and communities are isolated from political dynamics. At the same time, political and government analysts view Muslims only as citizens/people with distinctive attributes, as if they are not inspired by the religious teachings and values they believe in.

The link between the two study traditions above will be clearly seen if a historical-sociological perspective is used, thinking becomes an important explanatory force. Here, Islamic thought, including in the political field, is easily understood in relation to its social environment. Especially if these developing Islamic thoughts are understood to be related to changes in the national and international social environment that continue to be symptomatic. However, the relationship between thought and the ongoing political dynamics is not easy to show considering the nature of religious

teachings. Moreover, the doctrines of Islam itself are poly interpretable.

To bridge the gap between the studies above, this study addresses that, even if the formulation of these teachings in the state thought also varies, there is still dominant Islamic thought that significantly determines the direction or type of change (Watt, 1964; Effendy, 1998, p. 5). Especially if it considers the position of Muslims, as the majority component of Indonesian citizens. Awareness of this role and political position is strongly framed by the ideas adopted (Jurdi, 2008, pp. xi-xii; Kuntowijoyo & Priyono, 2008, p. 379). The problem is not only whether the ongoing awareness process contributes to the pattern of an increasingly democratic state order. An issue that is no less important to be studied is the content of the thoughts that have been rolling so far, which have been followed by changes in the life order of the country.

Even though the necessity above is simple, it has fundamental implications because it is in the context of finding solutions to the direction and future of state life in Indonesia, especially in the context of emerging people-state relations. In this regard, it is still rare to find studies by both Indonesian political scientists and researchers or Islamic studies in Indonesia, especially those that discuss the importance of the role and contribution of Islam as a religion embraced by the majority of the Indonesian people. However, this necessity has been neglected in the study of Islamic thought in Indonesia. This, because is the Islamic thought studies that have been developed so far are very obsessed with characterizing and in turn portraying exoticism more or less.

Most studies on Islamic political thought have so far stopped at characterizing the nature of thought. As shown, there are not many studies dedicated to revealing how to respond to the dynamics of society through the outpouring of thinking capacity. Riddell's (2019)

study on the prospects of Islam in responding to democratization is a good example, by grouping reform-era Islamic thought into (1) *The Neo-Modernists*, (2) *The Modernists*, (3) *The Traditionalists*, and (4) *The Radical Islamists*. Meanwhile, Woodward (2001) classifies it into (1) *indigenized* (indigenous) Islam, (2) traditional Islam, (3) modernist Islam, (4) Islamism or Islamist, and (5) Islamic neo-modernism.

The study of Islamic thought using the above typology predominantly uses two approaches: *cultural and security*. The cultural approach emphasizes the traditions inherent in Indonesian Islam. In the process, this approach looks at and places more emphasis on how individual interpretations or interpretations of Islamic community organizations on the holy verses and their impact in influencing political behavior. It can even be said that this approach is most dominantly used in studying Islam in Indonesia (Hadiz, 2011a, 2011b). The security approach is mostly carried out by researchers who lack an understanding of Islamic teachings (Voll, 1982, pp. 2–4).

Understanding of Islamic thought by using the two approaches above causes the emergence of unclear indicators of Islamic thought. The two approaches above have given birth to a *good and bad* Muslim perspective, or in Indonesia, it is better known as moderate Islam and radical Islam (Hadiz, 2011a, 2011b). The implication of these two approaches is that there has been a simplification and reduction of the problems of Islamic thought when the problems are so complex (Bayah, 2007, pp. 39–42).

To understand the dynamics of Islamic thought after the collapse of the New Order, it is necessary to place it in the context of the complexity of the problems it faces. Starting from the explanation above and to develop a study of Islamic thought in the context of changes in the state order, especially the people-state relations in Indonesia during the reform era. This study, in addition to

considering the internal-cultural-theological and political perspectives as mentioned above, needs to be taken into account. The *historical sociology approach* and the *political economy approach* are also used. In addition, the political philosophy is also used as a basic perspective in viewing and explaining the concept of state goals put forward by the figures of progressive muslim, mainstream Islamic organizations, and political Islamists organizations in the reformation era of Indonesia.

The main problem that is the focus of this article: how is Islamic thought articulated and implemented by the figures of progressive muslim, mainstream Islamic organizations, and political Islamists organizations in the reformation era of Indonesia in changing of state order in the reformation era of Indonesia? How is Islamic thought transformed by three variants muslim thought in Indonesia's state from the perspective of Islamic political philosophy?

### **Theoretical Framework**

In the context of democracy, the Indonesian people should be positioned as real citizens. Of course, this position is different from that of the *little people (kawula)*. The position as a subject shows that the people have no role or rights in the life of the state. Therefore, the state dominates people's lives (Kuntowijoyo & Priyono, 2008, p. 379). This reality is reflected in the people-state relations in the pre-independence period.

The position of the people as poor people explains that the people have rights and roles in the life of the state, although they are very limited. In this position as the *wang cilik*, the state recognizes the position, the rights, and the role of the people in the life of the state even though it is still limited. Therefore, the position of the state remains more dominant (Kuntowijoyo & Priyono, 2008, p. 370). This reality can be understood from the reality of people-state relations in Indonesia, especially in the era of the New Order.

Furthermore, the position of the people as citizens. In this regard, the state fully positions the people as having rights and roles in the modern sense related to the people-state relationship. This position as a citizen has implications for the form (pattern) of the people-state relationship (Kuntowijoyo & Priyono, 2008, p. 375). The latter people-state relations like this were voiced by Muslims in the reformation era of Indonesia.

To get to the people-state relationship that is aspired in Indonesia in the reform era, *first*, the willingness of the state as represented by the political elite and the government to position the people as subjects, not just objects. The *second* prerequisite is to put the ruling elite state as a servant of the people (Mul Khan, 2009, p. 204). *Third*, the people are free from any form of state intervention that controls all public discourse in the form of a constitution and the hegemony of the ruling elite, which tends to be treated as a class that is always right under the protection of the state which tends to be sacred.

The ideal condition of the people's relationship with the state is precisely a form of social life in which the people are the main actors with the state and law, and the elite in it actually function as servants of the people (Mul Khan, 2009, p. 206). In this connection, it can be said that if the position of the state as a servant of the people goes well, it means that the goals of the state will also be realized, namely justice, welfare, and prosperity (Yusdani, 2020). As stated by al-Gazali that in managing the government system it is necessary to be based on the teachings of justice because fairness is the wisdom of Allah SWT. In addition, the just act of the ruler is something that is coveted by all the people. Therefore, morally and religiously, the legitimacy of power is determined by actions to create justice for the leader. Thus it is clear that without the establishment of justice, morally, the validity of power does not exist (Ġazzālī, 1988, p. 181). On this basis, it can be emphasized that the government may impose various policies to

regulate its people as long as it is done for reasons of benefit (welfare) for the people (Madaniy & Halim, 2010, p. 75; Yusdani, 2021, p. 320).

The various explanations above indicate that the relationship between the people and the state is in a strong position. A strong state in sense of being able to carry out its function of providing security protection, ensuring economic prosperity, creating social order, and maintaining territorial integration, strong people can be interpreted as having the ability to exercise control over the state that leads to authoritarian practices or *abuse of power* are also needed (Yusdani et al., 2021). That way, it will create a relationship between the people and the state that always has as quoted by Manan (Manan, 2005, pp. 261–262) by borrowing the term from Giddens (1982) as *dialectic of control* or a form of relationship between the people and the state which is referred to by Stepan (2000) as *positive-sum*, namely a form of relationship between the people and the state which each has a balanced power capacity and does not negate each other.

## **METHOD**

This research traces the response of Islamic thought to changes in people-state relations as a result of changes in the concept of the state that emerged in the reformation era of Indonesia. Indonesian Islamic thinkers who are the subjects of this research are Nurcholish Madjid (Shihab, 1998, p. 41; Tim Penulis Paramadina, 2004, pp. 208, 238–241) and Abdurrahman Wahid (Wahid, 1984). The determination of these two figures considerations that the thoughts of these two figures have been widely published in Indonesia, the thoughts of these two figures are closely related and even these two figures are involved with state issues in the reformation era of Indonesia. In addition, the thoughts of these two figures even come from the Islamic tradition, but their thoughts in many ways exceed the existing Islamic organizations in Indonesia.

Islamic thoughts that are socio-religious organizations are Muhammadiyah (Noer, 1980, p. xi; Wijaya, 2015, pp. 134, 138), Nahdlatul Ulama (hereinafter referred to as NU (Wijaya, 2015, pp. 134, 138, 144-149). Muhammadiyah and NU in contemporary Indonesia are now more popularly referred to as mainstream Islam (Jurdi, 2008, p. 6). the Islamic Defenders Front (hereinafter referred to as FPI) (Syihab, 2011, pp. 185-186). Hereinafter referred to as MMI) (Jurdi, 2008, p. 411) and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (hereinafter referred to as HTI) (Nashir, 2007, p. 421). These three Islamic organizations in this study are called political islamistts (Singh & Qodir, 2015, pp. 6-7).

The basis of consideration for the determination of Muhammadiyah and NU in this study is because these two largest organizations are mainstream Islamic organizations in Indonesia. These two mass organizations were present before the independence of Indonesia, have many followers, and have contributed to building the direction of development and future of the Indonesian nation and state. While the basis for establishing the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), in this study, the three Indonesian Islamic organizations represent various Islamic organizations born in the reform era. In addition, these three political islamists organizations have followers and views on state and Islamic issues that are unique to Indonesia by offering an Islamic state and the formalization of sharia as a solution.

## **Data Sources**

Sources or reference materials for studying Islamic thinkers as individuals and progressive muslims Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid are the various written works of two figures in the form of books, articles, or published interviews. These sources or references can be grouped into primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources are various references written by relevant

figures related to Islam and the relationship between the people and the state in Indonesia which have been published since 1998. While secondary literature sources are sources of literature written by this figure before the reformation. Including secondary sources are the writings of researchers who examine the thoughts of both figures and thoughts of Indonesian Islamic organizations about the change of state order in the reformation era of Indonesia.

Data or information on the response of Islamic thought to changes in the state order during the reformation era of Indonesia apart from the primary and secondary sources mentioned above is also supported by the results of interviews with: Ahmad Syafii Maarif (representing the Central Leadership of Muhammadiyah), Dr. KHA Malik Madaniy, MA (Katibul Am Syuriyah PBNU), Habib Muhammad Rizieq (Chairman of the Islamic Defenders Front), Irfan S. Awwas (Chairman of Tanfiziyah Indonesian Mujahideen Council), Mohammad Rozi (Head of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia).

### **Research Approach**

The approach used in this study is a historical approach. The historical approach chosen in this study is the historical *challenge and response* approach (Sullivan, 1970, p. 33; Toynbee, 1955, pp. 2, 23, 271). With a historical approach like this, it can be explained that the emergence of Islamic thought in the context of changes in the state order, especially the people-state relations in reformation era of Indonesia is the answer to Islam and its people for the challenges they face.

### **Analysis Technique**

The analytical technique used to understand the response of Islamic thought proposed by Nurcholish Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid, Muhammadiyah, and Nahdlatul Ulama is the sociology of knowledge, explaining the dialectic between Muslim thinkers or

Muslim social organizations with the context and reality of changing state structure in reformation era of Indonesia (Fanani, 2008, p. 54). This dialectic takes place in the process of three momentums (stages) simultaneously, namely *internalization*, *objectification*, and *externalization* (Berger et al., 1990, pp. 4-6; Kuntowijoyo, 1997, pp. 82-83, 90, 2001, pp. 139-140, 337; Najjar, 1995, pp. 22, 90, 125).

