



## **Reconfiguring Mosque-Based Civic Networks: Religious Messaging, Emotional Appeal, and Social Intimacy in Hijrah Movement of 'Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya' WhatsApp Group**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examines how the WhatsApp group Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya operates as a civic micro-network that reshapes mosque-based Islamic participation among urban youth engaged in the hijrah movement in Greater Bandung. Using virtual ethnography and one-year observation (July 2023–June 2024), the research explores how religious messaging, emotional resonance, and social intimacy are constructed and maintained in everyday group interaction. The findings show that daily spiritual prompts, repentance narratives, and offline gatherings foster a collective moral journey rooted in transformation and belonging. Rather than solely distributing da'wa content, the group nurtures trust, accountability, and coordinated mosque-based activities that deepen civic religiosity. While the group demonstrates stability and active participation, it is not without limitations. Informants noted some content fatigue and silent readership patterns, as well as subtle frictions when mosque administrators differed in da'wa orientation or program intensity. These limitations suggest that digital hijrah activism relies on negotiated interaction, ongoing trust-building, and careful coordination with offline mosque authorities. This paper contributes to the study of digital Islamic movements by highlighting the evolving role of WhatsApp as a medium for sustaining spiritual commitment, facilitating civic bonds, and navigating the informal structures of religious authority in contemporary Indonesian cities.*

**Keywords:** Computer Mediated Communication; hijrah movement; Islamic activism; whatsapp groups.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the contemporary religious phenomena in Indonesia, particularly in the Bandung Raya region (Bandung City, Cimahi City, Bandung Regency, and West Bandung Regency), is the youth preaching community movement known as the Hijrah Movement. The term 'hijrah,' derived from the Arabic word *hajara* (هَجَرَ), translates to "leave" or "sever" (Abdurrahman, 2020b). In the Indonesian language context, it signifies not only physical relocation but also a transformative shift in attitude and behavior towards a more positive direction (Kementerian Pendidikan Kebudayaan Riset Teknologi Republik Indonesia, 2016).

This dual meaning reflects the core concept of 'dakwah,' which denotes a call or invitation and appears 321 times in the Quran (Fakhruroji, 2017). As noted by Asep Saeful Muhtadi (Muhtadi, 2012), hijrah and dakwah together form a movement that aims to disseminate teachings and promote cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral changes.

The contemporary hijrah movement encompasses the renunciation of prohibited acts and an inner spiritual migration (Sya'adtil, 2020). Prophet Muhammad SAW stated, "*There is no hijrah after the Conquest of Mecca but jihad and intention*" {Bukhari, Hadith No. 2575; (Syarif, 2019)}.

This recent movement capitalizes on the spiritual dryness of urban youth, offering engaging religious programs and utilizing information communication technology (ICT) to deliver religious messages effectively {(Setia & Dilawati, 2021); (Hamdani & Aziz, 2024)}. The recent hijrah movement includes: Capitalizing on the spiritual dryness of urban youth through engaging and useful religious programs for the broader community (Setia & Dilawati, 2021); Utilizing media based on information communication technology (ICT) to deliver religious messages while influencing the format of these messages (Hamdani & Aziz, 2024); Preaching using modern approaches that leverage social media as a medium for da'wah (Addini, 2019); Rustandi, 2019)

Communities within the hijrah movement seek acceptance among Muslims in Indonesia's major cities by implementing cultural strategies in both physical and digital realms. One notable approach is preaching via Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), which facilitates engagement through various digital platforms (Nasrullah, 2014). This methodology has become increasingly prevalent, particularly through instant messaging applications like WhatsApp, which can accommodate up to 1,024

members, fostering a sense of community attachment {(Meisyaroh, 2014); (Cronjé & van Zyl, 2022)}.

One of their approaches is preaching based on Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC). CMC involves human communication through computers, engaging an audience within a specific context, and utilizing media for specific purposes (Nasrullah, 2014). It encompasses communication connected by computers, allowing information exchange via the internet and integrating computer technology into daily life (Fakhruroji, 2017). Meyrowitz (Meyrowitz, 1997) describes it as communication where media serve as conduits, the language for conveying messages, and the environment during message delivery.

