Development of Arabic Language Learning Based on CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) and Flash Cards

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Abstract:

This research aims to develop Arabic language teaching materials based on Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), utilizing the Moodle platform. Moodle will incorporate vocabulary, reading texts, dialogues, and exercises tailored to the curriculum of MTs Al-Muslihuun Tlogo Blitar. Additionally, Moodle will include images, animations, and online quizzes related to the speaking skill (maharah kalam). This CALL implementation will be integrated with vocabulary games in the form of Flashcards. The research employs the ADDIE model developed by Reiser and Margareth Mollenda. The Moodle platform is designed by analyzing the needs for teaching materials, referring to the independent curriculum for the ninth grade of Madrasah Tsanawiyah under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The embedded videos are sourced from YouTube.com, while animations are obtained from social media platforms. Exercises and Flashcards are designed using Canva.com premium and Adobe Photoshop Lightroom. Quizzes are created using Quizizz.com, Kahoot.com, Owl Quiz, Wordwall, Fyrebox, and Baamboozle. The product trial demonstrated student acceptance and satisfaction, achieving a rate of 93.5%. Summary of statistical results: There was an increase in the average value (mean) between the pre-treatment and post-treatment periods. The initial mean value, measured through the pre-test, was 60.22, while the post-test mean value, following the treatment, showed a significant increase to 78.70. That indicates that the intervention had a positive effect.

Keywords: CALL; Flash Card; Maharah Kalam; Moodle.

INTRODUCTION

The utilization of technology in language learning has opened up new opportunities and expanded learning horizons for students. One of the main advantages of using technology in language learning is increased accessibility. Through the internet, students can access a wide range of language learning resources and materials from around the world. They can take online courses, download language learning apps, or access

websites that provide exercises and lesson materials. Technology also enhances the language learning experience through various interactive features. Language learning apps and software are often equipped with features such as voice recording, playback, interactive exercises and online quizzes (Marisa et al., 2021). This allows students to practice listening and speaking, engage in game-based activities, and test their understanding quickly and efficiently. Learning design has long been the focus of attention of educational technologists. As science and technology advance, the field of learning design continues to evolve. Terms such as telecommunications (on-line learning or web-based learning), virtual classroom, and hybrid instruction are evidence of this development (Baroroh, 2020).

Gagne, Briggs, & Wager (1992) developed the concept of learning design that helps a person's learning process, both in the short and long term (Isma et al., 2022). They believe that learning occurs due to internal and external learning conditions. Internal conditions include the learner's ability and readiness, while external conditions refer to the designed environmental settings. The preparation of these external conditions is referred to as learning design. (Mu'minin, 2022a) emphasize the use of the systems approach concept as the foundation of learning design thinking. The systems approach generally consists of analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation. Learning design includes all the processes implemented in the system approach. Technological advances and the findings of educational technologists have a significant impact on educational institutions in Indonesia. One form of learning development in educational institutions is web-based learning, which is used to accommodate classes with a large number of students (Darmawati, 2023).

Moodle, as a reliable e-learning platform, has great potential to improve the effectiveness of Arabic language teaching (Armanila, 2021). At the same time, digital flash cards offer an interactive and fun way of learning. The combination of these two tools opens up new opportunities to create a more engaging and efficient Arabic learning experience. Moodle is a web-based learning platform capable of integrating various learning features, such as discussion forums, online assignments, and automated assessments (Rachmawati et al., 2020). In the context of Arabic learning media development, Moodle can be a very useful tool. One of the important aspects in Arabic language learning is speaking skill. Speaking skill is the ability to express ideas, opinions, and feelings in Arabic orally. To develop speaking skills, the use of flash cards can also be an effective alternative. Flash cards are cards that contain words or sentences in Arabic along with their translations. By using flash cards, students can practice their speaking skills by saying the words or sentences listed on the card.

The use of Moodle and flash cards in the development of Arabic learning media has several advantages. First, by using Moodle, students can access learning materials anytime and anywhere. This allows students to learn Arabic independently and flexibly. In addition, Moodle also allows students to interact with fellow students and teachers through discussion forums, thus improving their speaking skills. Second, the use of flash cards in the development of Arabic learning media can improve students' speaking skills quickly and effectively. By using flash cards, students can practice the ability to pronounce words or sentences in Arabic repeatedly (Mu'minin, 2022b). This will help students in mastering vocabulary and sentence patterns in Arabic better.

However, in developing Arabic learning media based on Moodle and flash cards, there are several challenges that need to be faced. First, more effort is needed in developing learning materials that suit the needs of students. Arabic language learning requires a different approach from other language learning. Therefore, the learning materials developed must be able to meet the needs and characteristics of students in learning Arabic. Second, a deep understanding of the use of Moodle and flash card technology is required. Teachers who are responsible for developing Arabic learning media must understand well how to integrate Moodle and flash cards in the learning process (Gemilang & Listiana, 2020). In addition, teachers must also be able to utilize the features in Moodle to increase student interaction and participation.

Arabic language learning at MTS AlMuslihuun Tlogo Blitar currently uses independent curriculum Ministry of Religion textbooks. The small number of students and teachers causes language learning to be considered less effective and efficient. So that student interest in learning does not increase, it decreases every year. Therefore, the CALL learning model is present to assist students in improving language skills. In this case, speaking skills (kalam) are prioritized as the main basis of language. School location factors and teacher quality affect the development of maharah kalam of MTS AlMuslihuun Tlogo Blitar students. Researchers hope that CALL and Flash Card media can be an initial stepping stone to start utilizing technology to the fullest. So that in further learning it can develop four Arabic language competencies at once and encourage students to strengthen intuition and innovate.

Research (Nurlaili & Nurmairina, 2020), applying video-assisted CALL to improve the active learning process and improve English language skills in the field of English for job hunting. In addition, Flash Card

media was used in research (Rahimadinullah et al., 2021), developing Arabic word cards and learning activities for third grade students of Madrasah Aliyah and describing the feasibility of utilizing Arabic word cards and learning activities. Research (Fahruddin et al., 2022), examined the effectiveness of using picture card media to improve the speaking ability of group B children at TK Islam Nurul Iman Sekarbela. Research (Khoirunnisa & Fauji, 2023) developed picture card media to improve Arabic speaking skills in 7th grade MTs Darul Fikri Sidoarjo students.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is defined as the exploration and study of computer applications in language teaching and learning. Its primary goal is to leverage information and communication technology (ICT) tools like word processors, multimedia (CD-ROMs), and internet applications (email, chat, WWW) to enhance language acquisition, foster independent learning skills, and boost student motivation. CALL has evolved through three main phases: the structural/behavioristic era (1960s-1970s) focused on repetitive drills and practice for accuracy; the communicative/cognitive phase (1980s-1990s) emphasized communicative exercises for fluency; and the integrative/sociocognitive period (1990s-present) utilizes technology for authentic tasks and social interaction (Haniefa & Samsudin, 2025). Beyond its evolution, CALL can function as a tutor, simulation, game, or a tool for both teachers and students, offering various benefits such as adaptability to student preferences, increased motivation, and the creation of authentic learning environments.

Flash cards are visual learning aids in the form of small cards, containing images, text, or symbols on one side and explanations or questions on the other. This medium is designed to help students memorize and understand information in an engaging and interactive way. Key characteristics of flash cards include their informative two-sided format, visualization of concepts, portability, flexibility, interactivity, focus on single concepts, content versatility, durability, and ease of storage (Putra et al., 2022). Flash cards have proven effective in improving memory retention, simplifying the comprehension of abstract concepts, boosting learning motivation, and facilitating independent study.

Maharah Kalam, or speaking skill, generally refers to an individual's ability to express thoughts, ideas, feelings, and information orally in Arabic in an effective, fluent, and comprehensible manner. As one of the four language skills (alongside listening, reading, and writing), it is productive and active. Key components include accurate pronunciation and intonation, sufficient vocabulary, correct grammar/sentence structure, fluency, comprehension of interlocutors' speech, accuracy, and contextual appropriateness. The objectives of teaching Maharah Kalam range from developing daily communication abilities to exchanging ideas, expressing opinions, participating in discussions, and delivering short presentations (Ayu Khairani & Sahkholid Nasution, 2023). Its development is influenced by internal factors like motivation and self-confidence, as well as external factors such as teaching methods and opportunities for practice.

METHOD

This research is an experimental type of research by dividing the research subjects into control and experimental classes. This research design is Research and Development (R&D) by utilizing ADDIE theory. Data validity in this study was carried out using triangulation techniques. Triangulation is a data checking technique using other sources outside the data for the purpose of checking or comparing the data (Ahyar et al., 2020). The data to be compared are data obtained from interviews and observations. This research focuses on ninth grade students at MTs AlMuslihuun Tlogo Blitar as research subjects. The object of this research is the improvement of maharah kalam of ninth grade students at MTs AlMuslihuun Tlogo Blitar through the use of innovative learning media. Research or evaluation instruments function as measuring instruments that can provide quantitative and qualitative information about the variables being studied. The instrument is addressed to material expert validation, media expert validation, and product trial validation. The validity formula is as follows:

$$V = \frac{TSe}{TSh} \; X \; 100\%$$

V : Validity
Tse : Total score from validators
Tsh : Total maximum score
The following table shows the success of the validity test:

Table 1. Success of Validity Test

| No.	Score in Percentage	Information
1	< 21	Very Less
2	21 – 40	Less
3	41 – 60	Enough
4	61 – 80	Good
5	81 – 100	Very Good

This research combines several data collection techniques to obtain a more complete picture of the effect of the CALL learning model on improving students' maharah kalam. Interviews will be conducted to dig deeper into students' learning experiences and get richer input. Questionnaires will be used to measure students' perceptions, test the validity of the material and media experts, and measure the feasibility of the product against the language learning model. The speaking ability test will be used to objectively measure changes in speaking ability. Documentation in the form of field notes and student work will be used to complement the data obtained from other data collection techniques. This research will employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative descriptive data analysis to gain a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of using CALL and Flashcard learning models in enhancing students' *maharah kalam*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Development of Moodle-based CALL and Flash Card

The research results in the development chapter will describe the stages of research, based on the ADDIE model. This research was conducted at least 10 meetings in total. The initial phase involved a comprehensive needs analysis through **teacher interviews** and **student questionnaires (46 students, Class IX MTS AlMuslihuun Tlogo Blitar)**.

Figure 1
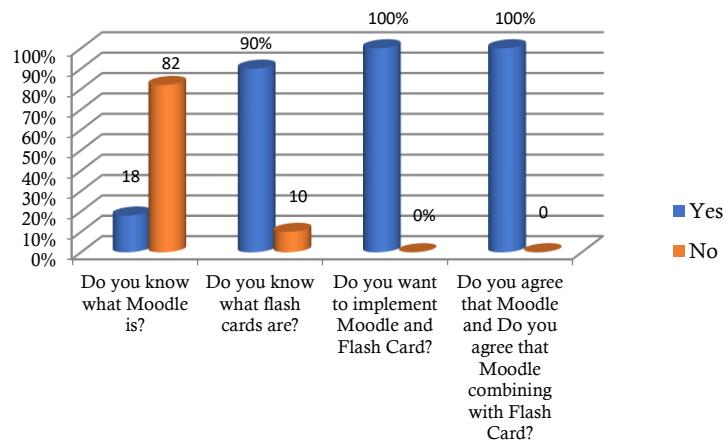
Initial analysis, based on teacher interviews and student questionnaires (46 students, Class IX), revealed a need for more engaging and accessible learning tools due to limited class time and student unfamiliarity with technology for language learning. While 82% of students didn't know Moodle, 90% knew Flash Cards (though not as learning media), and a remarkable 100% expressed enthusiasm for using these tools for interactive quizzes over traditional methods.

The research design integrated Moodle for core instructional delivery across all four language skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing), incorporating YouTube videos for speaking and Canva-designed writing exercises. Flash Cards, also designed with Canva, were created as visually appealing physical aids. Online quizzes from platforms like Quizizz and Kahoot were embedded in Moodle to ensure interactive content and assess understanding. During development, the Moodle platform was meticulously set up with welcoming flyers, structured chapters for vocabulary, reading (PDFs), conversations (embedded videos), and writing (downloadable

exercises). Flash Cards were designed with Arabic on one side and translations on the other, intended for partner activities to boost speaking skills. Online quizzes were embedded to reinforce learning.

Implementation involved expert validation (material and media experts) who rated the product as "very good quality." A student trial with 46 students resulted in an average score of 93.5% ("very valid"). Students found the product easy to use, highly accessible (96.9% anytime/anywhere), visually attractive, and effective in increasing their motivation and comprehension due to clear text and simple language. Overall evaluation confirmed that the integrated use of Moodle and Flash Cards is highly effective in improving students' Arabic language skills, especially speaking. This blended media promotes independent and flexible learning, allowing students to practice more frequently and enhancing their fluency.

Quality of Moodle and Flash Card-based CALL Products

To ensure the quality of Moodle and **Flash** Card-based learning media in the context of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), a comprehensive evaluation was conducted through three complementary stages. These stages were designed not only to assess the technical feasibility of the product but also to guarantee its pedagogical relevance and effectiveness in Arabic language instruction at the secondary school level.

The first stage involved material expert validation, which was carried out by a professional in Arabic linguistics with extensive teaching experience across various educational levels. This validation aimed to evaluate the material's alignment with the curriculum, linguistic accuracy, grammatical structure, and level of difficulty appropriate for ninth-grade students. According to Borg and Gall, expert validation is a crucial part of the product development process to ensure that the content meets academic and instructional standards (Aka, 2019). (Sugiyono, 2016)also emphasized the importance of involving subject matter experts in evaluating the quality and appropriateness of educational materials before broader implementation.

The second stage was media expert evaluation, which focused on assessing the design, user interface, and interactive features of the learning media. Key elements evaluated included ergonomics, interface consistency, visual appeal, and user-friendliness. This step is critical to ensure that the product is not only visually engaging but also effectively supports students' learning processes. Involving media experts helps ensure that the learning product aligns with modern educational technology standards and principles of instructional design (Crompton & Sykora, 2021).

The third stage consisted of user testing involving ninth-grade students as end-users of the learning media. This was part of a formative evaluation process, where students were invited to provide feedback through questionnaires and discussions about their experiences using the platform. Their feedback focused on usability, clarity of instructions, perceived usefulness of the material, and how it influenced their motivation to learn. (Dick & Carey, 1977) argue that involving learners directly in the evaluation process is an essential component of formative evaluation, as it provides insight into the real-world effectiveness and user acceptance of educational products.

Through these three stages material expert validation, media expert evaluation, and end-user testing it can be concluded that the Moodle and Flash Card-based CALL product meets high-quality standards and is responsive to learners' needs. This layered evaluation approach ensures that the learning media is academically sound, technologically functional, and practically effective in supporting Arabic language acquisition in the classroom setting.