To understand the thoughts of political Islamists FPI, MMI, and HTI used *discursive strategies* (Hasan, 2012, pp. xiv-xv). They put the thought response as a result of the interaction between the long-term dynamics of political Islam in the face of state authoritarianism, with the existing political, social, and economic systems considered to have failed to save Indonesian Muslims from the ongoing crisis (Hasan, 2008, pp. 2, 322).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The response of Islamic thought to changes in the state order in the reformation era of Indonesia, especially changes in the relations between the people and the state, shows that all Islamic thinkers, both progressive figures (Cak Nur and Gus Dur), mainstream Islamic organizations (Muhammadiyah and NU) and political Islamist (FPI, MMI, and HTI) are of the opinion of the urgency of the role of the state in the lives of the Indonesian people, who are predominantly Muslim. Therefore, the role of the state in people's lives is not merely as a *passive nachtwachterstaat*, that is, the state only acts and is present when the people's basic rights are violated or order and security are disturbed and in socio-economic problems. the *laissez faire* rule is used. Thus, the state must play an active role in building the welfare of its people (Anwar, 1987; Mawardi, 2003, p. 139).

To realize the prosperous state or people mentioned above, the two variants of Islamic thought mentioned above differ in how they are taken. For mainstream Islamic thought, it is argued that realizing

the ideals of a prosperous state is done by integrating Islamic ethics in the state with the state system that has been applied in Indonesia. As for Islamic thought, it is not mainstream to achieve the ideals of a prosperous state and society even if it considers the complexity of the problems and factors that affect the life of the state in the contemporary era but by offering Islam formally in the state order with all its derivations.

State thinking of progressive Islam (Cak Nur and Gus Dur), mainstream Islamic organizations (Muhammadiyah and NU), and political Islamists (FPI, MMI, and HTI) above can be said to realize the concept of the *welfare state* (Ġazzālī, 1988, p. 181) or *social service state*, namely the state is responsible for the welfare of the people (Siregar, 2021, pp. 116–130) and therefore must actively intervene in social and economic life through a system that controls economic forces and tries to minimize social and economic differences, especially differences arising from the unequal distribution of wealth (Budiarjo, 1987, pp. 53, 58–59).

From the point of view of theory or State Science, the response of the Islamic thinkers above is in accordance with the theoretical approach or state science developed by the world today, which requires the active role of the state in economic planning. Thus, this view shows a view that the position of the Indonesian state is other than as an economic instrument as well as a legal instrument to realize social justice or welfare for all Indonesian people.

The description of the importance and strategic position of the state for the lives of the people above, Muslim thinkers then offered a strong current of Islamic thought to look for patterns of people-state relations as new alternatives and solutions that could perpetuate the unity and integrity of the nation within the unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Therefore, based on the responses and thoughts above, it can be emphasized in the view of Cak Nur (Majid,

2004, pp. 134–135; 145), Gus Dur (Manan, 2005, p. 38), Muhammadiyah (Redaksi Suara Muhammadiyah, 2012, p. 4) and NU (Lailatul, 2012) that in the reform era, in addition to a strong state, the people must also be strong.

The pattern of strong people's relations (Kuntowijoyo, 1997, pp. 26–27) and the strong state is a pattern of relations that positions the people and the state in a position of *check and balance* relationship, in the sense that no party is more dominant over the other party. The state is strong because the state has strong constitutional legitimacy and a broad support base from the people (Hiariej, 1998, p. 10; Manan, 2005, pp. 34, 39). A strong state is also in the sense of being able to carry out its function of providing security protection, ensuring economic prosperity, creating social order, and maintaining its territorial integration (Manan, 2005, pp. 261–262). While the people are strong because of the people's political awareness that is getting better, the courage of high resistance to state power, and the very free space for the press to exercise social control (Hiariej, 1998, p. 10; Manan, 2005, pp. 34, 39).

Furthermore, it can also be argued that strong people can be interpreted as having the ability to exercise control over the state which leads to authoritarian practices or *abuse of power* (Manan, 2005, pp. 261–262). The relatively parallel form of the relationship above can reduce the emergence of the tendency of domination by one party over another (Hiariej, 1998, p. 10; Manan, 2005, pp. 34, 39). The equal position of the relationship makes it difficult for each party to impose the interests and desires of the other party, except by ignoring all objections and protests raised by one of the parties. However, such abandonment is not without risk. Because, if the state does it, it will easily be suspected that it will begin to show signs of being unresponsive to the voice of the people, and this means the initial symptoms of authoritarianism. As a result, abundant popular support

for the state will gradually shrink. Meanwhile, if the people do it, then it shows people have tended to become anarchists. If anarchism occurs in the people, it can invite the state to act repressively (Manan, 2005, p. 39).

The position of equal people-state relations above indicates the application of democratic principles which require that the relationship between the state and the people is equally strong, which is useful for preventing the establishment of authoritarianism in power and mass anarchism. The assumption of democracy regarding people-state relations is that if the people *vis--vis the* state is relatively strong, then democracy will take place, otherwise, if the state is strong and the people are weak then democracy will not work. This means that democracy will run and be well maintained if the balance of the position of the people-state relationship is equally strong (Budiman, 1990, p. 3).

Departing from the position of the strong people and the strong state above, it will create a relationship between the people - the state that always has - to borrow the term of Giddens (1982) as a *dialectic of control*. This is the form of people-state relations which Stepan (2000) as having the *positive-sum* character *in*, namely the form of people-state relations, each of which has a balanced capacity and does not negate each other (Manan, 2005, pp. 261-262).

The views of Cak Nur, Gus Dur, Muhammadiyah, and NU regarding the position of a strong people and a strong state in the reform era of Indonesia, can be explained that the arrangement of the system of government or state, as explained by al-Gazali that power should rest on very basic Islamic ethics, namely the realization of justice. for all the people (the strong people) because justice, besides being wisdom from God, is also an act that is coveted by all the people. That way, morally and religiously, the legitimacy of the strength of the state or government is determined by actions to create

justice for its people. In this regard, it can be emphasized that without justice, there is no moral validity of power, on the contrary, there is tyranny (Ġazzālī, 1988, pp. 43–44, 173, 181).

Based on the explanation above, it can be stated that the people's obedience to the state or government is because it can realize justice or welfare for all its people (Siregar, 2021, p. 130). This explanation essentially emphasizes that the affairs of the people are completely in the hands of the people in accordance with the goal of achieving the welfare/justice they want. In fact, it is the people who are the source of state or government power (Khallaf, 1977, p. 29). This is in accordance with the basic principle of “*tasarruf al-imam ala ar-ra'iyah manutun bil maslahah* (Suyuti, 1983, p. 83) or *at-tasarruf ala ar-ra'iyah manutun bil maslahah* (Zarqa, 1989, p. 309).

The description above confirms a universal law that justice or welfare is a trait that must always be attached to every government or state if you want the continuity of government or state power to continue. Every government or state will always get demands to be able to represent the interests of all its people to realize prosperity (Ġazzālī, 1988, pp. 173, 181). If the government or the state is able to realize the dream of the welfare of all its people, the people will always obey and submit to the state or government, in this situation the state or government has a strong position. Therefore, every government or state power must be able to implement a system of regulating its people that adheres to the principles of justice or welfare (Yusdani, 2021, pp. 345, 397). On the other hand, if a government or state actually runs an order that makes the majority of its people unfairly, it is certain that the order of the government or the state will not last long. This situation is called the strong people and the weak state.

The situation above illustrates that when an order of government no longer gains the trust of its people, it means that it no longer has a legitimate basis for governing. Such a situation will cause a

government to meet various disobedience from its people. In other words, it can be explained that *a just state will survive, even if it is an infidel state. On the other hand, an unjust state will be destroyed even if it is an Islamic state.*

Meanwhile, the idea of revitalizing the caliphate, dawlah Islamiyah or Islamic state and shari'a is part of the discourse strategy in the context of power relations, especially power relations between the people and the state which are unbalanced and manipulative. In addition, these ideas become one of the few discourse options in welcoming a more prospective change (Hasan, 2012, pp. xiv-xv). That way, the response of non-mainstream Islamic thought can be read as an effort and awareness to get a better and dignified life in the context of state order system changing. In addition, this response can also be understood as part of the dynamic movement of Indonesian Muslim society which is changing at a time when the roots of democracy are starting to stick firmly (Hasan, 2012, pp. xiv-xv).

Variants of thinking of political Islamists are the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). This variant of thinking in responding to changes in the state system in the reformation era of Indonesia focuses more on strengthening the role of the state. This is based on the reality of state life during the New Order era and in the reform era how strong and dominant the influence of the market economy was, which had a very serious impact on the life of the state and people in various aspects.

The variants of Islamic thought are not mainstream even though they focus more on strengthening the role of the state in the reformation era of Indonesia, but it cannot be concluded that they do not strengthen the role of the people because in the view of this variant of thinking the relations between the people and the state are based on

Islamic Sharia, the people's rights are automatically fulfilled. Thus the position of the people will also be strong.

This variant of Islamic thought is political Islamist (Hasan, 2012, p. 157) even though it is "reactive" or "conspirative" in responding to changes in the pattern of people-state relations, especially the three levels of problems above, local, national, and global but religious (Islam). they use as a frame, meaning that the state system they offer must be based on an Islamic system. Therefore, to realize prosperity, prosperity, and justice, these three non-mainstream Islamic organizations reject their basis on the *nation-state system*, democracy, human rights, the nation-state, civil society, and various systems that do not originate from Islam.

The reasons for the refusal of the three political Islamists to change state structure in the reformation era of Indonesia are based on these various systems because these systems originate from the West, are secular and of course, contradict Islam. Therefore, according to them, the system of state life for Muslims, including in regulating and directing changes of the state system in the reformation era of Indonesia must be based on an Islamic system because Islam is a universal religion and is also a complete system for regulating people-state relations. country.

In addition to the argument that Islam is a complete teaching and has a standard system of state and government, including in regulating people-state relations, Muslims as the majority of Indonesian citizens. The emergence of this alternative thought can also be read as criticism and critical attitude of non-mainstream Islamic organizations towards the reality of the people-state relationship in the state and government system in Indonesia, both before the reform and in the reform era, which tends to be corrupt and manipulative. In addition, the reality is that the state system adopted

from the West secular has failed to realize justice and the welfare of the people (Hasan, 2012, p. 157).

Furthermore, it can be explained that in the view of political Islamists, the above state system whose application rejects its foundation on democracy, human rights, civil society, and the nation-state in regulating people-state relations in Indonesia, they understand is a system of "kufr" because it is an extension of the hands of capitalist countries or the global economy. Because of this, the regulation of change of state system by using a state and government system imported from the West has failed to prosper and prosper the people and even these systems are also used by capital-owning countries as a tool to control and exploit wealth and resources. nature owned by Indonesia (Wibowo, 2010, p. 6).

Based on the above perspective, Political Islamists initiated a change in the pattern of people-state relations in Indonesia in the reform era that needed to be replaced with an Islamic state system with formal and total enforcement of sharia. That's why Islam, is not the mainstream, the regulation of changes in people-state relations must return to the Islamic system because Islam is perfect teaching and comes from God (Hasan, 2010, p. 23). In this context, it can be understood the emergence of the thought of the people-state relation in the reformation era of Indonesia based on the concept or system of *the International Khilafah State* promoted by HTI, *the Archipelago Khilafah State* as discoursed by MMI and *the Indonesian Islamic State Kaffah* initiated by the FPI.