Instant messaging is one of the most popular forms of CMC, gaining prominence in 1995 through the paid chat service mIRC/Moo Internet Relay Chat, followed by free instant messaging services like ICQ in 1996 and AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) in 1997. Over time, instant messaging has become accessible not only on computers but also on smartphones, with various providers like Blackberry Messenger (BBM), Ebuddy, Kakao Talk, Line, WeChat, Telegram, and the most popular in Indonesia, WhatsApp/WA (Meisyaroh, 2014). Through WhatsApp, especially WhatsApp Groups (WAG), which can accommodate up to 1,024 members, virtual communities can be created and fostered, effectively enhancing a sense of community attachment (Cronjé & van Zyl, 2022).

The Islamic activism of the hijrah movement based on CMC through WAG is projected as a productive effort to engineer individuals and society through the transformation of values according to Islamic teachings (Ritonga, 2019). The true meaning of Islamic religious life encompasses faith and social piety, as evidenced by the Quran, where the word faith is frequently coupled with righteous deeds, indicating that religious attitudes must foster social dimensions (Kahmad, 2011).

This concept, “From Individual Piety to Social Piety,” suggests that faith is not merely a heartfelt confession but also a commitment to praiseworthy attitudes and behavior (*akhlaqul karimah*); Islam strengthens the relationship with Allah (*hablum minallah*) and the relationship among humans (*hablum min al-nas*), extending beyond religious formalism to include the prophetic mission for communal welfare (Ismail, 2018). The process of preaching, which involves internalizing Islamic values into social attitudes and movements to support the interests of the Muslim community, is known as Islamic activism and/or Islamic Activism

(Fakhruroji, 2017; Rustandi, 2019). Islamic Activism/Da'wah encompasses three phases: resource mobilization, decision-making, and framing ideas to achieve Islamic goals (Wiktorowicz, 2004).

In Bandung Raya, according to the research team's observation, Islamic activism through CMC from 2020-2024 is intensively demonstrated by the WAG "Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya," established in 2017. The drivers of this WAG include mosque activists, mostly young people, from various mosques: DKM Masjid Ar-Rahman in Kota Baru Parahyangan (representing West Bandung Regency), Masjid Al-Mujaddid (Cimahi City), Rumah Amal Masjid Salman ITB (Central Bandung City), Dimas Tekad Sentosa (Bandung Regency), Masjid Manuggal (Northern Bandung City), and Masjid Lautze 2 (Central Bandung City). Examples of their Islamic activism activities through WAG include designing *pengajian* posters for majlis taklim, providing 1,000 meals during Ramadan, and raising donations for animal feed at the Bandung Zoo during the Coronavirus pandemic activity restrictions.

These activities highlight the broader impact of the hijrah movement in urban contexts. This study aims to address the following research questions: What is the general pattern of WAG Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya as support for Islamic activism/da'wah at Greater Bandung hijrah movement?

The concept of Islamic activism by the hijrah-themed mosque community in Bandung Raya is also interesting to study due to its circular/simultaneous effects at national, regional, and global levels. Nationally, similar movements to Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya in Indonesia include One Finger Movement (OFM) and The Strangers al-Ghuroba in Jakarta, the Muslim Punk Community (Surabaya), and the Musicians Reciting Community (KOMUJI) and Indonesia Without Liberal Islam Network (ITJ) in Bandung City (Saefullah, 2017). The research results show that there are similarities in the hijrah movement but with unique but complementary movement focuses and goals.

On a regional scale, the transformative da'wah community movement in Bandung Raya aligns with the findings of Norsaleha Mohd. Salleh et al. (Salleh et al., 2016), which results that the high level of religious activities among young people in higher education institutions in Malaysia is driven by factors such as the role of CMC and social media, a high level of knowledge of Islamic teachings, and the appeal of Islamic studies educators.

On a global scale, young Muslim activists in Australia are actively transforming society by spreading positive values and countering negative stereotypes of Islam through works in the fields of literature, music, and television. These efforts are made by the second generation of Muslims in Australia because they realize that negative stereotypes are often perpetuated by the media, and thus, they can be countered with works in similar media. Examples include literary works by authors such as Taghred Chandab, Randa Abdel-Fattah, Nadia Jamal, and Irfan Yusuf, music by the hip-hop group The Brothahood, and television through the variety show Salam Café, which is aired on one of the country's public television stations, SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) in Sydney (Ali, 2022).