Validation Test Results from Material Experts

The validation test was conducted by a material expert on the Moodle-based CALL media and Flash Cards, specifically by Muhammad Khoirul Malik, Lc., M.A., Head of the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatulloh Tulungagung. The expert evaluation was carried out using a structured questionnaire consisting of seventeen items designed to assess various aspects of content validity, clarity, relevance, and instructional quality. To determine the overall validity of the learning media, the researchers used the following formula to calculate the percentage score:

$$V = (TSe / TSh) \times 100\%$$
$$V = (70 / 85) \times 100\% = 82.4\%$$

Based on this calculation, the media received a validity score of 82.4%, which falls within the category of "very valid" according to common instructional media assessment criteria (Sugiyono, 2016). This score indicates that the learning media meets the essential requirements for instructional quality and content accuracy.

The material expert provided a positive evaluation on several key aspects. *First*, the content was deemed curriculum-appropriate, meaning it aligns with the competency targets and learning objectives set for Arabic language instruction at the secondary level. *Second*, the clarity of material presentation was praised for being concise, structured, and accessible to students with varying levels of language proficiency. *Third*, the relevance of the examples used in the learning materials was seen as highly beneficial in helping students connect abstract language concepts with real-life usage.

Additionally, the expert appreciated the use of student-friendly language, which reduces cognitive overload and enhances comprehension. This is particularly important in foreign language learning, where clear and contextualized input plays a crucial role in helping learners build vocabulary and grammatical awareness (Richards & Reppen, 2016). The integration of relevant examples, combined with visual support from the Flash Cards, was noted as an effective strategy for reinforcing student understanding and engagement. Overall, the results of the material expert validation affirm that the Moodle and Flash Card-based CALL product is both pedagogically sound and practically applicable in the context of Arabic language education. The expert's feedback provides a strong foundation for further refining and implementing the media in real classroom settings.

Validation Test Results from Media Experts

The validation process of the Moodle-based CALL media and Flashcards was conducted by Mufti Rasyid, M.Pd.I, a lecturer in the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatulloh Tulungagung, who served as the media expert. The evaluation was conducted using a structured questionnaire consisting of fourteen items, designed to assess multiple aspects of the media, including visual design, layout consistency, interface usability, interactivity, and integration of multimedia features. Each item used a scaled response system to enable quantifiable analysis of the media's quality. Based on the results of this evaluation, the media achieved a score of 87.1%, calculated using the formula $V = (TSe/TSh) \times 100\%$, where 61 out of a possible 70 points were earned. This score indicates that the media meets high standards of validity and demonstrates strong quality in both visual and functional aspects.

The media expert provided several key observations that supported this score. One of the most prominent strengths noted was the visual appearance of the media. The platform's layout was described as clean and visually balanced, with appropriate use of color schemes, font styles, and spatial organization. These visual elements were not only aesthetically pleasing but also contributed to the legibility and clarity of instructional content. The expert's positive assessment resonates with Mayer's Coherence Principle in multimedia learning, which emphasizes that clean, uncluttered design reduces extraneous cognitive load and enhances learning effectiveness (Clark & Mayer, 2023). The use of consistent visual cues and structured formatting also supports the Signaling Principle, which helps learners identify and focus on key information by highlighting essential elements (Petersen et al., 2020).

Another important aspect highlighted by the expert was the usability and interactivity of the learning media. The navigation system was found to be intuitive and user-friendly, allowing learners to access materials easily without experiencing confusion or disorientation. This is critical in digital learning environments, particularly for younger students or those unfamiliar with educational technology platforms. The ease of use reflects principles from Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), which holds that reducing unnecessary complexity in learning tools allows students to allocate more cognitive resources toward understanding the content itself (Sweller et al., 2011). In this context, intuitive interface design serves not only aesthetic purposes but also pedagogical ones, by fostering efficient learning interactions.

The expert also appreciated the integration of multimedia features such as short videos, interactive audio clips, and animated Flash Cards. These components were considered effective in enriching the overall learning experience and maintaining student engagement. This finding aligns with the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which posits that learners comprehend material more effectively when it is presented through a combination of visual and verbal formats (Petersen et al., 2020). According to Mayer, multimedia elements when properly designed can activate both the visual/pictorial and auditory/verbal channels in the learner's brain, resulting in deeper cognitive processing and better retention. The videos embedded in the Moodle platform, for instance, provide dynamic demonstrations of pronunciation or grammatical patterns, while the Flash Cards offer interactive reinforcement of vocabulary, both of which support dual-channel learning.

From a motivational standpoint, the design of the media also reflects several elements from Keller's ARCS model of instructional design, which includes Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction (Keller, 2016). The media was able to capture students' attention through attractive visuals and interactive tasks; it was relevant

due to its contextual alignment with students' everyday experiences and curriculum goals; it built confidence by offering clear instructions and a non-threatening interface; and it promoted satisfaction through engaging feedback mechanisms and a visually pleasant user experience. These motivational elements are essential, especially in language learning, where student persistence is closely tied to how stimulating and accessible the learning resources are.

In addition to theoretical support, recent empirical studies have also reinforced the value of multimedia integration in language education. For instance, a study by (Barker, 2025) emphasized the impact of color cues and interactive video elements on learner engagement and vocabulary retention. These findings mirror the media expert's appreciation of color harmony and multimedia richness within the platform. It is evident that the CALL media in this study was designed not merely for technological novelty, but with purposeful alignment to principles of instructional design and empirical best practices.

Furthermore, the Flash Cards' design combining visual imagery, Arabic vocabulary, and contextual examples was regarded as particularly useful for reinforcing memory. This aligns with the Dual Coding Theory introduced by Paivio, which asserts that information is more easily remembered when it is encoded both verbally and visually (Paivio & Clark, 2006). The consistent structure of the Flash Cards also supports retrieval practice, a technique shown to improve long-term retention by allowing students to repeatedly access and recall the learned material in varied formats (Roediger & Butler, 2011).

While the overall evaluation was highly positive, the expert also suggested a few areas for refinement. These included ensuring color contrast accessibility for learners with visual impairments and adding interactive progress tracking features to increase learner autonomy. Such feedback demonstrates a mature evaluation process and paves the way for further iterative development. Importantly, it reinforces that even high-scoring media can continue to evolve in response to both expert review and user experience.

The validation results from the media expert provide strong evidence that the Moodle-based CALL and Flash Card media meet high standards of educational media design. Scoring 87.1% in expert evaluation, the media demonstrates excellence in visual aesthetics, multimedia integration, and usability. These findings are not only supported by contemporary theories such as Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory, and Keller's ARCS model, but also echo recent empirical research in digital language instruction. The expert's feedback validates that the media is pedagogically effective, technologically sound, and practically relevant for students learning Arabic as a foreign language. This validation marks an important step in the media development process and establishes a strong foundation for further refinement through student-centered evaluation and classroom implementation.

Product Test Results

The final stage in evaluating the effectiveness of the Moodle-based CALL and Flash Card learning media involved direct assessment from the end-users students who engaged with the media in a real learning context. This product trial was conducted at MTs Al-Muslihuun Tlogo Blitar, involving a sample of 46 ninth-grade students. The purpose of this trial was to collect empirical data on user experience, satisfaction, and perceived learning effectiveness after using the developed media in their Arabic language class.

To quantitatively assess the students' responses, a structured questionnaire was administered, consisting of multiple indicators related to attractiveness, usability, instructional clarity, engagement, and multimedia support. After analyzing the results, the researchers applied the following formula to determine the overall quality of the media based on student feedback:

$$V = (TSe / TSh) \times 100\%$$
$$= (2151 / 2300) \times 100\% = 93.5\%$$

A score of 93.5% places the product in the "very appropriate" category, indicating high acceptance and positive evaluation from the student participants. This finding affirms that the Moodle and Flash Card-based media is not only valid according to experts, but also resonates strongly with students in terms of usability, engagement, and instructional value.

One of the most significant findings from the product trial was that students found the media to be more interesting and motivating compared to traditional classroom methods. This aligns with constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that learners are more likely to construct knowledge effectively when they are actively engaged in the learning process through meaningful, interactive experiences (Mugambi, 2018). The integration of

multimedia elements such as visuals, sounds, and interactive tasks served to increase the students' emotional engagement and sustained their attention throughout the learning session.

In particular, students highlighted the ease of use and accessibility of the Moodle platform. Features such as simple navigation, clear instructions, and intuitive design helped reduce the cognitive load associated with operating digital platforms. This is in line with Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2011), which emphasizes the importance of reducing extraneous load (unnecessary mental effort) to free up cognitive resources for essential learning tasks. In this case, because the interface did not pose unnecessary complexity, students were able to focus more on the content rather than on figuring out how to use the system.

Another aspect that received strong appreciation from students was the inclusion of interactive features, such as quizzes, practice questions, and instant feedback. These elements not only made the learning experience more enjoyable but also provided opportunities for active recall and immediate reinforcement of the material. According to (Roediger & Butler, 2011), repeated retrieval and immediate feedback are among the most effective strategies for long-term memory retention. Students in the trial responded positively to the fact that they could test their understanding and receive feedback in real time, which in turn encouraged self-assessment and autonomous learning.

In the context of foreign language learning especially Arabic, which presents unique grammatical and phonetic challenges the role of interactive and contextualized learning tools becomes even more crucial. By allowing students to engage with vocabulary and sentence structures in both visual and auditory formats, the Flash Cards provided a dual-channel learning experience that catered to different learning styles. This is consistent with Mayer's (Mayer, 2005) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which argues that deeper learning occurs when learners are presented with complementary visual and verbal inputs.

Furthermore, many students expressed a preference for this learning model compared to conventional teacher-centered instruction. They perceived that learning through digital platforms offered them greater flexibility, autonomy, and motivation. These perceptions reflect key principles in the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012), which posits that learners are more motivated when their needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness are met. The Moodle and Flash Card platform gave students control over their pace and allowed them to revisit content as needed something not easily achieved in traditional settings.

Students also noted that the media helped them better understand the subject matter, especially complex grammar rules and vocabulary. The contextualized examples, clear explanations, and visual reinforcements played a crucial role in making abstract concepts more concrete and understandable. This finding is supported by Dual Coding Theory (Paivio & Clark, 2006), which suggests that combining verbal explanations with imagery leads to more effective mental representation and recall of information.

In terms of engagement, the media was found to be highly motivating and enjoyable. The gamified elements in the quizzes, along with the interactive nature of Flash Cards, were seen as a refreshing alternative to passive textbook reading or one-way lectures. This supports Keller's ARCS Model of Motivational Design, particularly in how the media captured learners' attention, made content relevant to their goals, built their confidence through practice, and gave them satisfaction via achievement tracking and feedback (Keller, 2016).

Overall, the 93.5% score obtained in the product test suggests not just surface-level enjoyment but deep learner satisfaction and perceived effectiveness. The student feedback provides concrete evidence that the developed learning media is well-received and pedagogically effective. Beyond usability and attractiveness, students affirmed that the media actually helped them learn better, feel more in control of their learning, and stay engaged throughout the process.

The implications of this trial are significant. First, the high level of student acceptance confirms the importance of learner-centered design in educational technology. It also underscores the need for schools and educators to integrate interactive digital tools in language instruction to meet the changing learning preferences of today's students. Second, the success of this model points to the potential scalability of similar learning systems for other subjects or institutions. Finally, these results offer empirical support for the continued development and use of Moodle and Flash Card-based CALL as a legitimate and effective instructional strategy, especially in the context of teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

Effectiveness Test Results

This section presents the results of the effectiveness test based on the implementation of Moodle and Flash Card-based Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) media in Arabic language instruction. The purpose of this test was to examine the impact of the developed media on students' academic achievement, particularly in

terms of their pre- and post-intervention performance. A total of 46 ninth-grade students from MTs Al-Muslihuun Tlogo Blitar participated in the trial. The results are analyzed quantitatively through frequency distributions, percentage shifts, and paired sample statistics.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution and Percentage of Student Scores

No.	Category	Scale	Frequency (Pre Test)	Frequency (Post Test)	Percentage (Pre Test)	Percentage (Post Test)
1	Very Good	86 – 100	0	10	0%	21.8%
2	Good	75 – 85	0	25	0%	54.3%
3	Fair	65 – 74	17	11	36.9%	23.9%
4	Poor	50 – 64	28	0	60.9%	0%
5	Very Poor	0 – 49	1	0	2.2%	0%
	Total		46	46	100%	100%

The data presented in Table 2 reveals a significant transformation in student learning outcomes following the implementation of the learning media. In the pre-test phase, the majority of students (60.9%) fell into the "Poor" category, with 36.9% in the "Fair" category and only one student (2.2%) in the "Very Poor" category. Notably, no students were categorized as "Good" or "Very Good." After the intervention, there was a substantial shift: 54.3% of students moved into the "Good" category, and 21.8% reached the "Very Good" level. The percentage of students in the "Fair" category decreased to 23.9%, while the "Poor" and "Very Poor" categories were completely eliminated.

This dramatic improvement reflects the effectiveness of the CALL media in enhancing student understanding and performance. From a pedagogical perspective, these results align with constructivist learning theory (Bruner, 1996), which posits that students learn best through active engagement and interaction with meaningful content. The CALL media, integrating Moodle and Flash Cards, facilitated this by offering interactive tasks, multimedia support, and autonomous learning opportunities.

Tabel 3. Paired Samples Statistics

Pair	Mean		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre Test	60.22	6	7.743	1.142
Post Test	78.70	6	9.686	1.428

Descriptive statistical analysis further underscores the effectiveness of the intervention. The average score before the intervention was 60.22, which increased significantly to 78.70 after the intervention—an improvement of 18.48 points. This shift is a strong indication that the learning media had a positive impact on students' cognitive development and language proficiency.

In terms of global relevance, this study contributes to the broader discourse on integrating technology in language education. According to (Mayer, 2009) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, the dual presentation of verbal and visual information enhances comprehension and retention. The integration of Moodle and Flash Cards exemplifies this theory by combining text, audio, and visual components to support different learning styles. Moreover, the interactivity built into the platform supports the active processing of information, one of the core conditions for meaningful learning.

The results are also consistent with the principles of Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2011), which suggests that instructional design should minimize extraneous cognitive load to optimize learning. The user-friendly interface of Moodle, combined with the structured nature of Flash Cards, helped students focus on learning Arabic rather than struggling with the platform itself. This design consideration directly contributed to the improved outcomes seen in the post-test results.

From a motivational standpoint, Keller's ARCS Model provides additional insight. The CALL media addressed all four components: Attention (through multimedia and gamified quizzes), Relevance (aligned with curriculum), Confidence (incremental difficulty levels), and Satisfaction (immediate feedback). These factors combined to

create a highly engaging learning environment, increasing student motivation and commitment to the learning process (Keller, 2016).

In recent international studies, similar patterns have emerged. For instance, Jocius et al. (2024) found that digital platforms integrating color-coded flashcards and personalized quizzes significantly increased vocabulary retention and learner engagement in ESL contexts. Another study by (Kessler, 2024) emphasized that the effectiveness of CALL tools lies not just in technological innovation but in pedagogical alignment and ease of use. These findings reinforce the global applicability of the present study and suggest that the integration of CALL with LMS platforms such as Moodle offers a promising direction for foreign language education, particularly in under-resourced or remote educational settings.