From the idea of the people-state relation based on Islam which is aspired by the three political Islamists above, it can also be read as their resistance and critical attitude towards the macro phenomenon of the failure of the secular political/state system implemented in Muslim countries including Indonesia to prosper. The people, even those systems have made the people miserable. In addition, these non-

mainstream Islamic organizations also fight the swift currents of unfair global political economy influence both at the national level of each Muslim country and at the global level (Hasan, 2010, p. 23).

On that basis, the above thought can be understood as part of the dynamic movement of Indonesian Muslim society which is facing a swift current of social change due to the pace of modernization and globalization (Hasan, 2010, pp. 3–5, 2012, pp. xii–xiii). It can even be added that the response developed both micro (locally and nationally such as culture, nation-state systems) and macro (modernization and globalization with all their associated values, such as the free market) as an impetus for the spirit of resistance against corrupt regimes ruling the world. Muslims fulfill their desire for power and hoard luxuries for themselves and their cronies. For non-mainstream Islamic organizations, the absence of divine intervention as the absolute ruler in the secular state and government system implies that the system is prone to be manipulated and abused by the ruling regimes. As a result, it is the people who suffer and are helplessly oppressed to face the arbitrariness of the ruler (Hasan, 2010, p. 6).

Starting from various issues related to people-state relations in the life of the Indonesian state, both in the economic, political, social, cultural, legal and ideological, and religious fields, it is clearly seen in the view of political Islamists that the government and the state both before the era both reforms and the reformation era failed to improve the welfare of the Indonesian people, protect the morality of the Indonesian people, eradicate corruption and the legal mafia, protect the creed of the people, and lead the Indonesian people to the path that Allah has blessed.

### **Progressive Islam Perspective**

Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on changes in the structure of the state in Indonesia are based on the main principle that the people must be sovereign. The power possessed by

the state is a mandate from the people. It is based on the principle of trust that consequences arise: the state is obliged to protect, fulfill the will of the people, and realize justice in the field of social life. The creation of social justice by the state for the people, for these two thinkers, at least provides a decent standard of living for people in various fields of life. In efforts to achieve social justice for the people, according to these two figures, the role of the state is still needed.

These two figures not only articulate the status of the people as holders of sovereignty. The people, according to both of them, must have a bargaining position with the state. The people need to be empowered so that they know and are aware of their rights as citizens. That way, people can claim their rights in the life of the state. With the strength of the people, they can exercise control over the state if the state violates and neglects its duties and obligations to the people.

### **Mainstream Islam Perspective**

Based on the description above, on the one hand, Muhammadiyah, NU, NU offers to reorganize the change of state order in the reformation era of Indonesia offering a pattern of state structure that strong state and strong people. This pattern of relations is offered to realize the welfare, prosperity, and justice of the people starting from the existing (state) system. Meanwhile, on the other hand, represented by FPI, MMI, and HTI, there are also ideas to regulate the relations between the people and the state with the idea that the state must be strong by completely replacing the Indonesian state system with an Islamic system. The two variants of Islamic thought with their respective offers of solutions regarding the pattern of relations between the people and the state explain the differences in the methods taken.

The choice of way of thinking from the first group of thinkers can be understood that the vision of Islamic thought in directing changes in the pattern of people-state relations in the reformation era of

Indonesia can be explained through the analysis of Kuntowijoyo's Prophetic Social Sciences (Kuntowijoyo, 2004, p. 33; Santoso, 2011). The formulation of the concept of social transformation in the Prophetic Social Sciences can be translated into the following four steps (Kuntowijoyo, 2004, p. 33; Santoso, 2011).

With the logic of thinking as mentioned above, it can be understood that in directing changes of state order in Islamic thought presented by Cak Nur, Gus Dur, Muhammadiyah, and NU, it is impossible to think from the basis of Islamic norms directly to bring about changes of state structure instantly. In the view of Cak Nur, Gus Dur, Muhammadiyah, and NU to arrive at the expected changes, there needs to be a careful reading of the macro and philosophical aspects of critical reading of social reality related to the complexity of the problems of changing state structure in the reformation era of Indonesia in various social, economic, cultural fields, politics, and the global market. In other words, it is necessary to consider the macro and micro sides.

After the micro and macro readings are carried out, further efforts are needed to formulate theories and concrete applications of these micro and macro readings. In this connection, of course, it is necessary to understand and consider the reality related to the change of state order. Therefore, the strategy towards changing of state structure as designed by many contemporary Islamic movements in the view of the above variants tends to forget the formulation of social theory. Sometimes they are too absorbed in discussing the theological-normative level but forget about the *methodological* design, to the stage of *formulating social theory*, and then to the *agenda (action) of changing people-state relations*.

Based on the explanation above, these Muslim thinkers, on the one hand, bring substantial religious teachings as an integral part of social analysis for the future of the Indonesian state and nation. In this

connection, it can be emphasized that these thinkers, on the other hand, do not use the textual-normative approach of Islam because in the view of the first variant it will not result in a state change in Indonesia. The offer of Islamic thought that

The first variant of thinking above has been carried out and applied objectification. What is called objectification is the translation of Islamic subjective values into objective categories that can be understood and accepted by everyone without the need to understand and agree on the original values (religion-Islam). Thus, objectification is a method to present religion in a more substantive and prophetic manner (Kuntowijoyo, 1997, 2001, p. 373).

By using the way of objectification which is defined as the transformation of the values of Islam that have been absorbed into the structure of the internal consciousness into forms that objective is Islam originally are the values that are subjective, with the objectification transformed into the values objective, regardless of the nature of their subjective. Thus, the objectification of a process to make the values of internal objective. In even more detail, it can be explained that objectification is a rational act of values that is manifested into rational actions so that outsiders can agree and enjoy without having to agree with the original values.

The estuary of all of this is with transcendental values, to direct changes of state order in Indonesia in a transformative manner. This kind of transformative character is not determined by technical skills but is determined by his commitment to realizing the new reality of the life of the state and nation in order to realize welfare which is the goal of the state and nation.

### **Political Islamist Perspective**

In contrast to the thoughts and strategies put forward by the two figures and the two mainstream mass organizations above, Islamic movements and thoughts are not mainstream in responding to

changes in Indonesian state order in the reformation era of Indonesia, which can be understood in the that starting from Islamic doctrine to agenda or action (Hasan, 2010).

Based on this explanation, it can be emphasized that the discourse and response of Islamic thought to changes in the state order, especially changes of state structure in the reformation era of Indonesia carried out by leaders, progressive Islam, mainstream Islamic organizations, and political Islamists above can be read as an effort and awareness to get a better and dignified life in the context of changing state structure in the reformation era of Indonesia. That way, this discourse, and response can also be understood as part of the dynamic movement of Indonesian Muslim society which is changing at a time when the roots of democracy are starting to stick firmly (Hasan, 2012, pp. xiv-xv).

Starting from the explanation above, clearly shows that the response of the thoughts of two figures, mainstream Islamic organizations, and political Islamists to changes of state order including the pattern of people-state relations, departed from Islamic teachings as a holistic and comprehensive teaching that has *multiple* capabilities to do continuous re-interpretation in the face of changing times, including changes in governance and state governance. Islam has thus been developed by Cak Nur, Gus Dur, Muhammadiyah, NU, FPI, MMI, and HTI in responding to political challenges such as the question of nationality and statehood.

From the overall map and response dynamics as well as the thought transformation strategy presented above, it can be emphasized that the strong current of Islamic thought is to build a just Indonesia based on state ethics in Islam whose actualization considers the reality of all aspects of the life of the Indonesian nation. In this way, it is hoped that a just, prosperous, dignified, and civilized life will be realized for all people.

## CONCLUSION

The response of Islamic thought to changes in the state order in the reformation era of Indonesia can be understood as part of the dynamic movement of the Indonesian Muslim community which is changing and realizing their rights as citizens at a time when the roots of democracy are firmly planted. Thoughts put forward by Islamic figures, mainstream Islamic organizations, and political Islamist thoughts are contributions and creative endeavors made by Islamic thinkers to create a better and dignified life in the context of the new state order, especially changes in the pattern of people-state relations in the reformation era of Indonesia. Islamic thought put forward by Islamic leaders and mass organizations in the reformation era of Indonesia related to changes in the state structure, especially in re-patterning people-state relations in the reform era, is a contributive and proactive response to Islam in the democratization process in Indonesia, and at the same time provides direction. democracy in Indonesia which is based on the ideals of realizing the life of the people and a prosperous state.

It can also be emphasized that the contribution of Islamic thought to the change in people-state relations in the reformation era of Indonesia that was put forward by prominent figures, mainstream Islamic organizations, and political Islamist organizations is the actualization of religious thought inherently in Islam, that the power possessed by the state is a mandate, and the mandate must be accounted for in the interests of the people. That way, all policies carried out by the state must refer to the welfare of the people. On that basis, in a state like this, besides the people being able to demand the responsibility of the state, the people can also carry out their urgency to the state to fulfill their rights if the state neglects or violates them. This thinking shows that in addition to carrying out a rational

function, the state must also carry out its ethical responsibilities to the people.

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# Ideal-Normative and Socio-Historical Approaches to Gender Equality Verses: A Study of Riffat Hassan's Thought

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## Abstract

Gender equality issues never stop being discussed and always attract attention. This is driven by the many inequalities experienced by women from ancient times until now. Even though gender equality is increasingly being echoed, the position of women is always affected and biased by patriarchal culture. Often women are made second. Islam itself provides space for gender equality. This study aims to discuss Riffat Hassan's thoughts on realizing gender equality in the Islamic view. This study also uses a qualitative descriptive method with a narrative analysis approach. The data was collected by documenting various sources related to Hassan and her thoughts and was analyzed using interactive qualitative analysis. The results show that there are two approaches used by Riffat Hassan in interpreting the verses of the Koran: the ideal-normative and socio-historical approaches. In her view, the basis of a contested patriarchal culture is related to 1) God first created men, not women; women are believed to have been created from the ribs of men. Therefore, women are derivative and ontologically secondary; 2) women, not men, are the primary agents for human fall from heaven; and 3) women are not only created by men but also for men, so the existence of women is only a tool and has no fundamental meaning.

**Keywords:** Gender Equality Verses; Ideal-Normative Approach; Islamic Studies; Riffat Hassan; Socio-Historical Approach

## **INTRODUCTION**

The status and position of women in Islam is a topic that always generates heated debate. With it, Muslim elites' perceptions regarding women's position are very diverse and cannot be identified clearly. This proves that women are extraordinary creatures (Patoari, 2019). However, women are often seen as weak stereotypes and as complementary figures. Not only men have this view, but women who are insecure and lack confidence that women are not created differently from men (Saifee et al., 2012). Pradita (2020) emphasized that the women's movement exists because of several issues of inequality. Then voiced an understanding of the relationship between men and women. Currently, many women leaders carry out similar movements, raising gender equality, one of which is Riffat Hassan

In relations between men and women, awareness of the need to reform patterns of relations between men and women in a more just and nuanced direction with equality continues and remains an exciting and essential issue to discuss (Lakoff, 1973; Holmgren & Hearn, 2009; Aspinall et al., 2021). There has been male domination in all societies throughout the ages, and so far, women have experienced unfair treatment in various aspects of life (Sudarso et al., 2019; Mawaddah et al., 2021; Vioni & Liansah, 2022). The exception is in matriarchal social life, where women are power holders (Setri & Setiawan, 2020). The amount of matriarchal social life is few compared to the patriarchy, so women always feel pressured.