However, criticism of the hijrah movement has emerged, and this includes those that defy research teams to confirm, neutralize, or refute the criticism. Unlike young students who learn from traditional scholars, the youth of the hijrah movement are identified as urban individuals with a superficial knowledge of Islam, as they learn not from conventional religious authorities but from the Internet, radio, television, books, magazines, and so on (Fansuri, 2023). In line with this, Abdul Mut'i, General Secretary of PP Muhammadiyah, stated that this phenomenon is prone to obtaining inaccurate information. This is because da'wah via CMC is one-way, without guidance, lacking clear references, and the learning duration is very instant, making this phenomenon a trend that will come and go (CNN, 2019).

Despite this dialectic, from a research gap perspective, the theme of discussing young Muslims globally is generally done in the field of general psychology research. For example, themes of cultural exchange, factors influencing the development of young Muslims, dynamic interactions and individual risks, and risk dissemination (Ahmed & Hashem, 2016). Meanwhile, research by Subkhi Ridho (Ridho, 2018) titled "Instant Messaging of New Middle-Class Muslimah: A Study of Islamic Identity in WhatsApp Groups" found that the majority of WhatsApp Groups lack Islamic activist sensitivity because they tend to avoid conversations involving the political fate of the Muslim community. Therefore, even this research shares many similarities with the aforementioned local, regional, and global data, particularly regarding use of CMC-based mediums. However, there are differences in the focus of the study subjects, which emphasize the activists among the youth in mosques and Islamic charitable organizations within a metropolitan city agglomeration.

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To address the research questions, the study employs a qualitative approach with virtual ethnography and the descriptive paradigm. This approach will focus on describe Islamic activism based on CMC through community and specific culture and technology usage (Robardet, 2011). The research team will interpret, including reinterpret, the internet as a method and medium used in communication with the principle of "ethnography in, of, and through the virtual" (Hine, 2012). Through virtual ethnography, the research team join WAG to become part of the community to examine how communication interaction patterns and patterns of Islamic activism are built by selecting and sorting writings in WAG that suit the research questions.

As most populous province in Indonesia, the research examines the entire conversation from 124 members in the WhatsApp Group (WAG) "Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya", then conducts intimate interviews with six specific informants as the leaders of the WAG. Specific informants also represent Greater Bandung Raya (including four regions and regencies), with each region/regency represented by at least one mosque activist in the WAG. If the overall informants in WAG are limited to observations within the virtual ethnography framework, then specific informants are investigated further through the in-depth interview data collection method.

Data collection occurred from mid-2023 to mid-2024, with locations based on WAG and specific informant mosques. Virtual ethnography and interview results were transcribed for in-depth analysis. At the same time, while observations were documented in writing, focusing on Islamic activism based on CMC within WAG of "Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya." Unrelated data were minimized to sharpen the research direction. After this initial screening, the research team triangulated sources by confirming key questions and responses across the three informant clusters to ensure the high validity of the data collected from interviews and observations. Following this stage, the writing team prepared the final research report. Through this research, we hope to contribute to the academic discourse on Islamic studies, communication, and social activism, particularly in the context of youth engagement in contemporary Indonesia.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

### General Patterns of Islamic Activism in the Hijrah Movement

The observation was conducted from June 2023 to May 2024. During this period, 3,411 chat messages were collected from the WhatsApp group *Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya*. These messages were filtered to include only those directly related to religious content, group coordination for *hijrah* activities, and public expressions of Islamic identity. A total of 624 posts were selected for qualitative content analysis. The coding process was guided by a thematic scheme comprising five main categories: (1) expressions of piety, (2) group mobilization, (3) religious advice and da'wa, (4) emotional expressions (e.g. gratitude, fear, hope), and (5) normative enforcement (e.g. reminders, corrections). The themes were derived inductively through open coding followed by axial coding to identify recurring discursive patterns.

The research team identified a general pattern in the Islamic activism of the hijrah movement, which begins with forming interaction patterns and aspects of information transparency. The process starts with observing members of WhatsApp Groups (WAG) within da'wah communities/mosques themed around the hijrah movement that are considered successful/stable to understand the conditions, characteristics, and preferences of the existing congregation, particularly regarding their acceptance and habits of accessing ICT devices. The majority of observations were conducted at Al-Lathif Mosque in Cihapit, Bandung City, and Al-Murabbi Mosque in Surya Sumantri, Bandung City. These observations were necessary because many informants felt a stagnation in their respective DKM/movement communities, thus necessitating a look at successful examples of revitalizing mosque activities within the hijrah movement framework.