Furthermore, the ability of this media to accommodate asynchronous and self-paced learning modes meets the current demands of post-pandemic education, which increasingly values flexibility and student-centered approaches. As UNESCO (2021) emphasized in its global education monitoring report, digital tools must be designed to promote equity, accessibility, and learner agency (Antoninis et al., 2023). The Moodle-based CALL system developed in this study meets these criteria by offering offline access options, intuitive navigation, and culturally appropriate content tailored to the local educational context.

The effectiveness test results strongly support the integration of Moodle and Flash Card-based CALL media in Arabic language instruction. Not only did the media result in significant gains in student performance, but it also aligned with contemporary international best practices in instructional design, learner motivation, and digital pedagogy. As education systems worldwide continue to embrace digital transformation, this study offers a valuable model for developing localized, culturally relevant, and pedagogically sound CALL interventions. Future research should further investigate long-term retention, teacher perspectives, and scalability across diverse educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

This research on the development of learning media based on Moodle and flashcards aims to improve speaking skills (maharah kalam) of ninth-grade students of MTs AlMuslihuun Tlogo Blitar. The validity test results show that the learning media developed has a high level of validity, both in terms of material (82.4%) and media (87.1%). This indicates that the learning media designed has been in accordance with the rules of learning media development and material that is relevant to the curriculum and student needs. The results of the learning media product trial also showed a very good success rate of 93.5%. This figure shows that the learning media developed is effectively used in the learning process and can be well received by students. Thus, it can be concluded that this Moodle and flashcard-based learning media has the potential to improve the speaking ability of ninth-grade students of MTs AlMuslihuun Tlogo Blitar. The development of this learning media is expected to be an alternative solution in improving the quality of Arabic language learning, especially in improving students' speaking skills

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Islamic Apologetics and the Commodification of Religion in the Digital Public Space

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Abstract:

Insights on the digital transformation of Islamic preaching in Indonesia, for example, highlight how religious practice gets enmeshed with social media's symbolic economy. In this paper, I examine the transition from da'wah to digital commodity in Islamic apologetics through the channel Bang Zuma Official on YouTube, and how faith, authority, and algorithms intersect in the digital public sphere. This study adopts a qualitative interpretive method, building on the analytics of Robert Entman's (1993) framing analysis and Vincent Mosco's (2009) theory of media commodification. The main data are collected from the video "Penyesat Itu Bergelar Yesus Kristus.. Siapa Pengikutnya???"(published March 6, 2025). They are, meaning structure or ideological representation, and the forms of commodification of religion in Bang Zuma's apologetic discourse. The results indicate that Bang Zuma conceptualizes Islam as the 'ultimate truth' and other religions in terms of epistemological distortions. His rhetorical style connects theological argumentation with digital aesthetics, rendering da'wah an ideological spectacle. Three forms of commodification are identified: content (theological messages simplified for viral status), audience (those who consume or engage via donations act out digital fatigue and labour), and indeed the preachers themselves as spiritual labour modified in relation to algorithmic concerns.

Keywords: algorithmic economy; digital da'wah; framing analysis; Islamic apologetics; religious commodification.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have become spiritual spaces, providing new ways to express faith (and share and gain certainty about) spirituality in an increasingly connected world. These media have now evolved into spaces where Islamic identities at the individual and community levels

are formed, expressed, and maintained. This phenomenon marks the emergence of digital Islamic apologetics as a contemporary manifestation of theological defense that operates through algorithmic logic and visual economy within the framework of the attention economy. In this empirical context, Islamic apologist figures like Bang Zuma represent the convergence between theological discourse competence and popular cultural aesthetics, systematically transforming conventional religious lectures into digital performances measured through engagement metrics.

Research on the mediatization of religion has shown that media is no longer simply a means of disseminating religious teachings, but also plays an active role in shaping religious experiences and practices (Hjarvard, 2008; Lövheim & Hjarvard, 2019; Campbell & Cheong, 2023). In an algorithm-driven and post-truth world, faith is expanding beyond its spiritual, moral, and doctrinal foundations to reflect the core principles embedded in these platforms (Couldry & Hepp, 2013). For devout and tech-savvy Indonesian Muslims, social media is both a space for expressing religious beliefs and an arena for competing interpretations. This raises an important question: how can Islamic broadcasting maintain its moral values while adapting to an algorithm-driven system that relies on sensation, pleasure, and visual appeal?

Several studies highlight that the digitalization of religious da'wah has created a paradox between religious idealism and market logic. Hashmi et al.,(2021) found that the commodification of religious da'wah on social media often results in representations of Islam reduced to imagery and performativity. Meanwhile, Fadilla & Isma Indriyani (2025) showed how digital platforms create a religious influencer economy, where religious figures compete not only for spiritual authority but also for algorithmic popularity. Research by Uswatusolihah et.al.,(2025) on the commodification of da'wah among middle-class Muslim women found that religious training programs are often packaged as paid "packages" that combine spiritual elements with modern lifestyles, making religion a tradable commodity. Recent studies have shown that social media has influenced the way Muslims interpret and practice their religion, with religious content increasing to 30% of total posts on platforms like Instagram and TikTok since 2020 (Larsson & Willander, 2025).

However, some studies still view the mediatization of religion normatively, between secularization and revitalization of faith, without deeply examining how digital apologetics works symbolically and ideologically in social media discourse. In fact, as emphasized by Couldry & Hepp (2013), mediatization must be understood as a social process in which reality (including religious) is constructed through representational practices. At this point, Entman's (1993) framing theory and Berger & Luckmann's (1966) social constructivism become relevant to explain how figures like Bang Zuma formulate apologetic narratives that are acceptable to the digital public, while maintaining theological truth claims.

Bang Zuma has emerged as a cultural phenomenon combining theological rhetoric with visually and emotionally engaging digital narratives. In the context of Islamic communication, he employs an argumentative style that prioritizes a rational defense of Islam to audiences of various faiths. However, this strategy is inseparable from the media logic that drives him to emerge as a competitive content creator within the algorithmic ecosystem. Therefore, digital Islamic apologetics functions not only as a form of ideological defense against the "other," as Hall et al. (2024), but also as a cultural performance produced and consumed within the digital religious marketplace.

This phenomenon intersects with the concept of "The Spectacle of the Other" (Hall, 1997), which explains how identity and difference are represented through visualization and symbolic consumption. In the context of Bang Zuma, apologetics becomes a spectacle constructed to attract audience attention, emotion, and engagement. The power of his religious message stems not only from theological substance, but also from the ability to manage form, style, and visual modality (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). This aligns with multimodality analysis, which asserts that meaning is never singular; it is created from a combination of text, image, sound, and gesture (Jewitt, 2017). Thus, apologetic strategies in the digital space are multimodal practices that are simultaneously ideological.

From the social constructionist perspective of Berger & Luckmann (2016), the mediatization of religion can be understood as an arena in which religious reality is reconstructed through symbolic interactions between communicators, media, and audiences. In this context, Bang Zuma utilizes media language to construct structures of plausibility, namely systems of social legitimacy for particular religious views. This demonstrates that the meaning of Islam is constructed not only through sacred texts but also through algorithms, commentary, and performative digital engagement (Campbell, 2021).

However, there has been little in-depth research into digital Islamic apologetics as a mediatized discourse practice. Most studies focus more on the content or phenomenon of celebrity da'wah, such as research (Tabroni

et al., 2025; Fadilla & Isma Indriyani, 2025) without connecting it to the ideological and representational dynamics that emerge from algorithmic logic. This study takes a position by reading Bang Zuma as a case study of how Islamic apologetics is constructed, negotiated, and commercialized in a digital order governed by visibility and performativity.

Theoretically, this research combines three major frameworks. First, the mediatization of religion, which highlights the transformation of religion under the logic of media (Hjarvard, 2008; Lövheim & Hjarvard, 2019). Second, Entman's (1993) Framing Theory which explains issues related to problem definition, causes, moral judgments, and solutions offered in apologetic representations Kress & Van Leeuwen (2001), multimodal analysis, which examines how text, images, and gestures interact to shape ideological messages. These three approaches combine to understand that digital Islamic apologetics is not simply a form of da'wah (preaching), but rather a political arena of representation involving symbolic, algorithmic, and cultural power.

In terms of scholarly contribution, this study offers a new reading of the practice of Islamic apologetics in the era of mediatized religion. First, it emphasizes that apologetics operates not only theologically but also culturally—through digital aesthetics that adapt to platform logic. Second, figures like Bang Zuma are represented as a form of algorithmic authority, where religious authority is constructed through content performance, not simply through scholarly chains of narration. Third, this study proposes a dialectical model between da'wah and commodification as the primary mechanism in the formation of digital apologetics discourse in Indonesia.

This research not only documents contemporary phenomena but also emphasizes the importance of reading digital Islamic apologetics as a field of media-mediated religio-cultural meaning construction, namely the process of religious meaning formation that arises from the intersection of faith, technology, and the symbolic market. In such an ecosystem, the values of da'wah are continuously negotiated to remain relevant, engaging, and competitive in the attention economy.

Conceptually, the dialectical relationship between da'wah, commodification, algorithms, and audiences in Bang Zuma's digital Islamic apologetics practice is visualized through the Digital Apologetics Dialectic Model as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Dialectical Model of Digital Islamic Apologetics
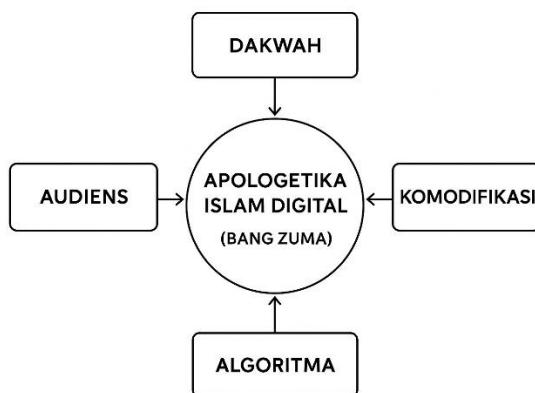
Source: Processed by the author, 2025

This model demonstrates that Digital Islamic Apologetics is at the center of the interaction of four main elements that influence each other in a circular fashion: da'wah, commodification, algorithms, and audiences. Da'wah serves as a source of religious values and messages, which are then formatted and commodified to suit the logic of the media market. As intermediaries, algorithms help determine the extent to which messages can spread in the digital public sphere. In this regard, audiences are involved in shaping the continuity of discourse through their participation, commentary, and engagement, which shape the strategies and forms that message dissemination will adopt in seeking its intertextual future. This relationship pattern demonstrates that the phenomenon of digital apologetics is not linear and static, but is also influenced by spiritual values and economic rationality integrated with algorithmic technology.

METHOD

This research uses an interpretive qualitative approach with a framing-based critical discourse analysis. This approach was chosen to understand how Islamic apologetics discourse is constructed, represented, and commodified in the digital space. As stated by Denzin & Lincoln (2011), qualitative research allows researchers to explore the meaning behind the texts, symbols, and communication practices that shape social reality. This approach emphasizes the interpretation of meaning that emerges from the interaction between the communicator (Bang Zuma), the media (YouTube), and the digital audience. The primary data for this study comes from the transcript of Bang Zuma Official's YouTube video titled THE LOST IS TITLED JESUS KRIST ACCORDING TO JESUS.. WHO ARE THE FOLLOWERS??? which was uploaded on March 6, 2025. The video was purposively selected because it contains strong apologetic elements and clearly illustrates the dynamics of religious rhetoric and mediatic logic. Secondary data were obtained from various academic articles, online news, and theoretical literature relevant to the issues of Islamic apologetics, media commodification, and the mediatization of religion. Data collection was carried out in two stages: (1) Digital documentation, namely downloading videos, creating verbatim transcripts, and observing visual elements and interactions in the comments column. (2) Literature study, to strengthen theoretical analysis related to framing, commodification, and social construction of religious reality.

The analysis was conducted using Robert Entman's (1993) framing model, which includes four dimensions: (1) Define Problems, identify the main issues defined in the apologetic discourse; (2) Diagnose Causes, finding the cause or actor to blame; (3) Make Moral Judgment, assess moral and ideological positions; (4) Treatment Recommendation, offers a solution or course of action. The results of the framing analysis are then interpreted using Vincent Mosco's media commodification theory to explore the forms of commodification of content, audience, and labor that emerge in Bang Zuma's digital preaching. Furthermore, Berger & Luckmann's theory of the social construction of reality is used to explain how religious reality is reproduced through symbolic interactions between communicators and audiences in the digital space. Data validity was ensured through triangulation of theories and sources. Researchers compared the results of the framing analysis with Mosco and Berger & Luckmann's theories to ensure interpretive consistency. Furthermore, peer debriefing with colleagues was conducted to maintain objectivity and avoid subjective bias.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mediatization of Religion and Digital Preaching

The development of communication technology over the past decade has brought about significant changes in the way beliefs are formed, religious interactions occur, and religious expressions emerge in the digital public sphere. Hjarvard (2008; Lövheim & Hjarvard (2019); Lundby (2023) propose a theoretical approach that focuses on mediated religion through the concept of communication infrastructure, where the specific characteristics of the media naturally determine the shape and form of the immanent logic and content that will be formed. This conceptualization implies that religion can no longer be understood as an independent entity separate from the media, but rather integrated into a communication ecosystem built by algorithmic systems, visual grammar, and attention economy mechanisms. In the contemporary Indonesian religious landscape, the phenomenon of digital da'wah represents the most concrete empirical manifestation of this process of mediatization.

In the Indonesian context, digital da'wah is the most visible manifestation of this mediatization process. Figures such as Ustaz Abdul Somad, Hanan Attaki, and Bang Zuma have established religious authority through digital appearances and online interactions (Hannan, 2024; Ahmad et al., 2025; Dahlan et al., 2025; Mukhroman & Halim, 2025). Lövheim & Hjarvard (2019) assert that mediatization gives rise to a new type of religious authority, acquired not only through scholarly traditions but also through visibility shaped by algorithms. This explains why da'wah messages are now often adapted to media formats that demand speed, emotional immediacy, and visual appeal. This phenomenon demonstrates that social media not only disseminates da'wah but also defines the form, style, and rhythm of da'wah itself. This is where the concept of mediatization becomes a gateway to understanding the transformation of Islamic apologetics into a performative and competitive digital format.

To analyze how religious messages are constructed in digital spaces, this study uses Robert Entman's (1993) framing theory. According to him, framing is the process of selecting certain aspects of reality and then

highlighting them to construct a coherent meaning (Entman, 1993). Entman identifies four main elements of framing: (1) Defining the main issues of concern; (2) Diagnosing the cause or party deemed responsible; (3) Making a moral judgment on a situation; (4) Recommending a solution or desired action. In the context of Bang Zuma's digital preaching, these four elements are clearly visible. He defines the problem as a theological deviation outside of Islam, diagnoses its cause through a narrative of distorted revelation, makes a moral judgment that Islam is the absolute truth, and offers a solution in the form of a return to monotheism. Therefore, framing becomes a discursive strategy for establishing ideological legitimacy in front of a digital audience. However, framing in the context of social media is not neutral. It is subject to visual and algorithmic logic, so theological messages are packaged in a way that attracts attention, evokes emotion, and is easily shared. This is what makes Bang Zuma's framing not only religious but also performative and mediatically strategic.