The wrong mindset says that women's roles are limited to the kitchen, the well, and the bed, so things outside of that become unimportant in the end (Bemiller & Schneider, 2010). Even though women themselves can become educators, agents of change, motivators, or supporters, it cannot be denied that women have a domestic role in giving birth, raising, and educating children (Sumbulah, 2019). However, one should not continue to be afraid to

work and achieve. They are locked up in views as housewives who are unpaid and never stop or other women who are too focused on external affairs and neglect family harmony. The balance between internal family affairs and self-achievement, which continues to increase, is increasingly difficult to achieve (Qudsiah & Gustiawati, 2017).

The discourse on women's liberation and empowerment is currently getting more attention; as a result, it presents the issue of gender equality. To differentiate between sex and gender, Mazure (Mazure, 2016, 2021) defines "sex" when referring to biology and "gender" when referring to self-representation influenced by social, cultural, and personal experience. Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Understanding the Biology of Sex and Gender Differences (2001) recommends specifications for researchers to clarify the use of sex and gender. The word "sex" should be used in the study of human subjects as a classification, typically as male or female, in accordance with the reproductive organs and functions that result from the chromosomal complement. The word "gender" should be used in the study of human subjects to refer to a person's self-representation as male or female or how that person is treated by social institutions based on how that person presents their gender. The word "sex" should be used in the majority of studies involving nonhuman animals. The division of sex (sex) is determined biologically and is attached to specific sexes and is permanent and cannot be replaced. Meanwhile, gender is built socially and culturally. Furthermore, gender is defined as a set of values, hopes, and beliefs played by men in social life. Islam itself provides space in the discussion of gender equality (Kazemi, 2000; Barlow & Akbarzadeh, 2006; Mir-Hosseini, 2006; Rizzo et al., 2007; Seedat, 2013).

Talking about gender equality is always associated with feminism. However, the relationship between feminism and religion

is debated ([Anyidoho, 2018](#); [Zubair & Zubair, 2017](#)). Women are very close to the atmosphere of domestication and patriarchal domination. So Muslim woman scholars or intellectuals seek to expel women from the center of men. Once again, women do not need to be imprisoned in the culture of *kanca wingking* (Javanese language) ([Hastuti et al., 2021](#)). It is tough to accept that the westernized framework of feminism can be adopted in the discourse on gender equality from an Islamic perspective ([Edwin, 2013](#)). So, it is the feminist Muslim woman who wants to combine the discourse on women's liberation from a patriarchal culture based on the Koran. As is known, Islam has announced the status of women who are born as leaders ([Supriyadi et al., 2019](#)).

This gender equality movement received full attention from Riffat Hassan. She has deep thoughts in studying the verses of the Koran about the conceptual relationship between women and men. This paper analyses Riffat Hassan's life background and beliefs on understanding the verses of the Koran through an ideal-normative and socio-historical approach. The Koran accommodates and appreciates women and does not discriminate against them.

## **METHOD**

The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative method with a thematic analysis approach. This aims to find out the search and deepening of a meaning resulting from various texts with specific themes of "what" and "how" ([Riessman, 2005](#)). Riffat Hassan examines gender equality in Islam, and this study analyses her way of interpreting the verses of the Koran using two approaches: ideal-normative and socio-historical. The data used in this study comes from various literature, such as books and journals related to Riffat Hassan's thoughts. Data collection through documentation and analysis with the concept of data presentation Miles and Huberman.

With these three steps of data analysis, the results of the reduction data are obtained as needed. Then the data is presented systematically and easily understood. Finally, a conclusion is given based on the data that has been compiled (Miles et al., 2014).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Riffat Hassan's Life Sketch**

Riffat Hassan is a Pakistani Muslim feminist scholar, to be precise in Lahore, which is a large old city and currently the capital of Punjab province. It is unknown exactly when Hassan was born, but several sources state that she was born in 1943 (Robikah, 2021). Hassan comes from a descendant of the Sayyid family, a prominent, respected, and respected family in the city. Hassan lives with his five brothers and three sisters. As for her father, who is a traditionalist and has patriarchal principles, a social system that places the role of men above all else, he believes and states that the best age for sex roles for every girl is to marry when they are under sixteen years old. This is contrary to Hassan's principle. Meanwhile, Hassan's mother does not agree with traditional Islamic culture; she rejects cultural principles that affirm the submission and inferiority of women to men. Due to her own life, her mother disobeyed her husband. He cares more about his daughter than his son. She says educating girls is more important than educating boys because girls born in Muslim communities will always face various obstacles (Husniyah, 2018).

Her father's views meant that Riffat Hassan never had a good relationship with her father, as did her mother's attitude, which did not want to compromise with traditional Islamic culture. In her teens, Hassan flatly refused his father's wish to send her to an all-girls school. Even her father emphasized to Hassan to follow the custom that girls must get married at 16. This courage cannot be separated from the support and protection of her mother, whom she categorizes as a

radical feminist, which makes Hassan alienated from her family and society (Hassan, 1991).

In addition to the family factor, the birth of Riffat Hassan's feminist thought cannot be separated from the condition of Pakistan, which was indeed classified as a country full of upheavals, especially in formulating the concept of an Islamic state between the Mawdudi sect which supports Pakistan as a traditional theocratic state, with the camp supporting the formation of a state Islam which is oriented towards Fazlurrahman's modern thoughts. In the context of such upheaval, the role of women becomes a central issue, between the "castration" of women's creativity and confining it to domestic areas on the one hand. On the other hand, there are demands to give freedom to women (Esha, 2010).

At seventeen, Riffat Hassan continued her studies for three years at St. Mary's College University of Durham, UK. She won the cum laude predicate in English literature and philosophy. Then, at the age of twenty-four, she earned a doctorate specializing in philosophy with a focus on Muhammad Iqbal, a Pakistani poet, and philosopher. Hassan also worked as a deputy director at the Federal Department of Information. After seven years in England, Hassan finally moved and settled in the United States.

In 1974, Riffat Riffat Hassan became a Professor of the Muslim Student's Association (MSA) branch of the University of Oklahoma in Stillwater. This marked the beginning of her career as a feminist theologian. She took this path because of her self-awareness and sense of responsibility for the task she felt, so he thought that she might have started something that was most important in his life's journey (Hassan & Mernissi, 1995). As a professor, she is always asked to be a resource person at annual seminars on women in Islam. At that time, he wondered why only the female theme was given to Hassan. The

reason is that it would be inappropriate if the female informants did not discuss issues related to women.

Even so, in the end, Riffat Hassan also accepted the offer. From there, she took valuable lessons in overcoming social problems that occur in gender-biased Islamic thought. When she became a teacher in the department of religion at a university in America, she made the Koran a reference material in teaching, at first he did not specialize in verses about women, but after paying close attention to these verses, this raised various questions in her mind, "Why do these verses seem to discriminate against and position women unfairly?" (Hassan, 1987).

In 1976, Riffat Hassan earned her professorship and career as Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, United States. Then, in 1979, she was asked to join a dialogue project between Jewish, Christian, and Islamic scholars. It was on this occasion that Hassan wrote a book entitled "Women in the Quran," which contains verses that are considered definitive in the context of the relationship between men and women, which has been the basis of male superiority over women (Hassan & Mernissi, 1995).

Riffat Hassan is a productive Muslim feminist, with most of her works being embodied in the form of articles (Mutrofin, 2015). From the results of these works, she was recognized by many groups as a feminist thinker because of her contribution to the movement of feminism in Pakistan. Among her works are "The Roles and Responsibilities of Women in Islamic Legal and Ritual Traditions" (1980), "Equal Before Allah Men and Women Equality in Islamic Tradition" (1987); *Feminist Theology and Women in the Muslim World*"; *Jihad fi Sabilillah: A Muslimah's Journey of Faith from Struggle to Struggle*"; "Issues of Female-Male Equality in Islamic Tradition"; "Women's Rights in Islam"; and "Muslim Women and Post-Patriarchal Islam."

## **Riffat Hassan's Exegeses Approach**

To build and strengthen a feminist theological paradigm closely related to women's issues, Riffat Hassan uses a two-level approach: ideal-normative and socio-historical (Husniyah, 2018). In the ideal-normative approach, Hassan observed the perfect normative side described by the Koran regarding women. She tried to make the relevance between what was told by the Koran and the empirical facts that occurred in society. These basic principles must be appropriate in the socio-historical context, making the Koran the highest guideline and source of value regarding issues of gender equality and relations between men and women that respect human rights. She stated that all the main points of Islamic teachings would be obtained only through a complete and comprehensive understanding of the Qur'an.

The socio-historical approach is carried out after looking carefully and critically at the actual normative ideals of the Qur'an, then connecting it with the empirical-historical reality of how women are conditioned in Islamic society. Unfortunately, according to Riffat Hassan's empirical data, there is still a "gap" in the case of women between the ideal-normative and the historical-empirical-realistic. Since childhood, Hassan has been taught that women must be submissive and obedient without being allowed to determine their attitude; for example, they were forced to marry early. She also lives with a family with a conflict crisis, even though she comes from a respected traditional Islamic family. Her father is also a representative of a patriarchal society which demands a distinction between men and women from birth (Sumbulah, 2023). This also turns out to be a situation experienced by almost all women wherever they are. If this is the case, then it means that something wrong in women's history led to unfair and treaty behavior towards women. The fundamental values in the Koran, especially those that discuss the spirit of freedom, justice, equality, and respect for human rights, can be translated and

actualized in the reality of human life (Engineer, 2004; Yusuf, 2018). And this is the main reason that made Hassan determined to do reinterpretation and even deconstruction to find verses of the Qur'an that contain an anti-women bias.

Both approaches are used by Riffat Hassan dialectically-integratively and functionally. This means that the two are interrelated and cannot be separated, so when Riffat looks at it from an ideal-normative side, he also looks at it from an empirical-realistic side. Meanwhile, at the normative level, he refers to the Qur'an as the guideline and source of the highest values in Islam. In contrast, at the historical level, he looks at how inequality in the treatment of women occurs in Islamic society. For example, Hassan believes Islam highly appreciates and supports the role of women. However, in misogynistic verses, there is a partiality towards men because the interpreters are men. In the map of studies on feminism, Hassan's thoughts are categorized as rationalist in responding to feminist issues. Her philosophy is based on the theological doctrines of God's justice and mercy, so for her, God's words in the Koran can only be interpreted at the level of justice that becomes the "world of understanding" of the Koran. This view certainly means applying the criteria of justice to the Qur'an rather than simply taking it for granted that the Qur'an must be fair (Minkaryo, 2016).

Riffat Hassan's strong belief in the authority of the Qur'an as a source of values and teachings in Islam has made Riffat always prioritize the Qur'an and position Hadith and other sources as 'relative' sources and can be debated. The hadith itself cannot be immediately accepted and used as a reference because it sometimes does not have a guarantee regarding its decoration, in contrast to the Al-Qur'an, which is guaranteed to be maintained directly from Allah SWT. This is as stated in QS. Al-Hijr: 9: "Indeed, We have sent down the Qur'an, and we are still maintaining it." The purpose of feminist

theology in the Islamic context, as meant by Hassan, is to process difficulties (taharrur liberation) from the unfair inequality of positions of women and men by referring to the holy book Al-Quran as the highest guideline and source of value in overcoming these problems (Haningsih, 2005). Hassan's views align with Engineer's (1990) liberation theology views stating that Islam is a revolutionary teaching that abolishes all forms of slavery, which was also practiced in the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the following decades. This is an approach for a researcher who wants to look at issues by continually referring to things that are normative ideals so that she will see how the Al-Qur'an outlines basic principles that are more normative and idealistic, especially how the Al-Qur'an views women from the perspective of their behavior, how their relationship is with their God, with other people, and with themselves.