The observations concluded that targeting the youth as a da'wah audience was essential. The results were implemented through the development of professional WA content (texts, photos, and videos) within the respective WAGs of each DKM. Simultaneously, this content was shared in the WAG *Kopdar Masjid Bandung Raya*, which triggered interactions among its members. These two WAGs were structured to ensure a two-way content production and dissemination scheme to encourage intensive interaction among all elements in the WAG. Hence, there was no WAG where only the admin could send content while the

audience could only read without responding.



Source: Author's Observation, 2025

Figure 1: Display in Profile & Homepage of WAG Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya

Professional content creation was categorized into three types: *da'wah* narratives, *muammalah*, and Islamic activism. Similarly, photos and videos were grouped into these three major categories. *Da'wah* narratives were most frequently divided into three main groups: information on study schedules (referred to as 'pengajian' in the hijrah movement) organized by mosque members, and *tausiyah* (advice, reflection, invitations) to practice Islamic teachings based on the Qur'an and authentic hadiths.

*Muammalah* content (texts, photos, and videos) generally involved offers of goods or services, mostly related to *da'wah* activities, such as selling religious books, Qur'an manuscripts, Islamic clothing, and similar items. The last type of content, which received the most attention in the study, was Islamic activism. This included online calls for direct involvement in activities aimed at achieving real community goals, particularly donations and real actions for building worship facilities or other mosque programs. Most of this content was created directly by WAG Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya members, although a small portion was merely forwarded WA content to encourage Islamic activism.

The three types of content were typically in the form of e-posters with WhatsApp (WA) specifications, square in shape, JPG format, and

bright in color to facilitate sharing with other WAG contacts. Some uploaded only one e-poster as it covered all information, while others added additional narratives before or after sending the e-poster.

In a few cases, the researchers also observed uploads that did not relate to the three general content categories, such as sending pantuns (poems), land certificates, and unrelated hotel inquiries. As for dissemination techniques, some began with the dissemination of photo/video content first, followed by the text (caption) content, which provided additional information. For instance, if the e-poster photo/video only contained basic information, such as the day, time, preacher, lecture title, and social media accounts, the caption provided more details, including explanations of the lecture title/preacher, the current social background necessitating the lecture, contact numbers, and requests to spread the content. However, some members/admins reversed the order by sending text content as an introduction first, followed by the e-poster/video.

In summary, the interaction patterns and aspects of information transparency were formed through a process of observing, imitating, and modifying successful hijrah movements to produce content (texts, photos, and videos) in internal DKM WAGs and organizing WAGs to be two-way to foster intensive interaction. This underscores the premise that preachers must leverage technology spaces for community da'wah. Preachers must play a role in preaching supported by technological means, especially to Muslims who utilize information and communication media (Castrawijaya, 2023). Its also aligns with broader trends where digital Islamic spheres enable preachers and pious individuals to assert influence beyond traditional hierarchies (Slama, 2017). This pattern of diversified religious engagement through digital artefacts resonates with the broader transformation of Islamic knowledge production, where mobile apps and digital platforms create new avenues for religious interaction and engagement beyond traditional spaces (Fakhruroji, 2019).

On the other hand, using technology also creates social relations, as da'wah activities are related to social interaction, namely the relationship between da'wah actors and partners. Da'wah institutions, social groups, and social processes involve social interaction, requiring people to develop and shape behavior and social da'wah (Khotimah & Amaluddin, 2022). These affective infrastructures demonstrate how trust, repetition, and symbolic alignment shape digital interactions among hijrah activists, where the role

of WhatsApp groups not only reflects the logics of affective publics (Papacharissi, 2015) and the decentralised, hybridised forms of Islamic expression across Indonesian digital networks (Jurriëns & Tapsell, 2017), but also illustrates a mediatization of religion in texting culture, wherein smartphones and messaging platforms reconfigure religious authority and self-help spirituality into emotionally resonant, digitally mediated da'wah (Fakhruroji, 2015).

Technology in da'wah, as represented by CMC through WAG Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya, further proves the internet's penetration into the Muslim community (Kuswana & Pauzian, 2023). This reflects too how Islamic digital content today is shaped by branding strategies and selective image projection that prioritise relatable, soft Islamic messages over authoritative ones (Rakhmani, 2016). The internet has created a forum for discourse, allowing people to seek knowledge, face identity crises, have spiritual experiences, and spread religious values without solely relying on certain authorities. Due to this significant role, if not widely implemented and optimally used by preachers, the flow of da'wah will slow down and lag. The impact of information globalization, marked by advances in communication technology, correlates with the readiness of preachers in utilizing social media and delivering da'wah (Ritonga, 2019). As Lim (2005) argues, the emergence of digital Islamic discourse reshapes not only religious authority but also civic engagement among young Indonesian Muslims.