The next theoretical framework is Vincent Mosco's theory of media commodification. Mosco explains that in a capitalist communication system, media functions as a mechanism for the production and exchange of meanings that have economic value (Mosco, 2000;Mosco, 2009). Commodification in this context encompasses three dimensions: (1) Commodification of content, when a message or idea is turned into a commercial product; (2) Audience commodification, when the audience's attention is turned into economic data that can be monetized; (3) Commodification of labor, when content producers become part of digital capitalist work. These three dimensions are highly relevant to understanding Islamic apologetics on YouTube, where theological messages are packaged in viral content formats, audiences participate as algorithmic labor, and preachers act as spiritual workers within a symbolic economy. This process demonstrates that religion is undergoing a shift in function, from a value system to a cultural product governed by the digital market and the attention economy. Commodification is not always negative; in some contexts, it is an adaptive strategy to keep religious values relevant and acceptable to digital audiences (Uswatusolihah et.al.2025). However, when spiritual value is measured by views and engagement, there's a risk of reducing faith to mere algorithmic performance.

As a philosophical framework, this study also utilizes Berger and Luckmann's (1966) theory of the social construction of reality. According to them, social reality is constructed through three dialectical processes: externalization, objectivation, and internalization (Berger & Luckmann, 2016). In the context of digital media, this means that religious meaning does not exist naturally but is constructed through symbolic interactions between preachers, media, and audiences. Bang Zuma externalized his religious views through digital content production; these messages were then objectified in videos, comments, and algorithms; and ultimately re-internalized by audiences who affirmed his beliefs through digital interactions. This process produces a new plausibility structure, a system of social legitimacy in which religious truth derives not only from sacred texts but also from the public resonance generated in digital spaces. Berger and Luckmann's theory helps explain how apologetic discourse is not only conveyed but also constructed and negotiated through interactive and algorithmic mediatic mechanisms.

The three frameworks above—framing (Entman), commodification (Mosco), and social construction (Berger & Luckmann)—are combined to construct a comprehensive analytical model. Framing explains how the meaning of apologetics is formed at the discourse level; commodification explains how that meaning is produced and marketed under the logic of the media; while social construction explains how audiences internalize religious messages through symbolic interactions in the digital space.

Conceptually, the relationship between the three is visualized as a dialectical model of da'wah-commodification-algorithm (see Figure 1), in which religion, media, and the symbolic market influence each other in a circular fashion. This model asserts that Islamic apologetics in the digital era is a product of the dynamic interaction between faith, technology, and symbolic capitalism, which together shape a new religious reality in the digital public sphere.

Bang Zuma: A Case Study

An analysis of the video "THE LEADER HAS THE TITLE OF JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JESUS.. WHO ARE HIS FOLLOWERS???" from the Bang Zuma Official channel (uploaded March 6, 2025) shows that the discourse of Islamic apologetics in the digital space not only displays theological defense, but also functions as a form of ideological performance packaged with algorithmic logic and popular aesthetics.
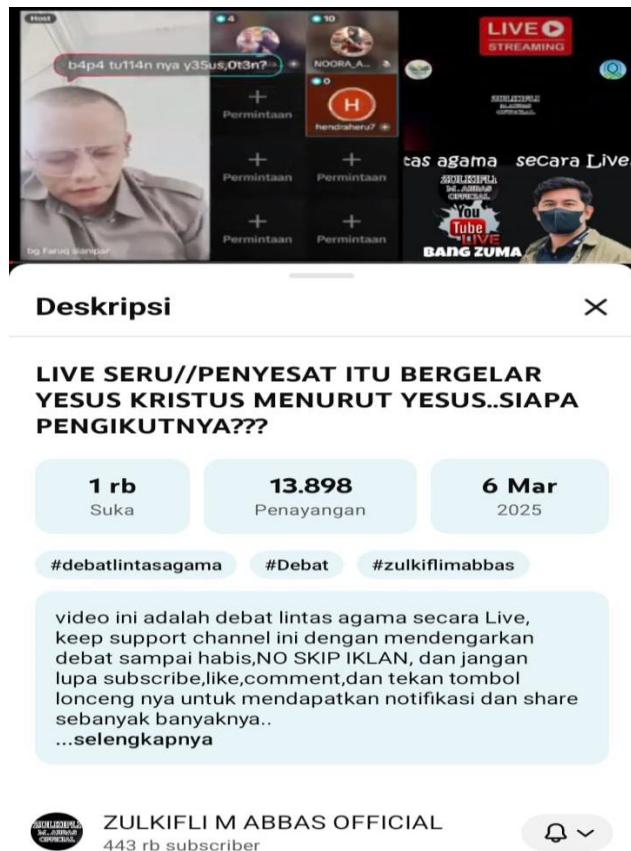
Picture 1. Screenshot of the video THE LEADER HAS THE TITLE OF JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JESUS... WHO ARE HIS FOLLOWERS???

Based on Robert Entman's (1993) framework, the results of the framing analysis can be explained through the following four dimensions: defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgment, and recommending treatment. Bang Zuma defined the core problem as a crisis of truth and the distortion of non-Islamic religious teachings, particularly regarding the figure of Jesus Christ, which he called "man-made." He positioned Islam as a rational and consistent theological system, while Christianity was seen as having lost the authenticity of its revelation. In this framing, YouTube functions as an arena for proving truth, where da'wah is positioned not merely as worship but also as an epistemological debate. The central issue constructed is not only theological but also symbolic: who has the right to define truth in the digital public sphere?

Bang Zuma attributed the cause of this truth crisis to human distortion of God's revelation and the dominance of Western secular logic. He believed that the distortion of the meaning of divinity resulted from the intervention of modern rationalism, which has pushed aside divine values. In the narrative, the "deviant" is not just a specific figure, but rather a non-Islamic system of thought deemed to be leading the people astray. Thus, the cause of the problem is personified in "deviant" figures and ideas, creating a kind of othering discourse, a distinction between "us" (Muslims) and "them" (the deviants).

Bang Zuma uses strong moral and theological language to frame Islam as the highest moral and epistemological authority. He cites verses from the Quran and the Hadith as the basis for his arguments, thereby strengthening Islam's position as the ultimate truth. Bang Zuma's emotional, rhetorical, and communicative style constructs a moral judgment that Islam is not only "true," but also that it "saves" people from erroneous thinking and misguided beliefs. This framework not only conveys a religious message but also evokes emotions that enhance the content's appeal on YouTube.

Bang Zuma's proposed solution is a return to monotheism and Islamic rationality. He emphasizes the importance of critical thinking based on faith and urges his audience to abandon secular logic, which he deems misleading. However, in a digital context, these recommendations also have performative implications: calls to subscribe, like, and share content. In this context, religious action blends with algorithmic action, where spiritual participation simultaneously enhances the visibility and monetization of preaching.

Table 1. Robert Entman's Framing Analysis of the Bang Zuma Official Narrative

Framing Elements (Robert Entman)	Description of Framing Analysis in Bang Zuma Official's Narrative
Define Problems	The main problem is defined as the distortion of Jesus' teachings in Christianity, which have been manipulated by biblical authors like Luke and Paul. Bang Zuma positions Christians as victims of "theological error" for accepting dogma without rational verification. He considers the teachings of Jesus' ascension to heaven and his divinity to be epistemic and historical problems, rather than revelations. This narrative constructs the image that modern Christology is a product of human invention, not the word of God.
Diagnose Causes	The causes of heresy are traced to the false authority of the Gospel writers (such as Luke, who was not an eyewitness), as well as Satan's intervention in Paul's teachings. In his discursive logic, Christian theological deviation is the result of Satan's "rule of the world" (referring to Luke 4:5–8) and a spiritual distortion of the original revelation. Thus, the root of the problem is not simply differences in interpretation, but rather the influence of dark forces that obscure the truth of monotheism.
Make Moral Judgment	Bang Zuma believes that Christian teachings lack moral and epistemological legitimacy because they are derived from inauthentic texts. He positions Islam as a religion of reform and the perfecting of revelation (replacing Judaism and Christianity). Through political metaphors ("old order-new order-reformation"), he asserts Islam's superiority as the final true religion. His moral judgment is apologetic-confrontational: opposing heresy while calling for spiritual enlightenment through the Quran.
Treatment Recommendation	The solution offered is a return to pure monotheism, namely worshiping God without the intermediary of Jesus or spirits. He invites Christians to rationally examine his scriptures and engage in open dialogue, even with challenges or financial contests, to prove that the one who came to Paul was Jesus, the son of Mary. This approach supports the use of digital apologetics to prove the truth of Islam and change public understanding of the authenticity of revelation. Ideologically, Bang Zuma's method is persuasive and dominant, aiming to position Islam as the sole source of truth in the online public sphere.

Textual analysis reveals that Bang Zuma's apologetics is not grounded in a neutral spiritual position. It has two concurrent dimensions: (1) The theological dimension, which affirms Islam as the ultimate truth; and (2) The media dimension, namely the transformation of truth into visual and symbolic objects. In short, digital apologetics marks a new chapter in the politics of religious representation in the era of algorithms. Da'wah is not only the preacher's duty to spread the truth, but also the production of symbolic values measured through likes, views, and engagement. In this case, religion becomes a cultural commodity, and theological truth is transformed into content tailored to the demands of the media and digital markets.

Bang Zuma's content analysis reveals several common apologetic practices that he employs in cyberspace. Zuma frequently uploads videos refuting anti-Islamic instructions or slander against Islam found online. In these videos, he uses theology or secular logic, such as comparing interpretations and refuting public misconceptions. This approach is consistent with the findings of the Framing Religious Hoaxes study, which shows that refuting religious hoaxes is fundamental to maintaining the image of religion and Islamic identity in the digital age (Fathurrohman et al., 2024). Zuma also uses live broadcasts for interactive and sometimes confrontational debates. These debates provide a space for narrative confrontation, where opponents raise secular concerns or challenge Islamic teachings, which Zuma counters with sometimes dramatic rebuttals. This format has two characteristics: first, preaching that must be explained, and second, theater due to its tension, provocation, and audience receptivity. Short-form content, such as video reels or clips with apologetic punchlines, easily goes viral. This content typically presents apologetic arguments in a concise, visually engaging format, sometimes with dramatic editing effects, and interspersed with humor or a lighthearted style, making it easier for younger audiences to digest and share. Bang Zuma built a persona as an "apologetic young man" who is close to the millennial generation or Gen Z. This persona is not just an identity, but also a communication strategy: narrative, speaking style, content choices, and visual aesthetics are developed so that the audience feels Bang Zuma is

relatable/unfiltered. This branding strengthens audience trust and loyalty, which then increases engagement, subscribers/followers, and monetization potential.

The Commodification of Religion in the Algorithmic Era

The phenomenon of Bang Zuma's Islamic apologetics on YouTube demonstrates that digital da'wah cannot be separated from the logic of media capitalism and the attention economy. According to Mosco (2009), digital da'wah involves three main forms of commodification: content, audience, and labor. This process demonstrates how religious messages shift from purely spiritual value to symbolic currency that can be monetized through platform algorithms. In this section, complex theological messages are simplified into a digestible and viral storyline. Concepts about God, prophecy, and critiques of atheism are conveyed through concise and engaging video rhetoric, capable of evoking emotion and engaging the audience.

This description aligns with what Mosco (2009), calls the commodification of content, whereby spiritual content and values are transformed into symbolic, marketable commodities. Today, religious ideas are judged not only by their moral worth but also by their algorithmic efforts: how many clicks will they generate? How many likes? How many comments? How much money will they raise in donations? In the commodification of content, theological truth is increasingly governed by the logic of the platform, rather than solely by religious authority. Lectures become communication products competing in a digital symbolic marketplace, where speed, sensation, and visual aesthetics are more important than the depth of argument.

Commodification also occurs at the audience level. Viewers are no longer simply recipients of religious messages, but rather become part of the digital workforce (audience labor) that contributes to the platform's economic circulation. Every interaction—likes, comments, shares, donations, and TikTok gifts—consists of economic data utilized by the algorithmic system to increase content visibility and monetization. According to Choirin et al. (2025), audiences in the context of digital da'wah work unwittingly as producers of economic value, because their participation directly increases the potential income of creators and platforms. In this context, the audience's religious activities (such as amen to comments or sharing Islamic preaching videos) serve a dual purpose: they are both an expression of faith and the production of symbolic capital. Islamic preaching becomes a form of spiritual prosumerism, where religious consumption also means the production of economic value.

Bang Zuma himself occupies a dual role as both a digital preacher and a digital worker. He not only delivers Islamic messages but also carries out content production functions that are subject to the logic of algorithms and the rhythms of digital capitalism. As a creator, he must maintain consistency in production, relevance, visual quality, and engagement to survive in the competitive social media ecosystem. According to Mosco (2009), this is the commodification of labor, where spiritual and intellectual energy is transformed into corporate work that creates economic value. Da'wah is no longer simply a moral calling, but a digital profession that requires the highest levels of productivity and performativity. A da'i now functions as a "spiritual worker" in a symbolic capitalist system where respect is measured through algorithms.

Preaching as an Algorithmic Performance

The phenomenon of Bang Zuma's apologetics represents the mediatization of religion, as described by Hjarvard (2008), in which religious forms, functions, and expressions are reconfigured by the logic of digital media. In this context, da'wah (preaching) not only becomes a means of spreading Islamic teachings but also appears as an algorithmic performance subject to mechanisms of visibility, performative aesthetics, and platform calculations. Emotional rhetoric, theatrical speaking styles, and the use of provocative titles form what Campbell & Cheong, 2023), call the spectacle of religion, where faith, spirituality, and religious authority are presented as a form of mass-consumed spiritual entertainment. Da'wah on social media, therefore, operates as a performative practice that combines moral messages, branding strategies, and visual drama to capture public attention in the attention economy. Furthermore, platform algorithms function as curators of truth, determining which content is deemed worthy of viewing, sharing, and dissemination. Within this ecosystem, platform algorithms function as curators of truth, determining which content is deemed worthy of viewing and sharing. Within this framework, religious authority shifts from the authority of the chain of knowledge to algorithmic authority. Recent examples demonstrate that religious content creators are shaped not only by their religious scholarly background, but also by their digital engagement performance and mastery of platform logic (Sierocki, 2024). The validity of a preaching message now depends not on spiritual depth or scholarly credibility, but rather on digital performance, number of views, level of interaction, and resonance in the online public sphere.