Furthermore, Riffat Hassan also tries to develop three principles of methods used in rescue operations, mainly when he performs counter-exegeses (Sulastri, 2022). The three methodological principles include: a) analyzing semantically in checking the accuracy and suitability of word meanings (language accuracy) of various concepts in the Qur'an; b) examining the philosophical stability of existing interpretations of detention; and c) using ethical principles, which are based on the principle of justice, a reflection of God's justice or universal justice. The three principles can be further described in the following description: Firstly, Hassan looks for the true meaning of a word (primary meaning) of a particular concept by looking for the original root word, then from that understanding, it is adapted to the context of society. This aims to examine the concepts of meaning in interpreting the language of the Qur'an. She concludes that the word comes from the Hebrew word *adamah*, which means land. She primarily functions as a generic term for humans, so it cannot be sure that Adam was the first human being with the male gender because

the word is masculine only from the linguistic side and is not about gender (Sumbulah, 2023).

Secondly, understanding the Al-Quran as an integral component because it is a unified meaning that is arranged dialectically in such a way as to avoid contradictions, and this can be used as a test and assessment of other sources of value. Apart from the accuracy of language, Riffat Hassan's rejection of the classical commentators' conclusions regarding the creation of Adam and Eve is based on philosophical consistency by looking at various verses related to Adam, which in her research, these words are interrelated with thirty other verses, which in the context of creation, as a whole refers to three terms to refer to humanity, namely *al-insan*, *al-nas*, and *al-basyar* which do not refer to men (men), so that, he continued, there is not enough argument to state that Adam is a human being first created by God with the male gender (Hasyim, 2001).

Thirdly, the interpretations that emerge must be tested against ethical principles that emphasize the aspect of justice. Thus, an interpretation will be judged methodologically correct if it is in line with the principles of justice. Conversely, an interpretation result will be considered wrong if it is not in accordance with the principles of justice because it can cause unfair inequality and oppression for humans, especially for women. Likewise, with the ethical side, classical interpretation has reduced egalitarianism and perfected what becomes the "world" of the Koran. At the same time, in Islamic theological doctrine, the Koran is a holy book describing justice. Therefore, bringing up the *nafs wahidah* as Adam ultimately implies gender inequality and even strengthens the growing myth that God's main creature is male and not female because women were created from Adam's supporting bones, so ontologically, women are hereditary creatures (Alfitri, 2014; Hasyim, 2001).

## **Riffat Hassan's Construction Thinking**

Judging from her background, Riffat Hassan has a root of thought supported by various points of view: genealogical, theological, sociological, psychological, academic, and even political. These points of view are combined into a principle of feminist theology (Zulaiha, 2016). Hassan's thoughts on gender equality raise several questions regarding the assumption of gender inequality in society, especially among Muslims. These questions are how women were created (the concept of the creation of men and women); are women responsible for the fall of man (the concept of the fall of man from heaven); and why women were created (the purposes for which women were made)? In addition to these theological issues, Hassan also alluded to gender inequality related to sociological and theological issues in the realm of Islamic law, i.e., polygamy and the segregation system, which according to her, are very gender biased.

According to Riffat Hassan, there are three assumptions in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions, which are the roots of people's belief in gender inequality, positioning men as superior to women (Hassan, 2013). These assumptions include; 1) God created men first than women. Women are believed to have been created from the ribs of men; therefore, women are derivative and ontologically secondary. 2) Women are the cause of the process of human fall from heaven. 3) Women are not only created by men but also by men, so the existence of women is only used as a tool and has no fundamental meaning. In interpreting the verses regarding these three matters, there is a gross mismatch between the verses and their application. This is the contribution of Muslim women scholars.

For Riffat, fighting for the fate of women is part of jihad *fisabilillah*, which absolutely must be upheld. And it was proven to her son named Mona. Riffat always said that a Muslim must support

the principle of jihad fisabilillah by dedicating himself to fighting for justice and truth (Hassan, 1993; Husniah, 2018).

## **Riffat Hassan's View of Gender Equality**

### *The Concept of the Creation of Woman*

Rifaat's thoughts on the creation of women as Muslim women are, of course, based on the Al-Qur'an and Hadith. In feminist discourse, the notion of women's creation is a critical and fundamental issue that must be discussed first. Because the idea of equality and inequality between men and women is rooted in the concept of the creation of women, according to Rifat, if God created men and women to be equal, they could not be unequal in the future. In Islamic tradition, it is known and believed that there are four ways of human creation (Nurani, 2018), namely from the ground, from Adam's rib (creation of Eve), and through the mother. The process of fertilization without a father is created through biological fertilization. If you pay close attention, the scriptures about the creation of Adam do not specify how Adam was created. Adam is often referred to as the first human being in Islamic theology and is mentioned 25 times in the Qur'an, but only once the Creation of Adam is mentioned, as seen in verse 59 of Surah Al-Imran.

Rifaat said the Qur'an uses the word Adam to refer only to when humans are self-aware, knowledgeable, and morally autonomous. In explaining the creation of humans, the terms used are al-bastard, al-insan, and al-nâs. This is the same as what was quoted by Rifaat in Iqbal's state of mind. Contrary to this opinion, Rifat views Adam as a man without truth. So the word Adam is indeed a masculine noun, but only linguistically, it does not have a gendered meaning. The word Hawa (known as Adam's wife) is also not mentioned in the Quran. The word Hawa uses the word zawj to refer to Adam's consort. If Adam is not a man, then zawj is not necessarily a woman. Then why

is Eve interpreted as a wife and Adam as a man using the feminine word *zawjah* (Mernisi and Hassan, 1995)?

For example, in QS. Al-Nisa [4]: Riffat reinforces the meaning of this verse by saying that the word Adam is a Hebrew term and Adamah means land, which is a common term for humanity. Riffat also noted that there is no reference in the Qur'an that Adam was the first human, nor was Adam a man. Adam was only particular about the creation of Adam and Eve. The woman's story from Adam's rib is contained in three religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Anam, 2019).

### *The Concept of Equality between Men and Women*

When talking about gender equality, Riffat criticizes the source of the Koran. He argued that men and women were equal before God. In worship, both have the same reward. Islam is not a religion that prioritizes relationships with God but also with humans (Mutrophin, 2013). Much of God's justice and compassion for women is depicted in the Koran (Rif'at and Nurwahidin, 2022). And it turns out that this patriarchal system has caused suffering for every woman. This contrasts the actual conditions of women's lives with injustice and oppression that arbitrarily demeans women.

Several women have become prominent figures recorded in Islamic history, including Sayyidah Khadijah, Aisyah, and Rabi'ah al-Bishry (a famous female Sufi). However, the Islamic tradition, which even today still tends to be misogynistic and anti-women's bias, hinders women's freedom. This fact makes Riffat believe that women must be secondary, subordinate, and inferior to men.

Even though it has been emphasized in the Koran about equality between men and women, Muslim society has never considered men and women equal. It tends to side with interests that are beneficial to men. For Hassan, the basis of Muslim society's rejection of gender equality is rooted in the belief that women are inferior in creation. She

was created from a crooked rib and made a mistake by helping the devil thwart God's plan for Adam (Hassan, 2013). Allah has made one higher than the other, so from this context, men are the rulers of all women's affairs. Because men have spent their wealth on women, pious women are characterized by being obedient and careful in protecting their husbands' rights when their husbands are away. Men can warn and act decisively if there is a deviation in the ways described in the Al-Quran.

Feminist activists assume this verse is a specialization for men as husbands. Even though according to Riffat Hassan, the first main issue that must be noted is that the verse is addressed to *al-rijal* (men) and *al-nisa* (women), but the verse is addressed to all men and women in Islamic society (Sa'dan, 2017). The keyword in the first sentence of this verse is "qawwamun," which can be interpreted in various ways. Mahalli (2008) interprets the word "qawwamun" as mastering so that it can be construed as a protector, maintainer, and ruler of women.

This verse also explains the functional division of labor necessary to maintain a fair balance in society. Men are not given the advantage of fulfilling the obligation to conceive and give birth but are given the task of providing a living. Meanwhile, women are given the gift to fulfill the commitment to create and give birth but are freed from providing a living. The two functions are different but complement each other reasonably without superiority (Jaya, 2020). Surah al-Baqarah verse 187 explains about men and women in a marriage, which means, "They (women) are clothes for you and you (men) are clothes for them (women)." This has stated closeness, togetherness, and equality between men and women.

### ***The Concept of Polygamy***

One of the issues often raised in the discussion of feminism is the concept of polygamy. Because this concept is one of the reasons for stating that the Koran mistreats women because men get the

opportunity to be polygamous or have more than one wife, while women are not allowed to. According to Riffat Hassan, there is only one verse in the Qur'ân that discusses polygamy, i.e., Surah Al-Nisa verse 3: *“And if you fear that you will not be able to do justice to (the rights of) orphaned women (if you marry them), then marry (other) women you like: two, three, or four. Then if you are afraid that you will not be able to do justice (marry) only one person or the enslaved people you have, that is closer to not doing wrong.”*

This verse has been misinterpreted by most of the mufassirin so that in the end, the verse seems to legitimize a man to do polygamy just like that, without paying attention to the context when the verse was revealed and the spirit (spirit) of polygamy. According to Hassan, polygamy is permissible in Islam, but it is not a recommendation, let alone a mandatory thing. As was the case when the Prophet did polygamy by marrying many widows, but this was not for lust as the orientalist accused him, but. The Prophet did this, none other than to elevate and care for orphans and widows because, at that time, there were many wars, and many men died and left their children (Hassan, 1987; Ismail, 2017).

There is also an example in the issue of purdah (hijab). Riffat Hassan relates this to the system of segregation. She considers this a fairly complex problem. This is because Islamic society is generally divided into two areas, namely private and public. This means that as long as everyone is still in their respective territories, there will be no problems. Hassan calls it a segregation system, i.e., separation of the two sexes between men and women, and this kind of arrangement is considered the right and wise thing (Husniyah, 2018; Jaya, 2020).

In other contexts, the Qur'an also talks about the principle of modesty. Riffat thinks that when a woman leaves the house, she does not have to cover her face with a veil. Hijab does not have to be a garment that covers the entire body but covers parts of the body that

are appropriate to protect so as not to cause lust. Because if it is written that it is obligatory to cover the face, why in the Koran does a man have to lower his gaze when meeting the opposite sex? This is, of course, closely related to the different social conditions of each region. According to Riffat, the aim of the hijab is for women to maintain modesty, not to domesticate women in matters of gender (Hassan, 1990).

## CONCLUSION

Riffat Hassan as a Muslim theologian, seeks to liberate women from the bias of patriarchal culture, which causes women's inequality and injustice. She uses ideal-normative and socio-historical approaches in interpreting the verses of the Koran regarding gender equality. Apart from that, she also uses counter-exegeses. She believes that men and women are equal in their creation and are complementary in roles. Women are not only burdened with their domestic roles but are empowered and able to do many things.