The hijrah movement community in WAG Islamic activism is an example of a da'wah community in Bandung Raya that is ready and has utilized ICT advantages. They mobilize Islamic activism resources (Wiktorowicz, 2004) by observing a hijrah movement and then developing it to encourage interaction patterns and information transparency tailored to the audience's character in a CMC medium (Abdurrahman, 2020a).

The capitalization of these resources also manifests the concept of the public sphere, a medium that connects layered networks and distances as a forum for expressing aspirations and discussion without barriers (Habermas, 1991). With the advancement of ICT, the public sphere evolves into a virtual public sphere, emphasizing inclusive, egalitarian, and effective participation in discussions, replacing conventional public spaces. The virtual public sphere introduces new democratic processes by involving everyone and fostering various movements through diverse interactions and rapid information dissemination (Nasrullah, 2012). These concepts

justify the two-way WAG approach in many hijrah movements in Bandung Raya, treating all members from mosque/da'wah communities equally, inclusively, and effectively.

Rulli Nasrullah (Nasrullah, 2014) even describes the virtual public sphere as a critique of Juergen Habermas's public sphere concept, involving private people developing critical/limited debate arenas against regulations. While the public sphere focuses on providing public space from bourgeois society to broadly discuss realities, the virtual public sphere emphasizes equal yet effective participation in discussing realities, replacing conventional public spaces. In this context, WAG Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya effectively meets the demand for a medium facilitating creative participation, real-time interaction, interactive user feedback, communication around media content, and access to content (information) anytime and anywhere.

### **General Patterns of Islamic Activism in the Hijrah Movement**

In developing the produced texts, the dissemination of content/lessons predominantly features educational, systematic tarbiyah (Islamic education) rather than grand tabligh akbar gatherings. This approach is taken because tarbiyah content is deemed more contributive to the Hijrah movement community, fostering a longer-lasting public engagement compared to the more fleeting impact of grand tabligh akbar events.

This situation was observed by the researchers in numerous posts within the WhatsApp Groups (WAG), where mosque activists tend to emphasize continuous, sequential, in-depth, and significant da'wah material. The selected materials are often serialized/thematic over dozens of sessions, maintaining consistent themes rather than varying topics each week.

Furthermore, the research team found that informants in West Bandung Regency not only held dozens of thematic sessions but also meticulously documented all their da'wah videos. These recorded videos, initially uploaded episode by episode on YouTube after each session, eventually formed a dedicated playlist of 24 episodes on themes such as Ummahatul Mu'minin (the Mothers of the Believers, the wives of Prophet Muhammad SAW). The YouTube links of this series were then shared in the WAG of Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya, with the aim of spreading the tarbiyah narrative beyond the mosque congregation to the broader community.



Source: Author's Observation, 2025

Figure 2: Tarbiyah Content in WAG Documented on YouTube

The strategy of developing follow-up texts within the framework of Islamic activism means that the average da'i (preacher) invited by activists in these groups needs to deeply explore a branch of Islamic knowledge. The speakers are not typically the popular, sensational, and easily digestible tabligh akbar style preachers, but rather those with a serious, substantive approach, often lacking in humor. Generally, these da'i are predominantly graduates from the Middle East or hold at least an Lc (Licentiate, equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in Indonesia) due to their high tendency towards tarbiyah da'wah. However, this method, while receiving positive responses, also faced some resistance, as observed in informants from Cimahi City, where the weekly tarbiyah sessions were seen to conflict with the existing programs designed by senior DKM administrators.

The preference for continuous tarbiyah texts is a manifestation of the strategy that conveying Islamic da'wah should provide education tailored to the background of the da'wah objectives. This ensures the effectiveness of the teachings given to the target, such as using theory and practice in teaching and learning (Rustandi, 2022; Jusup, 2023). This is driven by two determinants. First, the proliferation of spiritual cyberspace movements (Zaleski, 1999; Rustandi, 2022) allows public discourse and opinion from

any part of the world to be easily accessed with just a computer, laptop, or smartphone with affordable internet data. This has sparked interest in digital spaces for public opinion, leading to social change. Second, a social movement must be based on three commonalities: collective nature, collective interests and goals, and collective actions to realize them; movements are based on common interests and goals; and movements seek change outside established institutions (Nur Hasanah, 2017). What the Hijrah movement community does with the development of tarbiyah texts in the global spiritual cyberspace movement is made possible by easy access to information meeting the three motivations of a social movement.