Digital da'wah is no longer merely a religious activity, but also a mediated religious performance, as belief in narrative vectors and aesthetics of visibility. In this algorithmically regulated space, religion becomes a semiotic and performative object, while spiritual values are negotiated through the rhythms of engagement and machine calculations. On the other hand, Muhtadi (2019) reminds us of the sensitivity of religious communicators who must use da'wah language that respects the principles of religious sanctity, so that digital da'wah does not lose its spiritual side in the face of the demands of digital visibility, but rather is able to fulfill its function as a means of dialogue and harmonious friendship in the spirit of *rahmatan lil alamin*. The digitalization of da'wah requires an understanding of how participatory media contributes to public action. Turmudi (2019) explains that participatory media has three main characteristics: public-to-many, where everyone can share; participatory, where the broad participation of many individuals makes the media valuable to them; and networked, which enables connections on a larger scale and faster communication. In the context of Islamic apologetics in the digital space, these characteristics create a dilemma: on the one hand, they facilitate the mass dissemination of religious messages, but on the other hand, they require the content to adapt to a participatory logic that demands active engagement. Therefore, spiritual messages must be packaged in formats that encourage participation amidst the competition for digital attention.

The Dialectic of Spirituality and Symbolic Capitalism

While commodification practices carry the risk of diminishing religious values, the phenomenon of digital da'wah also demonstrates how apologetic practices can creatively adapt to the logic of modern media and the attention economy. Recent research by Fadilla & Isma Indriyani (2025) found that digital Islamic da'wah in Indonesia is conditioned by platform algorithms that prioritize engagement and visibility. In reality, spiritual value is often measured by views, likes, comments, and donations rather than pure theological depth (Fadilla & Isma Indriyani, 2025). Within this framework, da'wah content becomes a product that can be bought and sold symbolically.

At the same time, commodification in Bang Zuma's case is not an entirely negative process. However, it is not necessarily a bad thing; rather, it is an evolutionary step to maintain presence and existence in a highly competitive algorithmic landscape. Commodification, in this sense, becomes a kind of middle ground where the sea is navigated in such a way that da'wah (Islamic preaching) does not lose its direction, spiritual values are maintained, but also adapts to the platform's logic of providing visibility and performance. This phenomenon highlights the dialectic between spirituality and the symbolic market: on the one hand, there is a demand for the sanctity of religious messages; on the other, there is a need for these messages to be appealing and visible in the digital realm. Digital da'wah has become an arena of ongoing negotiation: how to package divine messages in media formats without losing their essence, while also adapting to the mechanisms of information capitalism—the logic of algorithms, visibility, and symbolic capital.

Mukarom et al. (2024) noted that despite the widespread dissemination of Islamic teachings through digital technology, it also appropriately cautioned against non-Islamic content. Digital literacy is crucial to ensure technology is used responsibly and does not become a vehicle for the spread of disinformation. The real challenge in creating Islamic apologetic content is finding a balance between the appeal of algorithm-driven engagement and maintaining the spiritual integrity at the heart of apologetics. From the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu's symbolic capital theory, digital visibility and engagement can be understood as new symbolic capital that determines social legitimacy in mediatized spaces. Recent examples show that digital religious actors derive legitimacy not solely from traditional sanad (religious lineage) or authority, but from the performance of visibility and resonance on digital platforms (Annaki et al., 2025). In this context, spirituality is no longer merely an internal experience or a closed community, but rather an experience that is displayed, measured, and evaluated in an algorithmic public arena.

Within this framework, we can also read that symbolic capitalism in digital da'wah operates through three key mechanisms: (1) content selection based on visual and emotional appeal, (2) platform orientation towards engagement metrics as a benchmark for da'wah success, and (3) the production of religious identity packaged as a media product as well as social consumption. As stated by (Uswatusolihah et al. 2025) that religion on social media lives in an ecosystem where spiritual values are transformed into numbers, metrics, and rankings, an attention economy that demands performance. This study highlights that digital Islamic apologetics should not be viewed as a rigid separation between pure spirituality and total capitalism. Rather, it is a dynamic space where faith, technology, and the symbolic market continuously interact. Digital da'wah is formed as a mediated

religio-cultural process, where religious meaning is continuously shaped by platform algorithms, visibility trends, and the aesthetics of online presence.

Synthesis of Discussion

The empirical findings of this study confirm that contemporary Islamic apologetics practices are undergoing structural transformation through two concurrent and interconnected mechanisms: mediatization and commodification. These two processes do not operate independently, but rather build upon each other within a digital ecosystem that fundamentally alters how apologetic discourse is produced, distributed, and consumed in the digital public sphere (Hjarvard ,2008; Lövheim & Hjarvard 2019; Lundby, 2023). In addition, the results of this study validate the initial theoretical assumption that digital Islamic apologetics cannot be understood linearly or unidirectionally, but rather must be analyzed as a cyclical-interactive phenomenon at the center of the interaction of four constitutive elements: (1) da'wah as a theological mission, (2) commodification as the platform's economic-political logic, (3) algorithms as technical infrastructure for content curation, and (4) audiences as consumption-participation actors. These four elements form a digital Islamic apologetics ecosystem that dynamically influences each other, creating a feedback loop that continuously reshapes the practice, substance, and purpose of Islamic apologetics itself. The commodification of Islamic apologetics in the digital public sphere cannot be understood in a linear or unidimensional manner. Instead, this phenomenon must be analyzed as the emergent nature of the cyclical interaction of four constitutive elements: da'wah, commodification, algorithms, and audiences. These four elements do not operate independently or sequentially, but rather in a simultaneous and mutually reinforcing feedback loop, creating a complex, ambiguous, and constantly changing apologetics ecosystem.

This research demonstrates that religion in the algorithmic era is not simply a communicated text, but rather a reality mediated, produced, negotiated, and consumed within the digital ecosystem. In this context, Bang Zuma's Apologetics activities are a concrete manifestation of Islamic faith as a digital performance, where religion is exhibited, staged, and traded for profit. Vigilance against this trend is crucial to prevent digital da'wah from being swept away by the currents of symbolic capitalism that dominate the religious public sphere in our era.

Based on Mosco's (2009) commodification theory, this study identifies three main types of commodification in digital apologetics: Commodification of content, commodification of audiences, and commodification of labor. These three activities demonstrate that religion is not only mediated but also produced, staged, and traded within the media system. Islamic apologetics for the digital age, therefore, is a dialectical interaction between spirituality and symbolic capitalism, where faith meets the market, and *da'wah* adapts to algorithms.

Referring to the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 2023), such religious reality is not considered something that already exists, but is formed through the interaction between communicators, media, and audiences. Da'wah takes the form of a social technology that not only transfers spiritual values, but also creates new practices in experiencing religion through visual, algorithmic, and participatory means. This study explores a political economy approach to the concept of commodity fetishism in the context of digital religion and provides insights into the commodification of religion, combining framing theory and the political economy of communication on the one hand, and connecting this duo to the social construction of reality on the other. The dialectical model of da'wah-commodification-audience-algorithm found shows that religious reality is increasingly shaped in response to the interaction between meaning structures, symbolic economies, and intermediary technologies (Salamon, 2024). This finding opens up space for the formulation of a new idea of the algorithmic commodification of religion, which suggests that algorithms operate not only as spiritual but also as economic intermediaries. For preachers and religious organizations, the findings of this study emphasize the importance of digital literacy and media ethics. Digital speech is inextricably linked to algorithmic logic. Therefore, we need communication strategies that allow messages to maintain their purity while adapting to the platform's operating system. For the digital environment, this research serves as an important meditative element to ensure that religious media consumption is not limited to spiritual entertainment but becomes a space for objective dialogue and moral development. Commodification can expand the reach of da'wah through increased mediatization, but it also exposes our faith to the risk of being reduced to mere algorithmic execution. Therefore, there must be a moral awareness that clicks, views, and donations are both spiritual and financial transactions. Da'wah must be anchored in principles of honesty, social concern, and responsibility, not simply for visibility and popularity.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that Islamic apologetics in the digital era, as represented by Bang Zuma, is a response to the epistemological and economic shifts in current da'wah. By applying Robert Entman's (1993) analytical framework, this study finds that Bang Zuma develops an apologetic narrative by portraying Islam as the truest path and marginalizing other religions as epistemological variations. This discursive space creates a religious discourse that carries a secular image, characterised as antagonistic, rational, and performative. However, in the digital space of social media, things are not entirely neutral. The symbolic economy of digital da'wah requires visibility, participation, and monetization. As a result, digital Islamic apologetics operates as a mediated religious space, where truth, authority, and spirituality are debated as part of a public performance dictated by the attention economy. This marks the emergence of a new era in religious communication where faith is no longer simply believed but also displayed, measured, and traded. The dialectical model of da'wah–commodification–audience–algorithm demonstrates that religious reality is increasingly shaped by the reciprocal relationship between structures of meaning, symbolic economies, and technological media. This observation opens up space for the emergence of a new concept, the algorithmic commodification of religion, which focuses more on how algorithms become both spiritual and economic mediators.

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Palestine in Indonesian foreign policy: The relevance of Soekarno's speech at the 1955 AAC

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Abstract:

The Palestinian issue is one of the most complex conflicts in contemporary global politics, reflecting systemic injustice and the failure of international institutions to uphold human rights and national sovereignty. As a country born from the decolonization struggle, Indonesia has consistently voiced support for Palestinian independence, both through diplomatic, humanitarian, and international forums. This article reveals that President Soekarno's speech at the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (AAC) was not just a symbolic statement, but became the ideological and moral foundation for Indonesia's foreign policy towards Palestine. Through a qualitative approach with a historical-diplomatic method, this article analyzes the content of Soekarno's speech, KAA documents, and the practice of Indonesian diplomacy from the early era of independence to the post-Reformation period. This research demonstrates that the values of anti-colonialism, South-South solidarity, and global justice, as conveyed by Soekarno, remain the foundation of Indonesia's stance towards Palestine to this day. The scientific contribution of this study lies in strengthening the post-colonial perspective in the study of Indonesian diplomacy and affirming the importance of ideological heritage in shaping the direction of value-based foreign policy.

Keywords: anti-colonialism; Asian-African Conference; Palestine; Indonesian diplomacy; Soekarno's speech.

INTRODUCTION

After World War II, the world order underwent a massive transformation with the emergence of two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. The rivalry between the two triggered the Cold War, an ideological conflict that divided the world into two major blocs: the capitalist Western bloc led by the United States, and the communist Eastern bloc led by the Soviet Union (Haba, 2022). New nations emerging from post-war decolonization, particularly in Asia and Africa, were caught in a tug-of-war between these two powers (Eckel, 2023). In this context, the need arose to establish a third axis independent of these two great powers, which later became the basis for the birth of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Non-Aligned Movement did not emerge in a vacuum, but rather as an active response by newly independent nations to global geopolitical pressures. These nations did not want to become pawns in global ideological conflicts, but instead sought to fight for independence, development, and international peace based on the principle of mutual respect for sovereignty (Freedman, 2008). The birth of the Non-Aligned Movement has strong roots in the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (AAC) in Bandung, initiated by countries such as Indonesia, India, Egypt, and Yugoslavia. In this forum, leaders of the global South began to forge political and economic solidarity as an alternative to Western and Eastern domination.

Indonesia, under Sukarno's leadership, played a key role in shaping the ideological framework of the Non-Aligned Movement. Sukarno's speech at the opening of the 1955 Asian-African Conference (AAC) served as a moral rallying cry for nations to reject colonialism in any form, including modern colonialism through economic or military intervention by major powers (Soekarno, 1955). The conference not only condemned colonialism in Africa and Asia but also voiced concern for the plight of Palestine as an unresolved global issue. Solidarity with Palestine became part of the early narrative of the Non-Aligned Movement's anti-colonial struggle.

The emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement demonstrated that developing countries actively participated in shaping the dynamics of international relations. This movement provided a forum for Southern countries to collectively voice their interests, including supporting the Palestinian cause in various multilateral forums (Dinkel, 2019). In this context, Indonesia's support for Palestine is not merely a bilateral policy, but part of a historical and ideological commitment to a more just and equitable world order. The spirit of Bandung and the principles of Non-Aligned Movement remain an inspiration for Indonesian diplomacy to this day.

Indonesia was one of the first countries in Asia to successfully proclaim its independence after World War II, precisely on August 17, 1945. This independence was not the result of a gift, but through a long struggle against Dutch colonialism and Japanese occupation (Kahin, 1952). Against this background, the spirit of anti-colonialism not only became the basis for the formation of Indonesia's national identity, but also became the moral foundation in the direction of its foreign policy. President Sukarno consistently brought this anti-colonial narrative in various international forums as part of Indonesia's ideological diplomacy in the early days of independence.

In international forums, Indonesia did not take a passive position as a new nation simply accepting the post-war global order. Instead, Indonesia emerged as a leader among Third World nations, prioritizing solidarity with nations still under colonialism (Anwar, 2005). This was reflected in Indonesia's active role in organizing the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung, which marked a milestone in the birth of South-South solidarity. At the conference, Sukarno emphasized that the struggle of Asian and African nations was not over as long as colonialism persisted in new forms, including economic imperialism and military occupation.

Indonesia's position as a new nation with an anti-colonial spirit has led it to consistently support independence for other nations, including Palestine. In his speech at the Asian-African Conference (AAC), Sukarno stated that modern colonialism could take any form and that the world should not be deceived by the illusion of formal independence while the people remain oppressed (Soekarno, 1955). Therefore, Indonesia's support for Palestine from the outset was not merely a political expression, but part of the consistent anti-colonial principles espoused since the nation's inception. Solidarity with Palestine is a concrete manifestation of these principles.

Indonesia also leverages its position as a non-aligned nation to reject all forms of domination by major powers that reinforce new colonial practices. In various UN and Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) forums, Indonesia actively advocates for Palestinian independence, and to this day, it has not established diplomatic relations with Israel as a principled political stance (Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2020). Thus, Indonesia's position as a new nation championing anti-colonialism is not merely a matter of history, but a foundation for moral continuity in its foreign policy that continues to this day.

The Palestinian issue has long been a symbol of international injustice and the failure of the global community to uphold the principles of international law. Since the founding of the state of Israel in 1948 and the displacement of more than 700,000 Palestinians in the Nakba, this issue has not only become a regional issue in the Middle East, but has become a global concern because it concerns land rights, refugees, and colonization (Khalidi, 2020). Although the UN has issued various resolutions regarding the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, the reality on the ground shows that the occupation, illegal settlements, and violence continue without any firm sanctions against violators (United Nations, 1948).

In the context of global politics, Palestine is not simply a bilateral issue between Palestine and Israel, but rather reflects the imbalance of power in the international system. When powerful nations use their veto power to protect their allies, the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people are neglected. Therefore, newly independent nations in Asia and Africa, which share a similar historical experience as colonized nations, feel a moral

attachment to the Palestinian struggle (Prashad, 2007). This solidarity is driven by the values of justice and anti-colonialism that are at the heart of the world order envisioned by Third World nations.