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*Nurmala, Sumbulah & Nurbayan*

# Comparison of Time in the World and the Afterday in the Quantum Revolution to the Rules of Islamic Science

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## Abstract

*Time and space are quantities determined by mass and speed. Atom is the smallest material that can not be divided again. The quantum revolution begins with the existence of a wave that has dualistic properties, then discusses micro-objects and their constituents. This has something to do with the comparison of time and the afterlife which is explained through science and the source of truth, namely the Qur'an. The method used is the library research method which focuses on analysis by connecting with the Al-Qur'an. The results of the analysis found that the comparison of the time of the world and the hereafter is explained in the Al-Qur'an in Al-Hajj verse 47 and Al-Baqarah verse 80, it is explained that the world time is faster than the time of the Hereafter which is associated with quantum physics is the assumption that this world is like an atom and the next world is a large dimension, so the time in the two will be very clearly different. The afterlife will slow down because the calculation of world time will be much faster because the world is small like an atom. Atom itself is explained in the letter Al-Zalzalah verses 7-8, the letter Yunus verse 61, and the letter An-Nisa verse 40.*

**Keywords:** Atom; Islamic Science; Quantum Revolution; Time



## INTRODUCTION

The development of Islam in the midst of the rapid pace of development of education and information science has led to a situation where Islam is left far behind, which is realized by the emergence of Muslim belief circles regarding the development of philosophy and the discovery of scientific theories in science by Islamic scholars (Watini & Devana, 2021). Physics is a study within the scope of space and time that studies natural phenomena and matter along with its motion and behavior, concepts related to the universe, objects on the surface and in the earth (Hernawati, 2018). The concepts of physics are based on the experimental results of previous scientists, as technology develops, the proof of the concept of physics must be supported by sophisticated equipment to produce accurate data. Therefore, physics is included in the branches of natural science and science, where scientists will study the properties and behavior of matter from particle size or submicroscopic to the behavior of the universe as a cosmic unit (Feynman et al., 1977; Young et al., 2000).

The history of physics starts from the Greek era where it is divided into three stages based on events that occurred, namely the initial stage in 2400 BC, the second stage in 1600 BC, and the third stage in 1900 BC. In the first period there were scientists such as Ahmose (1650 BCE), Imhotep (2980 BCE), it was he who opened the gates of science which involved physics and mathematics. The development of physics coincided with the science of philosophy where the philosophy of the universe became the first pioneer in the emergence of thoughts about the field of physics. The famous thinker is Empedocles regarding the early version of the *Big Bang theory*. The characteristics of microscopic materials have been proposed by Democritus (420 BCE). In the second period, it is also known as the period of classical physics where the development of physics was carried out by Galileo and Newton (Newton's law I), Force Definition

(Newton's law II), and the law of Action and Reaction (Newton's law III). In the third period the concept of modern and quantum physics developed, starting from Planck's discovery of the quantized concept of light. At this time a lot of studies on electromagnetic waves. Scientists at this time focused on microscopic materials, many classical laws and theories were perfected at this time (Cajori, 1962; Halim & Herliana, 2020; Heilbron, 2018; von Laue, 2023).

Before getting to know the concepts of space and time, we must understand the concept of motion, which can be interpreted as an object whose position changes relative to a reference. Even in physics, time can experience expansion or dilation, what is meant here is stretching, meaning that an observer who sees an object moving at a speed almost the same as the speed of light will experience an expansion in time intervals. An easy analysis to illustrate is relativistic velocity summation. Time expansion can be called the twin paradox, described when there are twins who live on earth and one is an astronaut. When the astronauts return to earth, their ages will be different. Where people on earth experience time expansion and depending on who is moving whether people are on earth or astronauts (Saihu, 2019).

Everything that was created by scientists started from experiments to create concepts and theories where in fact they did not give birth to anything new, they just discovered what Allah SWT, the Creator, had created. The creation of the universe that was formed before the existence of humans, then when Allah created us from the ground it was only a matter of studying and then formulating it in the form of concepts and theories mathematically based on observational experiments. Allah has sent down the source of knowledge of life on earth, namely the Qur'an (Halim & Herliana, 2020; Islamy et al., 2020).

Al-Qu'ran is the life guide for Muslims in studying the universe, which is the main source of learning about physics. Many concepts

and theories of physics are explained in the Qur'an such as explaining the universe, phenomena that occur in nature in human life (Susanti et al., 2019). Al-Qur'an is the argument *naqli* as Muslims we must believe all the contents contained in it without the slightest doubt. Science or physics is the proposition of *aqli* which is based on the thoughts of the human mind or the findings of physical processes that must be tested for truth (Rakhmat & Rasyid, 2021), so that humans can understand physics according to the facts. The relationship between physics and the Qur'an is closely related, basically all knowledge in the world already exists in the Al-Qur'an either explicitly or implicitly (Rohmatulloh & Dwijayanto, 2021). Over time, physics is an interconnected concept in real life. The Qur'an is a reference for mankind to continue studying this universe or God's creation which is very clear according to the explanation of the verses in it (Una, 2022). The content of the Qur'an has a purpose.

Watini & Devana (2021) discusses the relationship of the new quantum theory with the principles of Islamic science and the verses of the Qur'an that it is relevant that the elementary particle of an atom is made of electrical charges. Where religion and science complement each other where human life must have guidelines. The Qur'an is the guide and direction of human life, while without science humans cannot develop to this point. According to research conducted by Ibn Khaldun who divided knowledge based on much human learning. There are four kinds of division, namely the science of religion (*shari'a*), the science of *'aqliyah* (physics and science of divinity), the science of studying Islamic law (knowledge of Arabic, arithmetic which helps with religious studies), and the science which helps study philosophy (logic) (Hernawati, 2018).

The quantum revolution that studies a micro object, where if the object has a structure or composition that is different from the others. The object can be given a potential difference or current that affects its

speed. These micro objects that compose every material that exists on earth. It is like the world hereafter is a material in which there is worldly life, so the world is just a micro object filled with its own structure or constituents, compared to the world hereafter. The time difference in the world and the hereafter must be different because the world is only a small part of the eternal world hereafter as written in the letter of the Qur'an (Parhan et al., 2021). Compared to heavenly religions where the afterlife is the same as in the present world, the difference in time is the same as the current state of the world.

The scholars stated that the importance of awareness in time, where Imam Syafi'i stated that he was once in an environment with Sufi people where he could take two sentences from them namely time is like a sword you can cut it if you don't, then time will cut you and if your lust is not preoccupied with goodness, then disobedience will preoccupy you. Indeed, human life is only a matter of time and opportunity is a choice. Where the end of time is a death emphasized by Imam Ahmad that in fact this life is only a matter of days, if one day has gone it will be close to death (Mujahidin et al., 2022).

## **METHOD**

In this research the method used is qualitative, meaning that this research focuses on library research. Library research is a study focused on the analysis of written materials based on context. Al-Qur'an is known as the holy book for Muslims where many verses contain knowledge that is useful both in this world and the hereafter. Most of the holy verses in the Al-Qur'an are allegorical in nature, therefore one intuitively needs insight to explore the meaning of these verses in the Al-Qur'an in order to be able to identify the meaning of these verses and can be applied in human life for the advancement of human science (Watini & Devana, 2021).

Electrons, protons, and neutrons are believed to refer to atoms. The verse about light is specifically mentioned in the Qur'an because electrons also play an important role in photons (light). In the Qur'an there are three verses which are believed to mention atoms, and are believed to describe certain basic forms in them. These verses can be translated and scientifically identified to extract the information contained in these verses in order to contribute to science for humans in the quantum world. In the letter Saba verse 22, the word "force" is written which can be associated with energy, which is known in energy physics which means energy, where energy is the rate of energy expenditure. Allah is the only God whose power is represented in the form of atoms throughout the universe. The energy and power deep inside the atom is very large, where it is known that with a little manipulation in the atom can produce very large nuclear energy which is known to be able to destroy a country. In the letter An-Nisa verse 40 ([Sasmita & Mariana, 2018](#)), Allah confirms to us about good deeds that will be rewarded twice, double can also be interpreted twice. This can be information about atoms where the word "double" can also be interpreted as "pairs". The important key in interpreting this verse is duality.

Wave duality is a phenomenon studied in physics, the authors believe that the verse mentions a double word to "give" information about where the 2 types of energy are associated with the event. According to the pair concept, the two energies behave as opposite pairs. The two inner energies take the form of subatomic particles intrinsically built into them, the tiny thing that's built up can be the reason for wave-particle duality. Scientists believe that in an electron it induces electric charges as well as a magnetic field caused by the spin of the particle. The next concept of physics is regarding the relativity of time, namely twin time, alluded to in Surah Al-Hajj verse

47 in the Al-Quran explaining the concept of the time of the world and the hereafter.

As for the technical research used in data collection with the documentation method, namely studying all the necessary data with related documents. There are two analytical techniques used, namely inductive thinking techniques and interpretation. The inductive thinking technique is a process of organizing several observed facts that are put together in a series that are interrelated, while the interpretation technique is an analysis by interpreting the verses of the Al-Quran, explaining all forms of aspects related to the Al-Quran and explaining the explicit meaning as well as implied that was initiated by travelers, but this interpretation will create deficiencies because it will initiate subjective interpretations and Islamic thoughts *emerge* (Khoiri, 2018).

## RESULTS

Islamic science which is based on the principles of the Qur'an contains various information about the universe and everything in it. In this era, the growth of technology and Islamic knowledge is very rapid for human life, almost every aspect of the stages of human life will be touched by science and technology. Where both are very concerned with the intrinsic drive in man (Ankiewicz et al., 2006; Habibah, 2017; Kaharudin et al., 2022). In fact, the Qur'an explains a lot about events in this universe, the process by which events occur in nature, and explains the creation of living things. Therefore, humans who are given an excess of reason will be driven by curiosity to learn about it. In the Qur'an only mentions the important things of a science in question. This is in contrast to physics where philosophers avoid the existence of God in the process of creating something in this universe, whereas in Islam the Creator is the holder of the key to this universe, in the Al-Qur'an surah Al-A'raf verse 54 which means:

*"Surely your Lord is Allah who created the earth in six days, then He resided on the Throne. He closes the night for the day that follows quickly, and (He also created) the sun, moon, and stars (each) obey His command. Remember, creating and ruling is only the right of Allah. Glory be to Allah, Lord of the worlds."* In this verse Allah only needed six days of creation which is only Allah's power which does not require time as in the Yasin verse verse 82 which means: *"Indeed His condition when He wants something is only to say to him: 'Be it!' So it happened."* In this verse Allah wants to emphasize that His power is in creating nature without any process of its creation. And the six days the creation of the universe is the time of the hereafter which will be very different from the calculation of world time. When Allah wills something then it will happen (Hadi, 2017).

## **Time**

According to Reichenbach (1948, 1991), space and time have characteristics consisting of one real time and three real spaces (Lirisa, 2021). Time and space are quantities determined by mass and speed (Chen & Chen, 2016; Ramadhani et al., 2016; Slowik, 1997). Within a certain time interval it will produce a change in position taking into account this position, namely speed. The concept of space and time is absolute according to Galileo. Einstein's theory of relativity of time is about speed and time dilation. As a letter in the Qur'an, namely the letter Al-Mu'minin verses 112-114 which means *"(112) Allah asks: 'How many years have you lived on Earth?'. (113) They replied: 'We stay (on earth) a day or half a day, so ask those who count.'. (114) Allah said: 'You do not stay (on earth) but for a little while, if you really know.'"*

Based on the verse above, the meaning of time is very relevant to the idea put forward, where the meaning of the time of the world and the hereafter has been explained in the verse in a fragment meaning that a day on earth is only a moment in the hereafter. Because this world is only a temporary place and we will be eternal in the hereafter. This is also one proof that time is absolute and undergoes a process of

dilation. Time in physics is expressed as an absolute quantity, is an interval of time in a coordinate system or a state. Time is explained in the Qur'an in Surah Al-Mu'minun verses 112-114 while in the concept of physics is the special theory of relativity which is explained in experimental facts when two objects move relatively uniformly. God will not be bound by the dimensions of space and time (Khoiri, 2018).