Ricard West and Lynn H. Turner proposed the concept of media ecology (Meisyaroh, 2014), substantively stating that the public cannot avoid instant messaging. Its presence as a medium always encompasses the entire existence of individuals in communication and every action taken by society daily. Instant messaging is a combination of technology, techniques, modes of information delivery, and communication codes to play the main role of communication in life, which is interpersonal communication. Hence, we cannot escape from media (including CMC in the form of WAG) in our lives because media encompasses the entire existence of society. Aware of their "imprisoned" position, the members of the WAG Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya utilize the instant messaging CMC medium as new media to produce creative and informative texts. This is done so that all elements can access and process the dominant narratives developed by a community. Especially in the current era of disruption, it is essential for civil society components to maximize new media for collegial productive purposes (Ridho, 2018). Such integration of structured Islamic learning into digital platforms illustrates the rise of digital tarbiyah cultures among Indonesian urban Muslims (Fakhrurroji, 2019).

### **General Patterns of Islamic Activism in the Hijrah Movement**

#### **Offline Habits Transformed into Online Practices**

The hijrah movement community's influence on internet culture is evident in how members of Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya have adapted their offline habits of synergy and interaction into their online practices within the WhatsApp Group (WAG). These offline habits were established before the creation of the WAG, characterized by frequent resource sharing among hijrah activists, such as sharing contact numbers of da'wah activists across mosques, coordinating mosque cleaning initiatives (BBM), and

sharing tips for successfully organizing religious programs like Sanlat (short-term Islamic boarding schools).

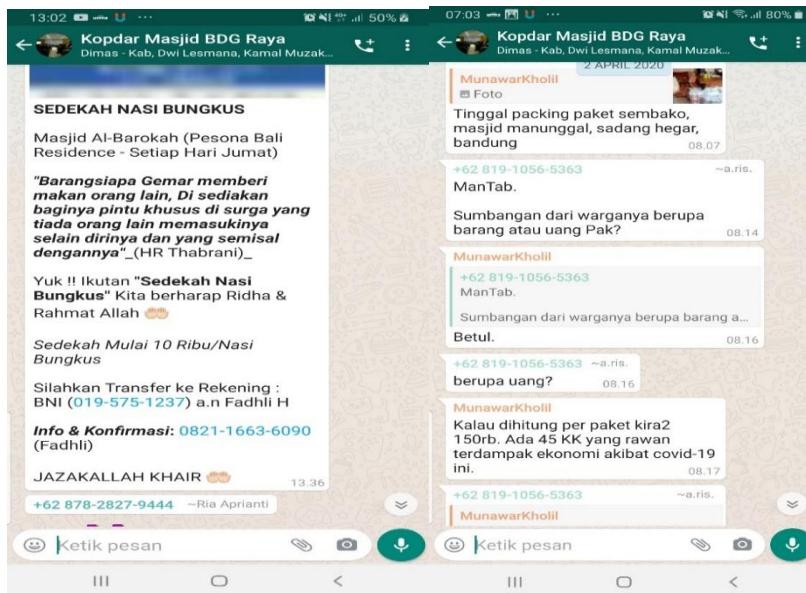
### **Formation of the WAG and Its Impact**

The community's offline synergies were further strengthened by an offline gathering on May 22, 2017, which led to the creation of the Kopdar BDG Raya WAG. This online platform enabled informants who consistently organized successful Sanlat programs to share their expertise and resources with other WAG members. This collaboration extended to initiatives like Berbagibuka.com, which coordinated the distribution of 62,000 food boxes during its first year through volunteers known as Ifthar Rangers. Additionally, the WAG facilitated the Imam Muda Salman program, which involved redistributing imams from larger mosques to smaller ones in need.

### **Case Studies of Offline and Online Synergies**

**Rumah Amal Salman ITB and Masjid Lautze 2 Collaboration:** The Rumah Amal Salman ITB decided to synergize with Masjid Lautze 2 after connecting through the WAG. Rumah Amal regularly allocates IDR 25 million per month for operational costs of converting new Muslims, providing them with meals and transportation allowances. Funds are allocated for mandatory routine activities every Sunday (Tadabbur Al-Quran "The heart asks, the Koran answers" and Tahsin Al-Qur'an), where at each meeting every convert is given lunch and transportation money of IDR 75 thousand per person. The average meeting is attended by at least 40 people, so participants want to come repeatedly.