The 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (AAC) in Bandung was a significant turning point in internationalizing the Palestinian issue from a Third World perspective. Attended by 29 Asian and African countries, Palestine was explicitly identified as a region still suffering from colonialism (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh & Daley, 2018). Conference participants agreed that the Palestinian struggle was part of a global struggle to liberate the world from all forms of foreign domination, both classical and new colonialism (Lloyd, 2012). Thus, the AAC became an important platform for building political consensus in support of Palestinian rights on the world stage.

Indonesia, as the conference host and a pioneer of Asian-African solidarity, played a central role in placing the Palestinian issue on the main agenda of the Asian-African Conference (AAC). President Sukarno's speech firmly rejected colonialism in all its forms and urged Asian-African countries not to be trapped in the euphoria of false independence if other nations were still oppressed (Soekarno, 1955). This call was not merely a rhetorical expression, but also served as a moral foundation for the diplomacy of participating countries in collectively supporting Palestinian independence (Gilboa, 2006). The 1955 Asian-African Conference also marked the beginning of the strengthening of Palestine's political position in the international arena, outside the framework of the Middle East conflict.

The relevance of the Asian-African Conference (AAC) to the Palestinian issue remains palpable today. The principles of solidarity, sovereignty, and justice affirmed at the Bandung Conference remain the moral foundation for many developing countries in addressing injustices against Palestine (Dinkel, 2019). In this context, the AAC holds not only historical value but also normative value that shapes the direction of global solidarity toward Palestine (Hongoh, 2016). Therefore, understanding the history of the AAC and its position on Palestine is crucial for formulating contemporary diplomatic strategies based on the values and history of the struggles of colonized nations.

Although Indonesia's support for Palestine has been ongoing since the beginning of independence, few studies have in-depth explored the historical and ideological roots of this stance, particularly in relation to President Sukarno's speech at the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (KAA) (Kelman, 1992). The speech is often viewed as a rhetorical symbol of anti-colonialism, but has not been widely studied as a normative foundation that shaped the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy towards Palestine (Mudzakir, 2025). Therefore, studies are needed that not only examine Indonesia's support politically and diplomatically, but also explore the basic values that shape the consistency of Indonesia's position in international forums regarding Palestine.

Based on this research problem, this study attempts to explore in depth how Sukarno's monumental speech at the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (AAC) significantly influenced the direction and foundation of Indonesian diplomacy regarding the Palestinian issue, both in the early days of independence and in the dynamics of contemporary foreign policy. The main question is to what extent the values of anti-colonialism and solidarity with oppressed nations that Sukarno advocated in Bandung remain a reference for Indonesia in determining its political position on the Palestine-Israel conflict to this day. By formulating focused research questions that cover the substance of the speech, its impact on diplomatic policy, and its continued relevance in the modern era, this study emphasizes the importance of revisiting historical heritage as a foundation for the legitimacy of Indonesian foreign policy.

In literature reviews, Indonesia's support for Palestine is typically analyzed through two main approaches: historical-political and international relations. The historical-political approach, as demonstrated in the work of George McTurnan Kahin, views Indonesia as a nation born out of a long struggle for decolonization, thus possessing a moral commitment to side with nations still experiencing oppression (Abegunrin & Manyeruke, 2020). In this context, Sukarno is positioned as a central figure who successfully instilled the ideology of anti-colonialism and global solidarity into Indonesian foreign policy. Thus, Indonesia's political stance toward Palestine stems not only from geopolitical calculations but also from a historical awareness that has been an integral part of Indonesia's diplomatic identity since the beginning of independence (Setiawati, 2024).

Dewi Fortuna Anwar, in her study, revealed that Indonesian foreign policy emphasizes the importance of continuity of values and principles in Indonesian diplomacy, especially in the post-Suharto era (Anwar, 2005). She demonstrated that support for Palestine is not merely a symbolic policy, but rather part of Indonesia's long-term commitment to a just international order. This study is relevant in bridging the gap between historical values (Sukarno's speech) and contemporary policy practices.

On the other hand, a constructivist approach to international relations studies also provides a strong theoretical basis for understanding Indonesia's diplomatic behavior. Christian Reus-Smit argues that states act not only based on strategic interests but also on identities and values shaped by history and political culture

(Reus-Smit, 1999). This approach is used in this research to understand how Sukarno's speeches shaped Indonesia's diplomatic identity, particularly in responding to global issues such as Palestine.

This research utilizes a variety of sources to ensure analytical depth and accuracy of historical context. Primary sources include primary documents such as President Sukarno's speech at the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (AAC), the diplomatic archives of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Final Communiqué of the Bandung Conference, the official product of international politics produced by the forum (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023). Secondary sources include academic books, journal articles, and policy reports from national and international institutions relevant to the Palestinian issue and Indonesian foreign policy. This diversity of sources provides a strong foundation for integrating historical analysis and contemporary readings of Indonesia's diplomatic orientation.

METHOD

Methodologically, this study uses a historical qualitative approach to understand the dynamics of Indonesian foreign policy through the lens of diplomatic history (Santana-Cordero & Szabó, 2019). This approach not only attempts to reconstruct past events and policies based on written sources but also interprets the socio-political context underlying the birth of these policies. The study is descriptive-analytical in nature, focusing on ideological narratives and the continuity of values from Soekarno's speech at the 1955 Asian-African Conference to its application in contemporary foreign policy (Kalaian et al., 2019).

The primary method used is a textual analysis of Sukarno's speech at the opening of the 1955 Asian-African Conference (AAC). This analysis was conducted by identifying rhetorical structures, ideological keywords, and anti-colonial symbolism reflecting support for the Palestinian struggle. The speech is treated as a diplomatic artifact with both symbolic and strategic functions in shaping the framework of Indonesian foreign policy values. Official documents of the AAC and the Bandung Final Communiqué were also analyzed to strengthen the understanding of the historical context of Sukarno's messages (Brydon, 2022).

Next, an interpretation of the diplomatic content and media representations is conducted to assess the extent to which the messages in the speech were adopted and developed in Indonesian diplomatic practice. The sources used include official press releases from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reports from international forums, and archives of national newspapers such as Harian Rakjat and Pedoman, which covered the Asian-African Conference (AAC) directly. This analysis provides insight into the resonance of Sukarno's speech in the public sphere and the construction of its narrative as part of the national diplomatic identity.

To strengthen the research focus, a case study approach was employed, using Palestine as a representative example of Indonesia's anti-colonial foreign policy (Quintão et al., 2020). This case study allows for an in-depth understanding of how the principles of Sukarno's speech were implemented in the form of diplomatic support for Palestine through various channels such as the UN, the OIC, and bilateral relations. Thus, this research methodology provides a comprehensive framework for exploring the continuity between Indonesia's historical legacy and diplomatic practices in the modern era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Ideological Foundations of Anti-Colonial Diplomacy and Support for Palestine

President Sukarno's opening speech at the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (AAC) is one of the most monumental pieces of political rhetoric in the history of Global South international relations, as it marked the starting point for Asian and African nations to articulate collective solidarity against modern colonialism (Shimazu, 2014). From the outset, Sukarno delivered a stark warning that colonialism still lives on in a new guise. His legendary line, "Colonialism is not yet dead," served as a global wake-up call, raising awareness that political independence does not automatically signal the end of oppression (Soekarno, 1955). He rejected Western claims that colonialism had ended and asserted that imperialism had now evolved into a form of neo-colonialism: economic domination, military intervention, and more subtle political control (Nkrumah, 1965).

It was in this context of ongoing global oppression that Sukarno introduced the Palestinian issue as the most visible symbol of a nation deprived of its political rights, territory, and future (Rasyid et al., 2024). According to Suryadinata (1998), Sukarno recognized that the Palestinian plight was the most blatant evidence of contemporary colonialism supported by the world's hegemonic powers (Suryadinata, 2018). The mention of Palestine in his speech aimed to position the issue not merely as a Middle Eastern issue, but as an integral part

of the Asian-African decolonization agenda (Bhattarai & Yousef, 2025). Thus, Indonesia's support for Palestine was built on an ideological foundation: universal solidarity with oppressed nations, not merely religious or geopolitical considerations (Aswar et al., 2025).

Rhetorically, Sukarno structured his speech with a strong balance of ethos, pathos, and logos. From an ethos perspective, he spoke as the leader of a nation that had been colonized for more than three centuries—a strong moral position to call for solidarity (Bayertz, 1999). From a pathos perspective, he outlined the real suffering of oppressed nations, especially the Palestinian people, thereby evoking empathy and political militancy among the other delegates. Meanwhile, from a logos perspective, Sukarno explained the structure of economic imperialism and military domination as a rational framework for collective action (Wicaksana, 2016). His rhetoric emphasized that the independence of one nation is incomplete as long as others continue to suffer—a philosophical argument that would later become the foundation of Indonesia's foreign policy: free and active with a humanitarian orientation (Adiputera & Missbach, 2021).

Sukarno's speech also displayed a powerful emotional style through the diction of struggle such as "rise," "don't be fooled," and the metaphor of colonialism as a monster in a new form. This provocative and inspiring language not only increased the power of persuasion but also strengthened the ideological cohesion between the Asian-African delegations. The success of this rhetoric is evident in how Sukarno's speech was not merely a symbolic discourse, but also influenced the content of the Final Communiqué of the Asian-African Conference, which explicitly affirmed the right to self-determination of Palestine and global condemnation of colonialism and racism (Phillips, 2016). This shows that the speech functioned as an effective diplomatic instrument in forming an international consensus.

Sukarno treated Palestine as the moral axis of the decolonization struggle. He emphasized that recognizing Palestinian independence meant rejecting global injustice. Sayigh believes that the successful inclusion of the Palestinian issue in the final communique of the Asian-African Conference (AAC) marked a milestone in the internationalization of the Palestinian issue through a solid global coalition of Southern countries (Sayigh, 2024). Thus, support for Palestine reflects Indonesia's diplomatic identity as a pioneering nation in the struggle for global justice.

The geopolitical context of the Bandung Speech was inseparable from the height of the Cold War. The world was divided into two major blocs: liberal capitalism under the United States and communism under the Soviet Union (Marks, 2012). In this situation, Sukarno introduced a third force, a new axis of world power he called the New Emerging Forces (NEFO), which rejected the dominance of these two blocs (Tarmizi, 2021). Here, Palestine emerged as a representation of a nation caught in the tug-of-war of superpower interests. Sukarno emphasized that true independence should not be under the shadow of interference from any major power, including those claiming global ideology (Argenti & Istiningdias, 2018). This means that Indonesia's support for Palestine arose from an anti-imperialist geopolitical awareness, not from alliance politics or sectarian interests (Husain, 2007).

From an international relations perspective, the Bandung Speech can be seen as an early manifestation of Indonesia's diplomatic identity (Acharya, 2016). Wendt (1999) emphasized that national identity is the foundation for shaping foreign policy preferences (Wendt, 1999). Sukarno's speech became the narrative birth of Indonesia's diplomatic identity as a nation that positioned itself at the forefront of the global struggle against colonialism and injustice (Nessel, 2025). This identity was then inherited across regimes: from Sukarno to the New Order and continued into the Reformation era. This proves that support for Palestine is an ideological constant in Indonesian diplomacy (Anshori & Zakaria, 2016).

On the other hand, Sukarno can also be understood as a norm entrepreneur, an actor who championed moral norms for international acceptance (Teo, 2022). Through the Asian-African Conference (AAC), Sukarno successfully pushed for the transformation of the Palestinian issue from a regional conflict to an international norm concerning the right of nations to independence (Noor Fahmi Pramuji, 2020). He created a collective moral awareness that defending Palestine was tantamount to upholding the principle of universal decolonization. Furthermore, he shifted the Palestinian issue from a mere geopolitical issue to a global ethical realm—a value that has subsequently been continuously advocated by Asian and African countries in various multilateral forums such as the UN and the OIC (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023).

The relevance of Sukarno's speech is also evident in Indonesian diplomatic practices after 1955. The Bandung Speech became the normative foundation for Indonesian foreign policy, consistently supporting the struggles of non-independent nations such as Namibia and Papua New Guinea, rejecting apartheid in South Africa, and playing an active role in the Palestinian independence struggle in various international forums (Wangge & Lawson, 2023). This shows that the speech has been institutionalized in Indonesian diplomatic

values. Nurmila & Rahmatullah even called the speech the moral constitution of Indonesian foreign policy (Nurmila & Rahmatullah, 2022).

Analytical summary shows that Sukarno's speech at the 1955 Asian-African Conference (AAC) had three significant impacts at three levels. First, at the national level, this speech shaped Indonesia's foreign policy identity as an anti-colonial nation and defender of the plight of oppressed peoples (Clark, 2011). Second, at the Asia-Africa regional level, this speech encouraged the consolidation of Southern countries in a united voice supporting Palestinian independence (Balfour et al., 2022). Third, at the global level, this speech marked the beginning of multilateral diplomacy pro-Palestinian independence in international forums (Wajner, 2017). Therefore, this speech is often considered a blueprint for Indonesia's diplomacy of principle, namely diplomacy that favors values, not power.

With a powerful narrative, Sukarno portrayed the world as entering a crucial historical phase, a "transitional period" leading to the birth of a new order: one no longer controlled by colonialism, whether physical or economic (Fajar, 2020). Within this grand vision, Palestinian independence was the moral key that determined whether the decolonization struggle truly achieved its goals. Thus, the Palestinian issue in the Bandung Speech was not a rhetorical ornament, but rather a central pillar in establishing global anti-colonial norms (Pham & Shilliam, 2016).

Ultimately, Sukarno's speech not only stirred the emotions of his audience but also moved the structure of international politics. He combined morality, strategy, and solidarity in a diplomatic formulation that spoke not only of Indonesia but also of universal humanity (Shekhar, 2018). Therefore, Sukarno's speech at the 1955 Asian-African Conference (AAC) was a historical moment that left a lasting impression on the architecture of international relations, while also becoming a permanent foundation for Indonesia's support for Palestine to this day (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023). In the simplest yet most powerful political language, Sukarno wanted to emphasize that the struggle is not over as long as there is still a nation living under colonial rule (Borgias, 2012).

To clarify the structure of the academic argumentation in the previous clarification, the following presents a synthesis in tabular form. The purpose of this table is to map the relationships between the main messages in Sukarno's speech, the rhetorical style used, the geopolitical context, and its immediate and long-term impact on Indonesian diplomacy and the Palestinian struggle. Thus, this table will demonstrate that Sukarno's speech was not merely a monumental oration, but also a normative and strategic framework for Indonesian foreign policy.