### **History of the Atom**

One of the studies in the theory of quantum revolution is a micro object such as atoms, particles, or molecules. The atom itself was first put forward by Democritus where a material can be broken down into particles, and when a particle cannot be divided again then it is called an atom. The definition of an atom according to language is that it does not cut, meaning it cannot be divided. The universe is made up of a lot of matter, while matter is made up of very small particles. In the Al-Qur'an letter Al-zalzalah verses 7-8 which means " (7) *Whoever does good weighing an dzarrah though, He will surely see (reply) it. (8) And whoever does evil as big as dzarrah, He will surely see (reply) it too.* In that verse there is the word *dzarrah* which is defined as finer than dust or according to physicists that *dzarrah* is an atom. In this verse it is also explained that an atom has a unit of weight or mass which is called "weight". In the Qur'an it is also explained in the letter An-nisa verse 40 which means " *Indeed, Allah does not wrong anyone even as big as an atom, and if there is a virtue as big as an atom, surely Allah will multiply it and give from His side a great reward.*" In this verse, *Dzarrah* is mentioned, which is interpreted as an atom where Allah will reward whatever His servant does, be it evil or good, even if what His servant does is only as big as *dzarrah*, Allah will multiply all the rewards of good done even if it is as big as *dzarrah* (Sabarni, 2019).

The history of the atom from classical to modern physics was promoted by John Dalton who explained the hypothesis about atoms based on Lavoisier's law (conservation of mass) and Proust's law

(constant ratio). Some of the points proposed by Dalton are as follows: 1). The smallest part of a material is an atom that can not be cut or divided again; 2). Atoms are described as solid balls that are very small in size, like a shot put. and has identical or different elements; 3). When atoms combine to produce a compound with simple ratios and integers; and 4). The separation or recombination of an atom is called a chemical reaction, so atoms cannot be destroyed or created.

The drawback of Dalton's atomic model is that it does not describe a solution that can conduct electricity. Where moving electrons are atoms that can conduct electricity. Therefore, there are particles other than electrons that cause electrical conduction ([Green, 2016](#); [Herzberg, 2010](#); [Scerri, 2006](#)). The next drawback is the existence of sub-atomic particles that make up atoms such as protons, neutrons and electrons, and some elements are composed of non-atomic molecules ([Kaal et al., 2022](#); [Whyntie, 2014](#)). Thomson's atomic model designed by JJ Thomson, which perfected John Dalton's hypothesis, was carried out by cathode ray tube experiments. The result of this experiment is to state that there are negatively charged particles called electrons. Known as Thomson's model is the raisin bread modeling, because the surface of the solid ball is sprinkled with electrons and there are other positively charged particles so that the solid ball is neutral. The weakness of this model is that it does not explain the arrangement of positive and negative charges in the solid ball or atom ([Baily, 2013](#); [Hentschel, 2009](#); [Pohl, 2020](#)).

The Rutherford atomic model was carried out by Rutherford, the experiments carried out were shooting thin plates with alpha particles, this was done to perfect the theory carried out by Thomson. The experimental results show that particles can be forwarded, reflected or deflected. Thus, the atom is composed of an arrangement of particles that are positively or negatively charged. Where there is an atomic nucleus surrounded by electrons. The atomic nucleus is

positively charged and the atomic mass is concentrated in the atomic nucleus. The weakness in this model does not explain electrons that do not enter the atomic nucleus, where the movement of electrons around the atomic nucleus, over time the energy of the electrons will run out and will join the atomic nucleus. Rutherford's model is known as the electron trajectory and will be discussed hereinafter referred to as shells (Heilbron, 1981; Villeneuve, 2005; Wereide, 1923; Yock, 2021).

Quantum studies describes the atom, which is a material with a micro level. Atom is a very small solid ball that has identical elements and cannot be divided further. According to Bohr states when the atom emits a quantum of energy and has a certain value. On the basis of the atom has due to a given potential difference in order to vibrate (French & Taylor, 2018; Pratt, 2021). Niels Bohr's atomic model, this modeling was carried out by Niels Hendrik David Bohr who will perfect the previous atomic theory by conducting experiments to analyze the color spectrum of the line-shaped hydrogen atoms. Bohr's hypothesis explained several points including: Atoms in their trajectories consist of positive charges surrounded by negatively charged electrons and electrons can move from one trajectory to another by absorbing the energy emitted so that the energy of the atom will not decrease when moving to the trajectory. If it is high, the electron will absorb energy and vice versa when it moves to a low trajectory, the electron will emit energy. This model discusses that atoms have several paths or shells occupied for the movement of atoms. The drawback of this model is that it does not explain that the color spectrum of an atom has many electrons (Berry, 1989; Heilbron & Kuhn, 1969; Hughes, 1990; Schirmacher, 2009).

In the Qur'an it is also explained about the history of the atom, in the letter Yunus verse 61 which means: "*Your Lord's knowledge does not escape, even if it is as big as an atom in the earth or in the sky. There is nothing smaller than not (also) greater than that, but (everything is recorded)*"

*in a real book (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfuzh).*" In the expression the meaning of "nothing is smaller" where it is possible that there are particles that make up the atom, as well as the atoms that make up all the matter in the universe are the same. And everything that happened in this universe was recorded before the creation of humans.

In the letter Saba verse 22 which means: "*Say (Muhammad), 'Call those whom you consider (as gods) other than Allah! They do not have (power) even an atom's weight in the heavens and the earth, and they have absolutely no participation in the (creation) of the heavens and the earth and none of them is a helper for Him.'*" In the verse that atoms have energy hidden in it, proven by physics that nuclear energy that can destroy a city in the bombing of the city of Nagasaki in Japan, is created from the atomic nucleus. Energy produced from electrons.

The creation of Allah with the approach of atomic models from scientists who are explained without them knowing it, this universe has many secrets and wonders when humans find out more deeply. And as the source of truth about what is in this universe is the Qur'an. In the letter Al-Mu'min verse 57 which means: "*Verily the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of man, but most people do not know.*" The creation of this universe has many miracles from Allah compared to the creation of humans, but Allah still glorifies humans by giving reason so that they continue to study His power so as to grow a sense of faith and piety towards Him.

## **Quantum Mechanics**

The development of quantum physics was a shock to science where the concepts of classical physics slowly began to disappear which were replaced by views of modern physics, starting with Max Planck regarding the existence of quantum in a micro matter, at this time all concepts of physics changed. Einstein's theory of relativity which states that a wave behaves like a particle, and vice versa. One of the discussions that show the quantum is light, a form of matter. In

1919 Louis de Broglie stated that particles have wave properties. Even light can be bent by gravity, and can be interfered with. Just as a photon of light can reflect when it collides with an electron where light behaves as a particle (Sujito et al., 2019).

## **Light**

Light comes from objects that emit light in the air, light sources include the sun, firelight. Light can be divided into two, visible and invisible light. Where visible light can be seen by our two eyes such as sunlight, while invisible light that cannot be seen by our eye senses such as UV rays and X rays. Light has properties including light can propagate straight, light can penetrate yellow objects, light can be reflected, and light can be refracted (Atiyah & Nugroho, 2020).

Moving light does not need space for its propagation because light can penetrate a vacuum. This light is God's power given to humanity so that it can make life easier in this universe, in Surah An-Nur verse 35 which means: " *God gives light (to) the heavens and the earth. The parable of Allah's light, is like a hole that is not penetrated, in which there is a large lamp. The lamp is in the glass (and) the glass is as if stars (shining) are like pearls, which are kindled with oil from a tree of many blessings (namely) an olive tree that grows neither in the east (of something) nor in the west. (its) whose oil (alone) almost illuminates, even though it is not touched. Light upon light (layered), Allah guides to His light whom He wills, and Allah makes parables for mankind, and Allah knows all things.*"

According to Abu Ali Hasan Ibn Al-Haitham in 965 to 1040, he assumed that light is a collection of small particles that move and have a certain speed. Reinforced by physics in particle theory by Newton in 1642 to 1727 who hypothesized that light is composed of small and light particles emitted by sources in all directions that have high speeds, where the speed of light is  $3 \times 10^8 m/s$ . According to Al-Maragi's interpretation, light is what illuminates this world by sprinkling the Kauniyah verses that were revealed through His

Messenger. Humans are just creatures that must be guided and given instructions for this life with Allah's permission.

### **Quantum Revolution Theory**

Explanation of quantum history in the early 20th century scientists named Albert Einstein and Max Planck put forward the quantum theory that explains the particle properties of waves. Then in 1923 the scientist AH Compton discovered that light has a dual nature, which means that light is both a particle and a wave. After this discovery the scientist De Broglie assumed that light is both wave and particle in nature, while particles can be wave in nature. This hypothesis was proven by scientists Clinton Davisson and Lester Germer, who stated that particles such as electrons, neutrons, and protons have dualistic properties, namely particles and waves (Bhatta, 2021; Menzel et al., 2012; Mittelstaedt et al., 1987). In the concept of a particle is a small material such as electrons or molecules. The nature of particles is dualism where it is found that light and matter exhibit waves as well as particles, this concept explains how quantum objects behave.

In addition, there is discussion about the theory of relativity which is a refinement of the theory of gravity initiated by Albert Einstein, which is divided into general and special relativity. Where special relativity in 1905 discussed the constant speed of light as evidenced by the speed of light not changing when the earth revolves around the sun which depends on the direction of the object being observed by the observer. However, Einstein did not fully understand the relationship between space and time in this special relativity, so Einstein developed complex mathematical equations to answer these problems which took ten years to produce results. Einstein found that space and time will bend in a giant object, the curve is affected by the force of gravity. One of the general relativity equations is the deflection of light on a giant object from the orbit of the planet

Mercury ([Hartini, 2019](#)). In the Qur'an it is explained about the theory of gravity which has to do with this relativity, surah Al-Hajj verse 65 which means: " *Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you what is on the earth and the ships that sail in the sea with His commands and He holds back the (objects) of the heavens from falling to the earth, but with His permission? Truly Allah is Most Gracious, Most Merciful to Humans.*" Allah has made a separate system for this universe to work according to His will.

As explained above, the theory of quantum revolution also in the 20th century stated that a particle has dualistic properties. This went on for decades by carrying out various experiments in order to achieve one goal, namely to observe and study this part of the universe. As discussed by Al-Ghazali who presented criticism of philosophers in the book *Tahaafut al-Falasifah*, there are three views regarding the eternity of nature, ignorance of God, and physical resurrection, where Al-Ghazali wanted to study philosophy together with religious knowledge ([Purwanto, 2020](#)). Not only philosophy, but all existing knowledge must be based on religious knowledge so that God's ignorance does not occur. It is better that the more we study this universe, we must glorify Allah, the Creator. Allah has created the universe that we live in in such a way from small things to big things, Allah has designed us to continue to explore religious knowledge by linking the universe.

As we know, religions in this world teach that there is a second life after death. However, there is an error in perception in this second life, divine religion teaches that when we commit sins in the world for only 40 days, we must atone for these sins for 40 days. They will assume that if they are tortured, then the torture will only last for a few days in accordance with the letter Al-Baqarah verse 80 which means: " *And they say: 'We will never be touched by the fire of hell, except for a few days.'* Say: 'Have you received a promise from Allah so that Allah

*will not break His promise or are you only telling Allah what you do not know?* They do not know the teachings of the Islamic religion, when the universe is destroyed, not only the spatial dimension will be destroyed, but also the space-time will be destroyed. Comparison of the time of the world and the hereafter taught by heavenly religions is irrelevant to science, where when equating these two times they are the same.

In the letter Thaha verse 103 which means "*They whispered to each other. "You stay (in the world) not more than ten (days)."*" In this verse it is explained that there will come a resurrection day when the disbelievers will ask each other or whisper. In *Tafsir al-Misbah* it is explained that when the disbelievers were afraid and whispered among them then stated that staying in the world was not only ten days which were short days. They spoke in faint voices or in whispers because of the atmosphere in Padang Mahsyar. In the interpretation by Sayyid Qutub, explaining that the infidel will feel that life in the world is only a few days, it feels short and the days feel short.