**Ulama Visits and Monthly Lectures:** The WAG facilitated the presence of popular young scholars like Ustadz Adi Hidayah (UAH) for monthly lectures in Kabupaten Bandung. It also attracted other prominent figures, including Dr. Agus Setiawan and Ustadzah Oki Setiana Dewi, along with international preachers like Sheikh Ahmad Abdul Nashir from Palestine.



Source: Author's Observation, 2025

Figure 3. (Left) Islamic activism calling for Friday Barakah, (Right) Islamic activism distributing basic necessities

### Inspiration from Online Activism

Some informants were inspired by online Islamic activism within the WAG without direct synergy. For example, Masjid Lautze 2 initiated a program called Nasi Jumat Berkah, providing meals after Friday prayers, influenced by similar activities observed in the WAG. This program has been well-received, offering 300 food boxes, 500-800 snacks, and coffee provided by Teras Kopi Community. Similarly, Manunggal Mosque in Sadang Serang, Kota Bandung, launched a charity program during the COVID-19 pandemic, distributing essential food packages to the needy, inspired by WAG's online activities.

### Monthly Da'wah Safari

In Kabupaten Bandung, the hijrah movement also conducts monthly da'wah safaris, involving motorcycle tours to remote areas, culminating in Islamic lectures. These tours target regions like Gambung, known for strong Sunda Wiwitan and Christian influences, and other remote areas such as Cipelah, Rancabolang, Ciwidey, and Pasir Awi.

### **Financial Accountability and Transparency**

One of the lasting offline habits transformed into online practice is the rigorous financial reporting by hijrah activists. Post-program financial reports, including text and diagram formats, are shared within the WAG to maintain transparency and accountability, fostering trust among donors and participants. This practice, which avoids corrupt activities, has become standard in the Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya WAG, ensuring detailed reporting for all internal and collaborative programs.

The continuation of the transition from offline community habits to online practices aligns with the concept of computers as "Persuasive Communication Technologies." This indicates that computers, as part of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), can enhance individual capabilities or simplify tasks, as informed communicators utilize these technologies collectively (Ma'arif, 2010; Rustandi, 2022). The persuasive power emerges because Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) and WhatsApp Groups (WAG) serve as new media that bridge the boundaries between personal and public communication. Additionally, these platforms exhibit unique characteristics, including reciprocal communication (interactivity) rather than unidirectional communication, a plethora of available information and cultural offerings, a greater array of genuine choices, enhanced control for recipients/users, and decentralization (Ibrahim, 2014). As a new media, CMC is not owned, controlled, or managed by a single entity. Instead, it operates as an intentionally interconnected computer network functioning based on mutually agreed protocols, thus facilitating global communication at an affordable cost. Consequently, the transition from offline to online habits becomes swift and straightforward.

Another factor contributing to the transformation of habits among the supporters of Islamic activism in Bandung Raya is the role of WAG as a manifestation of Web 3.0, which emphasizes human cooperation. This follows the progression from Web 1.0, which focused on individual recognition (human cognition) within a network, to Web 2.0, which revolved around interpersonal communication (human communication) within networks of individuals (Nasrullah, 2015). The final stage of this general pattern of Islamic activism represents a tangible depiction of the Web 3.0 phase, where CMC, in the form of group instant messaging, becomes both a medium and facilitator for mosque activists, congregants, communities, and prospective donors to collaborate (human cooperation),

particularly within the Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya and, more broadly, for all mosque and da'wah activists wherever they may be. This theoretical foundation of digital da'wah argues that media ecosystems such as messaging platforms transform traditional preaching roles and enable broader patterns of activism beyond institutional structures (Fakhruroji, 2017; Rustandi, 2019).

Simultaneously, the emergence of this new social movement is indeed grassroots in nature, stemming from the activities conducted by the masses with varying degrees of solidarity, and is focused on non-class expressions that reflect broader societal shifts in contemporary times (Nur Hasanah, 2017). This situation is clearly illustrated by the diverse social statuses of the majority of da'wah activists within the Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya, particularly as they are not affiliated with established religious organizations such as MUI (Indonesian Ulama Council), DMI (Indonesian Mosque Council), and BKPRMI (Indonesian Youth Mosque Communication Body). This computer-based persuasive social program is designed entirely from the ground up, reflecting the aspirations and conditions of a mosque or da'wah community, rather than being directed by elite religious leaders or authorities associated with MUI, DMI, or BKPRMI. Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya, as a component of civil society, employs adjustments and compromises that are more focused on social and economic issues. This phenomenon corresponds with how Muslim youth navigate piety and activism in online spaces, reconfiguring da'wah authority and community roles (Nisa, 2018).