It is explained in Tuhfatul Ahwadzi that one day in the hereafter is equal to a thousand days of the world, as Allah says in Surah Al-Hajj verse 47 which means "*And they ask you to hasten the doom, even though Allah will never violate His promise. Truly a day by your Lord is like a thousand years according to your reckoning.*" It is stated in the meaning of the letter that in fact a day with your Lord is like a thousand years according to your calculations. Therefore, half a day in the hereafter equals fifty thousand years in this world. Where is the fact that in this world no human has lived for fifty thousand years, which in the afterlife we have only gone through half a day, one can imagine how long the time in the afterlife will be. As for the word of Allah in the letter Al-Ma'arij verse 4 which means "*The powerful angels and Gabriel ascend (facing) to God in a day whose level is fifty thousand years.*" Explained in the meaning of the letter that this shows from the

previous verse that the disbelievers will feel the time in the long afterlife. As we know, religions in this world teach that there is a second life after death. However, there is an error in perception in this second life, divine religion teaches that when we commit sins in the world for only 40 days, we must atone for these sins for 40 days. They will think that if they are tortured, the torture will only last for a few days in accordance with Surah Al-Baqarah verse 80. They do not know the teachings of the Islamic religion, when the universe is destroyed, not only the spatial dimension will be destroyed, but space-time will also be destroyed.

## **DISCUSSION**

Every time will be different depending on the perspective of the recipient because of the relative concept he has because mass and speed determine time (Khoiri, 2018). Newton has a view of nature that has provided a frame of mind which actually basically comes from Galileo saying that "space and time are absolute", namely a universal Cartesian coordinate system in which there are absolute hours (Khoiri, 2018). In line with what was previously mentioned, Tiyas (2017) also mentions the occurrence of the phenomenon of relativity of time between what happens in the world and the hereafter as well as the phenomenon of relativity experienced by angels.

Tiyas (2017) explains several concepts of time in the Qur'an according to Quraish Shihab, he explained the word death which indicates the end of something, the word death is repeated 46 times in the Qur'an which has a tendency to set limits. time, also Dahr which means stretch of time, Waqt means Opportunity and one more, 'ashr which means sunset time. Human time in the world is only short, that is, it is only limited to fulfilling his promise to Allah SWT when he is in the spirit realm. While the afterlife is a place where humans are

accountable for their actions while in the world and also receive a reward of happiness from Allah SWT (Fachreza, 2020).

In the quantum approach of science, religion and philosophy, these three things are also called "brothers and sisters" (*bosom sisters*) (Laracy, 2021; Hidayah et al., 2022). But there are still frequent feuds and debates between the three, so collaboration between scientific fields is needed (Hidayatullah, 2019; Santalia, 2015). Of course, this collaboration does not mean mixing religion, the side of holiness and divinity in the concept of religion must be maintained in collaboration with science and must even strengthen one another (Guessoum, 2012; Arifudin, 2016; Çoruh, 2020).

We must always admire God for all his extraordinary works such as the heavens and the earth and everything in them that we live in today, even Banesh Hoffman also in his work on the quantum revolution, which contains how amazed he is to God because he has created himself to be able to think and examine a creation. God as a beautiful and useful blessing to break through the mysteries of other god's creations (Sujito et al., 2019), it is very inappropriate as human beings we are *kufur* for the blessings that God has given us because the nature of *kufur* is a form of our defiance towards Allah the Almighty (Hafid & Mukhlis, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation that has been explained, it can be concluded that everything in this universe does not have any defects, so that an explanation about the afterlife which is life after the world has been written in the Qur'an. Which assumes that this world is like an atom that has its own time, where the afterlife is a large dimension that contains these atoms. Calculations of the time of the afterlife and the world will definitely be different, where the atomic structure discussed in physics is composed of atomic nuclei and electrons,

having special and identical elements. As human beings who believe in Allah and the last day, we must prepare provisions for the afterlife after knowing that this world is only temporary and will last forever in the afterlife.

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As part of the submission process, authors are required to check off their submission's compliance with all of the following items, and submissions may be returned to authors that do not adhere to these guidelines.

- ✓ The submission has not been previously published, nor is it before another journal for consideration (or an explanation has been provided in Comments to the Editor).
- ✓ The submission file is in Microsoft Word, RTF, or WordPerfect document file format.
- ✓ Where available, URLs for the references have been provided.
- ✓ The text is single-spaced; uses a 12-point font; employs italics, rather than underlining (except with URL addresses); and all illustrations, figures, and tables are placed within the text at the appropriate points, rather than at the end.
- ✓ The text adheres to the stylistic and bibliographic requirements outlined in the Manuscript Preparations.

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Manuscripts sent to *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* will be considered for publication under several criteria.

1. The manuscripts discuss original and contributive ideas on contemporary Islamic issues.
2. The manuscript is an original work, has never been submitted to or under assessment of other publishers. Editorial board will conduct similarity check using TurnItIn. Editorial board will check the submitted manuscript using TurnItIn. The manuscript will be returned to its author when the similarity check is above 20%.
3. The manuscript is in English (American or British) with a good scientific writing command.
4. Each manuscript covers (in sectional order) title, author, affiliation, email address, abstract, key words, content, and references.

5. Abstract is written in both Bahasa Indonesia and English and about 200 words. Abstract from a research result covers aim of the research, methodology, and result of study. Abstract from an article covers background of the problem, discussion, and conclusion.
6. Key words are maximally five words which reflect overall content of the manuscript.
7. The manuscript is in about 5,000 - 8,000 or 15 - 20 pages of A4-sized paper with 1.15 space.
8. The manuscript uses APA Style 7th Edition and utilizes Zotero as references manager for managing citation.
9. References are automatically compiled with online application.
10. Editorial board will edit or revise the manuscript without changing its content.
11. Submitted manuscripts will receive notification as:
  - a. Accepted without revision;
  - b. Accepted with revision; or
  - c. Rejected
12. Author will receive notification when his/her manuscript is rejected by the editorial board.

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This ethical statement for Millah: Journal of Religious Studies binds the behavior of the authors, the editors, the reviewers, and the publisher. This statement is based on Elsevier recommendations and COPE's Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors.

## Ethical Guidelines for Journal Publication

The publication of an article in Millah: Journal of Religious Studies is a significant contribution to religion studies especially for Islamic issues and to the process of improving knowledge. The articles support and embody the scientific method. It is therefore important to agree upon standards of expected ethical behavior for the author, the editor, the peer reviewer, and the publisher.

Universitas Islam Indonesia as the publisher takes its duties of guardianship over all stages of publishing extremely seriously and recognizes the ethical and other responsibilities.

Millah: Journal of Religious Studies is committed to ensuring that advertising, reprint, or other commercial revenue has no impact or influence on editorial decisions.

## Duties of Authors

### *Reporting Standards*

The authors should present a reliable and accurate working paper as well as a discussion of its significance. The data should be reported accurately in the article. A paper has to be equipped with sufficient detail and relevant references. Fraudulent or inaccuracy statements that lead to unethical behavior are unacceptable.

### *Data Access and Retention*

Millah: Journal of Religious Studies may ask the Authors to provide the raw data in connection with a paper for editorial review, public access, or retention purposes.

### ***Originality and Plagiarism***

The authors have to ensure to cite and quote appropriately when using the working paper of others. Any form of plagiarism from passing off another's paper as the author's own paper, to copying or paraphrasing substantial parts of another's paper (without attribution), to claiming results from research conducted by others are unethical publishing behavior and unacceptable.

### ***Multiple, Redundant, or Concurrent Publication***

Basically, an author is strictly not allowed to publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication concurrently. It constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable.

### ***Acknowledgment of Sources***

The author should acknowledge the work of others properly. Authors should cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work. Information obtained privately, as in conversation, correspondence, or discussion with third parties, must not be used or reported without explicit, written permission from the source. Information obtained in the course of confidential services, such as refereeing manuscripts or grant applications, must not be used without the explicit written permission of the author of the work involved in these services.

### ***Authorship of the Paper***

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution only to the paper. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. The others should be acknowledged properly. The corresponding author should ensure that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication.

### ***Human or Animal Subjects***

If the work involves the use of animal or human subjects, the author should ensure that the manuscript contains a statement that all procedures were performed in compliance with relevant laws and institutional guidelines and that the appropriate institutional committee(s) has approved them. Authors

should include a statement in the manuscript that informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human subjects. The privacy rights of human subjects must always be observed.

### ***Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest***

All authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflicts of interest that might be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their manuscript. All sources of financial support for the project should be disclosed. Examples of potential conflicts of interest which should be disclosed include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. Potential conflicts of interest should be disclosed at the earliest stage possible.

### ***Fundamental Errors in Published Works***

When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal editor or publisher and cooperate with the editor to retract or correct the paper. If the editor or the publisher learns from a third party that a published work contains a significant error, it is the obligation of the author to promptly retract or correct the paper or provide evidence to the editor of the correctness of the original paper.

## **Duties of Editors**

### ***Publication Decisions***

The editor of a peer-reviewed journal is responsible for deciding which of the articles submitted to the journal should be published, often working in conjunction with the relevant society (for society-owned or sponsored journals). The validation of the work in question and its importance to researchers and readers must always drive such decisions. The editor may be guided by the policies of the journal's editorial board and constrained by such legal requirements as shall then be in force regarding libel, copyright infringement, and plagiarism. The editor may confer with other editors or reviewers (or society officers) in making this decision.

### ***Fair Play***

An editor should evaluate manuscripts for their intellectual content without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the authors.

### ***Confidentiality***

The editor and any editorial staff must not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the publisher, as appropriate.

### ***Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest***

Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in an editor's own research without the express written consent of the author. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. Editors should recuse themselves (i.e. should ask a co-editor, associate editor or other members of the editorial board instead to review and consider) from considering manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or (possibly) institutions connected to the papers. Editors should require all contributors to disclose relevant competing interests and publish corrections if competing interests are revealed after publication. If needed, other appropriate action should be taken, such as the publication of a retraction or expression of concern. It should be ensured that the peer-review process for sponsored supplements is the same as that used for the main journal. Items in sponsored supplements should be accepted solely on the basis of academic merit and interest to readers and not be influenced by commercial considerations. Non-peer-reviewed sections of their journal should be clearly identified.

### ***Involvement and Cooperation in Investigations***

An editor should take reasonably responsive measures when ethical complaints have been presented concerning a submitted manuscript or published paper, in conjunction with the publisher (or society). Such measures will generally include contacting the author of the manuscript or

paper and giving due consideration of the respective complaint or claims made, but may also include further communications to the relevant institutions and research bodies, and if the complaint is upheld, the publication of a correction, retraction, expression of concern, or other note, as may be relevant. Every reported act of unethical publishing behavior must be looked into, even if it is discovered years after publication.

## **Duties of Reviewers**

### ***Contribution to Editorial Decisions***

Editors are assisted by peer reviewers to decide the editorial aspects as well as for improving the quality of the papers.

### ***Promptness***

Whenever the appointed reviewer is not able to review because of an unqualified reason or is unable to respond promptly so he or she should notify the editor and excuse himself from the review process.

### ***Confidentiality***

Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. They must not be shown to or discussed with others except as authorized by the editor.

### ***Standards of Objectivity***

Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Referees should express their views clearly with supporting arguments.

### ***Acknowledgment of Sources***

Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument had been previously reported should be accompanied by the relevant citation. A reviewer should also call to the editor's attention any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published paper of which they have personal knowledge.

### *Disclosure and Conflict of Interest*

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