The characteristics of civil society-based da'wah emphasize community participation, positioning the community as the subject in managing their social groups, thereby preventing monopolization and government intervention. Civil society in da'wah maintains a degree of independence in managing its social groups (Khotimah & Amaluddin, 2022). This is consistent with framing analyses showing that Islamic content in social media is produced not only to convey religious norms but also to construct meaning through symbolic framing, visual strategies, and narrative practices that resonate with digital audiences (Fakhruroji, Rustandi & Busro, 2020).

Substantively, the final general pattern of Islamic activism arises from two main factors (Ismail, 2018). First, the realization of the concept "From Individual Piety to Social Piety" emphasizes that the pillars of understanding and practicing religion should encompass not only

formalistic aspects but also the substantive and prophetic mission aimed at achieving collective welfare for the ummah and the nation. This is by QS Al-Baqarah, 2:177:

“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but righteousness is in one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Books, and the Prophets and gives his wealth, despite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.”

Second, there exists a pillar of collective social responsibility concerning the practice of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, which is critically important for Indonesia, often categorized as a soft state (excessively tolerant of moral violations and crimes). Islamic activism underscores that being a good Muslim is not merely a personal endeavor; rather, with the insights and connections one possesses, one must foster social piety and remain aware of one's surroundings, exemplifying Islam as *rahmatan lil alamiin*.

While the continuity of *Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya* in mobilizing members and sustaining Islamic engagement appears encouraging, the group also navigates a range of internal frictions. Several members acknowledged that the volume and frequency of messages sometimes result in fatigue, silent readers, or missed information. Although the group promotes open participation, in practice only a few dominant contributors consistently shape the tone, agenda, and religious framing of discussions. This condition echoes concerns raised by Abdul Mut'i, particularly regarding the imbalance of content production and the limited mechanisms for theological verification in digital *da'wa* spaces. In some instances, differing *da'wa* styles among mosque leaders led to minor disagreements, especially when scheduled programs overlapped with existing routines. These dynamics illustrate that digital Islamic activism, while productive, requires ongoing negotiation of roles, authority, and values to maintain cohesion within the movement.

This study focused on a single WhatsApp group, *Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya*, known for its stability and sustained engagement in *hijrah*-related activities throughout mid-2023 to mid-2024. While this provides rich,

longitudinal insight into one exemplary case of Islamic digital activism, the analysis does not include a formal comparison with other *hijrah* groups in Bandung or with non-*hijrah* mosque WhatsApp communities. Moreover, the success or stability identified in this group is not contrasted with failed or inactive cases. Future research should adopt a comparative multi-group design to explore variations in group cohesion, message intensity, dropout patterns, or the influence of different theological orientations within the broader *hijrah* movement in urban Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION

This study explores how the WhatsApp group *Kopdar Masjid BDG Raya* operates as a mosque-based digital civic network that nurtures and reconfigures the *hijrah* practices of urban youth in Greater Bandung. Within this mediated space, Islamic activism is no longer confined to structured da‘wa events but evolves into intimate, emotionally charged, and dialogical interactions. Through a combination of spiritual reminders, shared narratives of personal transformation, and offline communal gatherings, the group sustains a moral environment where participants collectively reaffirm their *hijrah* journey toward deeper religious commitment.

Rather than functioning merely as a content distribution channel, the group serves as a relational infrastructure where trust, repetition, and symbolic authority shape participants’ sense of belonging and accountability. This indicates that *hijrah*-based digital activism is not only about ideological alignment but also about emotional resonance and social intimacy.

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal internal challenges that complicate this trajectory. Informants noted content fatigue, silent participants, and subtle tensions between informal influencers and formal mosque actors. These conditions suggest that while *hijrah* activism on WhatsApp can be dynamic and inclusive, it also requires continuous negotiation and structural reflexivity.

By illuminating these relational and affective dimensions, this study contributes to the growing literature on mediated Islamic movements in contemporary Indonesia. Future research should examine comparative mosque-based WhatsApp groups to understand how divergent *hijrah* pathways are shaped by institutional settings, class dynamics, and

theological orientations, especially in the context of evolving digital infrastructures.

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