Table 2. Core Discussion and Linkages to Indonesia's Pro-Palestine Diplomacy

Dimensions of Analysis	Key Findings	Implications for the Palestinian Issue
Ideological Message of Speech	"Colonialism is not yet dead" → colonialism evolves into neo-colonialism	Palestine is positioned as the most obvious example of modern colonialism so it must be the main agenda of decolonization.
Sukarno's Rhetorical Strategy	A combination of ethos (Indonesia's moral legitimacy), pathos (the suffering of the Palestinian people), logos (analysis of imperialism)	Generating collective empathy and support for moral positions in international diplomacy
Bandung as a Political Arena of the Global South	Formation of a third front: New Emerging Forces	Support for Palestine as a symbol of rejection of the domination of the two major Cold War blocs
Final press release AAC	Recognition of Palestine's right to independence & condemnation of colonialism	Internationalization of the Palestinian issue in the Asia-Africa multilateral forum
Soekarno as a Norm Entrepreneur	Transforming the Palestinian issue from a regional conflict to an international norm	The formation of a collective moral awareness that Palestine is part of the universal decolonization struggle.
Indonesian Diplomatic Identity	Free and active politics based on anti-colonialism and humanity	Consistent support for Palestine across regimes until the Reformation era
Multilevel Impact	National, Asia-Africa Regional, Global	Indonesian diplomacy is a pioneer of diplomacy of principle in defending Palestinian rights.

If we examine Table 1, it is clear that every element in Sukarno's speech directly correlates to strengthening Indonesia's diplomatic position on the Palestinian issue. The speech's ideological message was not only born from the long experience of colonialism in Indonesia, but also became a theoretical framework capable of explaining Palestinian suffering as part of a global system of oppression (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2014). Sukarno's persuasive strategy also helped expand Indonesia's moral legitimacy by presenting itself as a nation that not only fought for itself but also became a voice for other subordinate nations (Ahlstrand & Maniam, 2025).

The Asian-African Conference (AAC) became the first institutional space to officially elevate Palestine from a regional issue to an international one. The Final Communiqué demonstrated how Sukarno's rhetoric and ideology transformed global discourse, thereby gaining Palestine a new political position on the world diplomatic map (Muhammad Irfan Gati & Abd. Hafid, 2024). This was further confirmed in subsequent developments, as Indonesia continued to actively participate in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the United Nations in advocating for Palestinian rights. In other words, the speech's impact was not symbolic, but structural and sustainable.

Furthermore, the table shows that Sukarno's speech served as the foundation of Indonesia's diplomatic identity. This identity was shaped by anti-colonial values, solidarity with the Global South, and a commitment to the right to self-determination. The continuity of this identity is evident in the consistency of Indonesia's foreign policy, even after Sukarno left power (Quah, 2025). Thus, support for Palestine was not a short-term political move, but rather an ideological consequence of the Republic's founding principles.

The Impact of the Speech on the Direction of Indonesian Diplomacy

President Sukarno's speech at the opening of the 1955 Asian-African Conference (AAC) had a direct impact on the political climate and the direction of the conference's discussions. The participating countries, most of whom had recently gained independence from colonialism, welcomed the speech enthusiastically and used it as a moral framework for formulating a shared political stance (Soekarno, 1955). In plenary and committee forums, several delegations, including Egypt, India, and Burma, expressed their appreciation for Soekarno's firm stance against colonialism in all its forms. As a result, the Palestinian issue was successfully included in the Final Communiqué, making this conference one of the first international forums to explicitly recognize the Palestinian struggle (Pressman, 2020).

The positive reaction of participating countries to Sukarno's speech also confirmed Indonesia's position as a moral and political leader among Third World countries. The Asian-African Conference (AAC) became the forerunner to the formation of global South solidarity, which later developed into the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) (Dinkel, 2019). Within this structure, Indonesia consistently brought the Palestinian issue to international forums as a manifestation of the anti-colonial principles conveyed in the speech (Yeremia, 2020). Indonesia's success in mobilizing cross-regional support also demonstrated the effectiveness of Sukarno's speech as a diplomatic tool with strategic impact, not just symbolic (Setiawan & Tomsa, 2022).

Post-African Conference (KAA), Indonesia's diplomatic direction has consistently demonstrated its support for Palestinian independence. In 1988, Indonesia was one of the first countries to recognize the Palestinian Declaration of Independence announced by Yasser Arafat in Algeria (Hasram & Suryana, 2025). This stance was reaffirmed in various official statements by the Indonesian government, including speeches at the UN General Assembly and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Summit. In these forums, Indonesia frequently served as an informal spokesperson for Asian countries in voicing support for the Palestinian cause (Houston, 2025).

In the UN Security Council and General Assembly, Indonesia actively supports resolutions related to Palestine, including Resolutions 242 and 338, which demand Israel's withdrawal from occupied territory (Muhammad Irfan Gati & Abd. Hafid, 2024). Indonesia not only expresses its strong condemnation of Israeli violations of international law, such as military attacks on Gaza or the expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank (Umar & Azizah, 2025). This stance emphasizes that Indonesia's diplomatic stance toward Palestine is not merely rhetorical but is manifested in concrete actions.

Thus, Sukarno's speech at the 1955 Asian-African Conference (AAC) had a lasting influence on the direction and identity of Indonesian diplomacy. It not only shaped international perceptions of Indonesia's position but also served as a source of internal legitimacy for its long-term support for Palestine (Tahalele, 2020). Indonesian diplomacy, grounded in the values of anti-colonialism, justice, and international solidarity, can be directly traced to the spirit embodied in the 1955 Asian-African Conference (AAC) speech (Thakur, 2019).

In the context of contemporary Indonesian foreign policy, support for Palestine remains a continuation of diplomatic principles inherited from the era of President Sukarno (Pratiwi et al., 2021). However, global dynamics and strategic interests in the post-Reformasi era raise the question: does Indonesia's foreign policy toward Palestine demonstrate consistency or is it experiencing disruption? This research shows that, in general, there is continuity in values in Indonesia's stance, which continues to reject colonialism and support Palestinian independence, although in practice there are variations in diplomatic approaches that are more pragmatic and multilateral (Salim, 2017).

Sukarno's speech at the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference still resonates strongly in Indonesian diplomatic narratives (Li, 2023). The speech has become a symbolic and ideological foundation for formulating foreign policy based on the values of justice, anti-colonialism, and international solidarity (Gruffydd Jones, 2018). This is reflected in official Indonesian government speeches, which frequently reference the "Bandung Spirit" when addressing the Palestinian issue, both at the UN General Assembly and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) forum. Thus, Sukarno's speech serves not only as a historical archive but also as a moral framework and identity for Indonesian diplomacy that persists across regimes (Nartey & Ernanda, 2020).

However, a comparison with Indonesia's foreign policy in the post-Reformasi era reveals a shift in approach. The Indonesian government tends to use more moderate diplomatic language, is cautious in expressing political positions, and prioritizes multilateral mechanisms as channels of support for Palestine (Sukma, 1999). While fundamentally unchanged, Indonesia's diplomatic strategy has become more measured and dialogical, adapting to the complexities of global geopolitics and adopting a more pragmatic orientation toward national development (Solehudin, 2024).

Nevertheless, Indonesia's support for Palestine has never substantially waned. Indonesia remains active in voting in UN resolutions supporting Palestine, rejecting normalization of relations with Israel, and engaging in humanitarian diplomacy, such as sending aid to Gaza and supporting Palestinian refugees (Yunazwardi et al., 2025). This demonstrates that the values embodied in Sukarno's speech remain the moral compass of Indonesian diplomacy, even as the form and channels of expression have adapted to the context of the times (Christawan et al., 2023).

Thus, the relevance of Sukarno's speech for contemporary Indonesian foreign policy cannot be reduced to mere symbols, but rather as an ideological foundation that continues to function in shaping the direction of Indonesian diplomacy (Acharya, 2008). Amidst the challenges of a multipolar world and geopolitical pressures, the speech remains a source of inspiration for Indonesian diplomacy in maintaining its position as a country that upholds global justice, including in defending the rights of the Palestinian people (Makarychev & Wicaksana, 2025).

To see how Sukarno's speech at the opening of the 1955 Asian-African Conference shaped the direction of Indonesian diplomacy, particularly on the Palestinian issue, the following analysis presents a mapping of historical factors, political strategies, and the continuity of Indonesian policy within the framework of values-based diplomacy (Songbatumis, 2021). The table below helps visualize the systemic relationship between the speech's messages and their implementation in Indonesia's cross-regime foreign policy.

Table 3. The Impact of Soekarno's Speech at the 1955 Asian-African Conference on the Direction of Indonesian Pro-Palestinian Diplomacy

Impact Aspects	Historical Implementation	Contemporary Developments	Strategic Significance
Indonesia's Moral and Political Legitimacy as a Leader of the Global South	Widely accepted by the participating countries of the Asian-African Conference; Soekarno became the spokesperson for decolonization.	Indonesia actively leads the Palestinian issue at the UN and OIC	Enhancing Indonesia's position as a moral actor in the international system
Internationalization of the Palestinian Issue	The Palestinian issue was included in the Final Communiqué of the Asian-African Conference	Indonesia's continued support for UN resolutions regarding Palestine	Palestine is officially on the global diplomatic agenda and is no longer ignored as a local issue.

Continuity of Anti-Colonialism Policy	The free and active foreign policy is based on the anti-colonial struggle.	Rejection of normalization with Israel and consistent support for Palestinian independence	Becoming a hallmark of Indonesia's stable diplomatic identity across regimes
Multilateral Diplomacy as a Primary Instrument	The Asian-African Conference gave birth to the embryo of the Non-Aligned Movement	A more dialogical and pragmatic approach through global multilateralism	Supporting effective diplomacy while maintaining ideological principles
Mobilizing International Support	Indonesia builds Asia-Africa consensus on Palestine	Involvement of Asia-Pacific countries in support of Palestinian independence	Strengthening the global anti-colonial coalition and Palestine's international legitimacy
Humanitarian Diplomacy	Symbol of political solidarity with oppressed nations	Aid delivery to Gaza, Palestine refugee program, and economic support	Expanding the meaning of support from rhetoric → concrete action
Symbols of National Ideology and Identity	The "Bandung Spirit" became the foundation of foreign policy	References to Sukarno's speeches are still used in official government speeches.	Anti-colonial ideology remains alive in Indonesia's foreign policy identity.

Table 3 shows that Sukarno's speech at the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (AAC) not only impacted the direction of Indonesian foreign policy but also resonated within the international political architecture during the Cold War (Saha, 2025). The speech became a historical and ideological foundation that united Indonesia's moral values, political interests, and diplomatic strategy on the Palestinian issue (Zainal Arifin Renaldo, 2024). In the global context at that time, the world was divided into a bipolar power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union, while newly independent nations were still seeking space to assert their political identities (Suporn et al., 2021). It was at this point that Sukarno provided normative legitimacy that emphasized Indonesia's position as a defender of global justice and oppressed nations in an international system rife with domination (Barton et al., 2021).

The influence of Sukarno's speech was also evident through Indonesia's diplomatic contributions in expanding the base of solidarity in the global South, which later gave birth to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) (Čavoški, 2021). Within this geopolitical structure, Indonesia systematically brought the Palestinian issue to various international forums, making it a key issue on the multilateral agenda of Third World countries (Samad et al., 2023). Concrete policies were born from the anti-colonial principles articulated in the speech, including the successful inclusion of the Palestinian issue in the Final Communiqué of the 1955 Asian-African Conference (KAA), Indonesia's official recognition of Palestinian independence in 1988, reciprocal support through UN resolutions, and strengthening humanitarian diplomacy for the Palestinian people (Kornioti, 2025).

This continuity of stance demonstrates that the influence of Sukarno's speech transcended the domestic context and regime change (Fogg, 2021). Although Indonesia's diplomatic language in the post-Reformasi era became more moderate and pragmatic—in line with the shifting global environment toward multipolarity and the prioritization of national economic development—its fundamental values remained consistent: Indonesia rejects all forms of colonialism and fully supports the right of self-determination for Palestine (Shalbak, 2023). Even as many countries in the Middle East normalized political relations with Israel, Indonesia maintained a political position aligned with the historical and moral mandate of the Asian-African Conference (AAC).

Thus, Sukarno's speech serves not only as a historical artifact but also lives on as the "spirit" and ideological framework of Indonesian diplomacy. It continues to serve as a moral reference when Indonesia raises the Palestinian issue on the global stage, whether at the UN General Assembly, the OIC, or other international forums (Lewis, 2024). Amid increasingly complex geopolitical dynamics, the speech continues to inspire Indonesia's efforts to maintain its identity as a nation at the forefront of fighting for international justice and the rights of oppressed nations—a political legacy that remains relevant to this day (Sebastian & Othman Alkaff, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This research shows that President Sukarno's speech at the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference was not merely a symbolic statement, but rather served as the ideological foundation and normative direction for Indonesian diplomacy toward Palestine. The speech explicitly positioned Palestine as part of the global struggle against colonialism and succeeded in building an international consensus among Asian and African countries to support the rights of the Palestinian people. In the long run, the spirit and principles contained in this speech proved to be a consistent reference in Indonesian foreign policy, both in political stance, multilateral diplomacy, and humanitarian aid. This article contributes to the assertion that Sukarno's speech cannot be understood solely in a rhetorical historical context, but rather as the starting point for Indonesia's value-based diplomacy. Through a historical-diplomatic approach, this article demonstrates the continuity between the ideological narrative of Indonesia's early independence and contemporary foreign policy practices that continue to prioritize solidarity, justice, and resistance to colonialism. This research also positions Palestine not merely as a foreign issue, but as a reflection of Indonesia's diplomatic identity, which sides with oppressed nations.

The implications of this study are significant for the development of Indonesian diplomatic studies, particularly in examining how ideological values such as anti-colonialism can guide responses to ongoing global conflicts. Furthermore, this article contributes to post-colonial studies by positioning Third World countries, such as Indonesia, not merely as objects within the international order, but as subjects shaping the global agenda through moral force and transnational solidarity. In an increasingly pragmatic and polarized world, diplomatic legacies such as Sukarno's speeches remain relevant as an ethical and political compass for Indonesian foreign policy that favors justice and humanity.

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The Institutionalisation and Commodification of the Mushaf Al-Qur'an in Indonesia: An Analysis of the Business Practices of Syaamil Quran

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Abstract:

This study examines the institutionalization and commodification of the Qur'anic mushaf within the business practices of Syaamil Quran in Indonesia, and explores how the sacredness of the text is continuously negotiated within contemporary market dynamics. Theoretical perspectives include Marx's theory of commodification, Mosco's content commodification, Baudrillard's sign-value, Bourdieu's symbolic capital, and Gauthier's concept of spiritual capitalism. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis. The study focuses on product innovation, aesthetic design, personalization, pedagogical features, and the construction of religious legitimacy within Syaamil's publishing model. Findings reveal that the mushaf has evolved into a hybrid entity—simultaneously sacred and commodified—functioning not only as a religious text, but also as a cultural artifact, identity marker, and symbolic commodity. The principal challenge identified is the risk of commodity fetishism, in which aesthetic form and prestige may overshadow deeper spiritual engagement. This study recommends reinforcing ethical governance in religious publishing and sustaining collaboration with Islamic scholars to preserve the Qur'an's transformative function in society. This study contributes to the field of religion and political economy by positioning the Qur'anic mushaf as an emergent site of negotiation between sacred meaning and capitalist rationality, offering a critical model for understanding religious publishing in modern Muslim societies.

Keywords: Islamic identity; religious commodification; spiritual capitalism; symbolic value; Syaamil Quran.

INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an, as the sacred text of Muslims, functions not only as a spiritual guide but, in the context of contemporary capitalist society, has also become a significant object of commodification. This phenomenon is part of what Carrette and King term the "commodification of religion," where spiritual values are transformed into marketable commodities (J. R. Carrette, 2005). In Indonesia, the development of the halal industry has created space for the commodification of religious products, including the mushaf Al-Qur'an (physical copy of the Qur'an).

Theoretically, this shift can be dissected through the framework of Commodification Theory, rooted in Karl Marx's analysis of the transformation of use value into exchange value. Commodification occurs when a product is no longer valued based on its intrinsic benefits but rather on its potential for sale in the market (Marx, 1976).

This phenomenon peaks in the era of Late Capitalism, where market logic has expanded into every aspect of life, including culture and religion, creating what is called the Commodification of Religion. This concept specifically analyzes how religious symbols, practices, and texts are integrated into market mechanisms, making worship and piety into products that can be bought and sold (Fealy, 2009).

The publisher Syaamil Quran, a prominent Qur'an publishing and printing industry in Indonesia, serves as an ideal case study to examine this phenomenon. Syaamil Quran offers various mushaf variants with diverse features and designs. According to Hikmawan, Syaamil Quran has "successfully created market segmentation through systematic product differentiation" (Hikmawan, 2019). Products such as the Hafalan (Memorization) Mushaf, Tajwid Warna (Color-Coded Tajwid) Mushaf, Mushaf for Women, and various special editions demonstrate how the sacred text is redesigned to meet various consumer segments.

Based on preliminary observation, Syaamil Quran does not merely sell the mushaf as a holy book but also offers a packaged religious experience. This process aligns with the concept of "spiritual capitalism" explained by Gauthier as "the utilization of spiritual values within the logic of capitalist markets" (Goldstein, 2017). Through mature marketing strategies, Syaamil Quran successfully builds an image as a premium mushaf that is not only functional but also possesses high aesthetic and symbolic value.

While studies on the commodification of religion have been widely conducted, the focus on the commodification of the Qur'anic mushaf remains limited. Research by Ichwan predominantly discusses the political aspects of mushaf standardization (Ichwan, 2013), while Federspiel examines popular literature about the Qur'an without a specific focus on commodification (Federspiel, 1994).

In the context of Syaamil Quran, the study by Fahmi touches on business aspects but has not yet deeply connected them with commodification theory (Fahmi et al., 2020). This research seeks to fill this gap by utilizing the commodification theory framework to analyze Syaamil Quran's business strategies. Therefore, this study aims to critically analyze the commodification process within Syaamil Quran's business practices. It will focus on the production and marketing strategies Syaamil employs to create new exchange value for the Qur'anic mushaf and reveal the negotiation of meanings occurring between the idealism of da'wah and business imperatives in Indonesia's Islamic publishing industry.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach with a case study method, focusing on commodification practices in the institutionalization of the Qur'an at the Syaamil Quran publisher and printing house in Bandung (Furidha, 2023). This approach was chosen as it allows the researcher to understand deeply the social, economic, and ideological dynamics behind the production and distribution processes of the Qur'anic mushaf. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with management, production teams, and the marketing division, as well as direct observation at the factory and office locations. Analysis was conducted using Commodification Theory (Karl Marx), examining how the Qur'anic mushaf transforms from an object with pure spiritual use value into a commodity with high economic exchange value in the market (Marx, 1976). Data validity was strengthened through source and method triangulation, comparing interview results, internal documents, and field findings. This approach is expected to yield a critical understanding of the relationship between the sanctity of the text and market strategies in Indonesia's Qur'an publishing industry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Framework of Commodification: Sacred Text in Market Logic

The framework of commodification applied to the Mushaf al-Qur'an within Syaamil Quran cannot be understood merely as a technical process of printing and distribution, but rather as a complex intersection between sacred authority, economic rationality, cultural symbolism, and the logic of late capitalism. Based on in-depth interviews with the management of Syaamil Quran/Syaamil Group, particularly Mr. Dedi Wahyudi (Head of PT. SDQ), it was revealed that Syaamil Group operates under the grand vision of "becoming the leading company in grounding the Qur'an and reviving the Sirah (Prophetic Biography)." This vision reflects a dual orientation—spiritual and entrepreneurial—wherein the Qur'an is positioned simultaneously as a divine revelation and as an economic object mediated through modern industrial mechanisms. In the sociological imagination of contemporary Indonesia, the name Syaamil Quran has become deeply embedded in the public consciousness as a premium and authoritative brand of mushaf production. This branding, however, is not merely commercial in

nature; it also reflects a deeper process of institutionalization, where the sacred text is absorbed into what can be described as an Islamic moral economy shaped by modern capitalist infrastructures.

In the Indonesian context, where the government does not fully subsidize or distribute mushafs to meet the massive demand of over 230 million Muslims (Sebastian & Othman Alkaff, 2024), private institutions such as Syaamil Quran become structural actors within what may be termed the "religious supply chain." The statement from Syaamil that "the Qur'an is positioned as a product or commodity that requires investment to reach the hands of the public" is therefore not simply an admission of commercialization, but a recognition of structural reality. This aligns directly with Karl Marx's conception of commodification as a process whereby an object originally valued for its use-value is transformed into an object defined by its exchange-value within a system of market relations (Marx, 1976). The Qur'an, intrinsically imbued with transcendent meaning and spiritual use-value, cannot escape the material conditions of its own reproduction (Alvi & Werth, 2024). Paper, ink, design, layout, translation, calligraphy, editing, verification, logistics, and marketing all necessitate financial investment, managerial coordination, and economic planning. In this sense, the sacred text enters what Marx describes as the circuit of capital, not because its sacredness is negated, but because its physical manifestation is entangled within a global capitalist infrastructure that governs production and circulation (Hasan, 2022).

This process is further illuminated by Vincent Mosco's theory of the commodification of content, in which symbolic and communicative products—including religious texts—become subject to economic logics of abstraction, packaging, and distribution within political-economic frameworks (Mosco, 2009). Syaamil Quran does not operate as a traditional religious institution alone, but as a hybrid actor located at the intersection of da'wah, media, publishing, education, and market distribution (Rijal, 2023). The Qur'an, in this framework, is not reduced to a mere consumer item; rather, it becomes what can be described as a "mediated sacred commodity," a hybrid artifact that moves between two worlds—the spiritual and the material. This is consistent with what Kitiarsa (2008) terms the "commodification of religiosity," wherein religious objects and practices are reformulated through market frameworks while retaining symbolic, spiritual, and moral authority (Kitiarsa, 2007).

The symbiotic relationship between da'wah and business orientation, as described by Syaamil's management—"profits are used to support the sustainability of da'wah"—illustrates the logic of spiritual capitalism, a concept elaborated by Gauthier (2013) to describe the integration of religious values within capitalist modes of organization. Rather than presenting the market as an adversary to piety, this model reframes economic activity as a vehicle for spiritual dissemination (Gauthier, 2013). In this sense, capitalism is not positioned as a secularizing force that erodes religion, but rather as an infrastructure through which religious ideas, values, and practices are disseminated in more expansive, systematic, and accessible forms. This phenomenon is not unique to Islam or Indonesia; similar patterns have been observed in the Christian publishing industry in the United States, the Bible Belt's evangelical merchandise market, the commercialization of the Torah in orthodox Jewish communities, and the Buddhist ritual industries in East Asia (Fealy, 2009). However, what distinguishes the Indonesian case, particularly Syaamil Quran, is the integration of Islamic ethics, local culture, and aesthetic innovation into this commodification process (J. Carrette & King, 2005).

From a broader theoretical standpoint, this phenomenon must also be situated within what Adorno and Horkheimer termed the "culture industry," in which cultural artifacts—including religious products—are standardized, aestheticized, and mass-produced within industrial capitalism (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1972). The mushaf al-Qur'an, traditionally copied by hand in intimate and devotional contexts, is now embedded in large-scale industrial printing rigs, digital design studios, algorithmic supply chains, and e-commerce ecosystems. Yet, paradoxically, rather than diluting its sacred aura, this industrial replication often amplifies its symbolic presence in everyday Muslim life. Qur'ans are now found not only in mosques and pesantren but in coffee shops, book cafés, corporate offices, schools, digital marketplaces, and even as aesthetic objects in home décor. This shift illustrates what Baudrillard (1998) describes as the movement from use-value to sign-value, where objects are consumed not only for their function, but for the identity, image, and symbolism they project (Baudrillard, 1998).

In the case of Syaamil Quran, the mushaf does not merely function as a text to be read; it also operates as a symbolic marker of modern Muslim identity. Ownership of a particular variant of mushaf—such as a Tajwid Warna edition, Mushaf Hafalan, Mushaf for Women, or Custom Name Mushaf—signals a certain spiritual orientation, social aspiration, and religious lifestyle. The Qur'an thus enters what Appadurai (1986) refers to as "the social life of things," where commodities acquire meaning through their circulation within social, cultural, and ideological systems (Appadurai, 1986). The mushaf, then, is not simply an object; it is a sign, a narrative, and a carrier of value in Bourdieu's sense of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 2000). By positioning their products as tools of piety,

memorization, self-improvement, and da'wah, Syaamil effectively transforms each mushaf into a bundled package of religious meaning, aesthetic appeal, and moral purpose.

This is where the true sophistication of Syaamil's commodification strategy lies. The company does not simply sell paper and ink; it sells a vision of religiosity tailored to the needs of modern Muslims who live amid digital distractions, consumer culture, and fragmented spiritual attention. By framing its products as "solutions" to contemporary spiritual challenges—lack of focus, inability to read Arabic, weak memorization, or limited time for religious study—Syaamil embeds its mushafs within the everyday struggles of modern believers. This constitutes what Bauman (2007) might describe as the "liquid religiosity" of modern life, where spiritual practices are adapted to fit the rhythms of contemporary existence (Bauman & Magatti, 2007). Syaamil's products thus become bridges between the eternal and the temporal, between the sacred revelation and the profane routines of daily life.

Nevertheless, this process cannot be romanticized without critique. The integration of market logic into sacred domains opens the possibility of what Marx calls "commodity fetishism," wherein the social relationship between humans and the divine is obscured by an excessive focus on the object itself (Marx, 2000). In extreme conditions, the mushaf risks becoming an object of prestige, aesthetic admiration, or consumption, rather than a medium for divine engagement and ethical transformation. When people prioritize designer covers, color schemes, and personalization over comprehension, internalization, and ethical practice, the sacred risks being reduced to a lifestyle accessory. Syaamil acknowledges this tension, positioning it as an ongoing "dilemma and negotiation" rather than a resolved contradiction. This acknowledgment is significant, because it demonstrates institutional reflexivity: an awareness that the very structure that enables da'wah dissemination also contains the potential for spiritual superficiality (Marwantika & Dauda, 2025).

However, unlike purely profit-driven corporations, Syaamil continuously integrates ethical discourse, consultation with religious authorities, Qur'anic etiquettes (adab al-Qur'an), and da'wah-oriented programs into its business model. Initiatives such as Qur'an waqf programs, Qur'an training, Rumah Syaamil Qur'an, and partnerships with Islamic educational institutions provide a structural counterbalance to the risk of total commodification. In this sense, Syaamil operates in a liminal space between what Weber would call value-rational action (wertrational) and instrumental-rational action (zweckrational) (Nurulita, 2025). While profit and market expansion remain instrumental goals, they are framed within an overarching value system grounded in Islamic ethics and communal responsibility.

Thus, the commodification of the mushaf within Syaamil Quran should not be simplistically interpreted as the profanation of the sacred. Rather, it should be understood as a dialectical process, in which the sacred negotiates with, adapts to, and at times resists the logic of global capitalism (Bhanye, 2025). This dialectic produces a uniquely Indonesian model of "Islamic spiritual economy," where religious dissemination, cultural identity, moral capital, and economic sustainability form a complex, interdependent network. In this model, the mushaf is at once a divine text, an educational tool, an ideological symbol, a cultural artifact, and an economic commodity—each identity existing simultaneously without fully erasing the others. It is in this tension that the contemporary meaning of the Qur'an in modern society is continuously redefined, contested, and renegotiated (Ahmad, 2023).

Product Differentiation of the Mushaf: Creating Identity-Based Commodities

Product differentiation in the Qur'anic publishing industry, as practiced by Syaamil Quran, represents not merely a marketing strategy in the conventional sense, but a deeper socio-cultural and ideological transformation in how the sacred text is positioned, consumed, and experienced in contemporary Muslim society. Syaamil Quran explicitly asserts that its commitment to continuous product innovation is driven by the pragmatic intention to facilitate broader and more accessible interaction with the Qur'an, particularly in a socio-linguistic context where Arabic is not a native language for the vast majority of Indonesian Muslims. This admission, while seemingly functional, simultaneously reflects a profound shift in the ontology of the mushaf itself—from a singular, standardized sacred object into a pluralized, diversified, and highly segmented commodity form that is intricately tailored to meet the psychological, generational, educational, and identity-based needs of a modern consumer society (Qureshi, 2023). In this transformation, the mushaf is no longer treated as a uniform, homogenous religious artifact, but as a dynamic and malleable product that must continuously adapt to the evolving tastes, expectations, and lifestyles of its users (Cohen, 2019).

The differentiation strategies adopted by Syaamil Quran illustrate a highly sophisticated mechanism of cultural targeting and symbolic segmentation. For younger audiences, for instance, brightly colored pages,

intuitive visual guidance, child-friendly typography, and simplified visual cues are intentionally designed to attract attention, nurture emotional attachment, and create a sense of familiarity with the Qur'an from an early age. The development of colorful Qur'ans for children is not merely an aesthetic choice, but a strategic intervention into early religious socialization. It is an attempt to counteract the cognitive and sensory dominance of digital technology, animated entertainment, and fast-paced visual culture that increasingly shape the worldview of contemporary youth. By offering visually engaging mushafs, Syaamil is not only marketing a product but also intervening in what Bourdieu (2000) would describe as the formation of religious habitus—a set of internalized dispositions that structure an individual's orientation toward the sacred (Bourdieu, 2000).

Similarly, the introduction of the Tikrar (repetition) method into the mushaf design reflects a pedagogical shift in Qur'anic engagement. The traditional model of memorization in pesantren and classical Islamic institutions often relied on oral transmission, teacher-centered instruction, and repetitive recitation within communal spaces (Muh Mustakim, 2021). By embedding the Tikrar method directly into the printed mushaf, Syaamil transforms the Qur'an into a self-guiding pedagogical tool, allowing users to engage in structured memorization independently. This represents a form of functional commodification, where the mushaf is not merely a text but becomes an integrated learning system. In doing so, Syaamil bridges the gap between classical religious pedagogy and modern self-learning culture, a phenomenon that resonates with Giddens' concept of reflexive modernity, in which individuals increasingly take control of their own identity formation, including religious identity, through customized and self-directed practices (Tsutsumi, 2025).

The development of specialized mushafs such as the Tajwid Warna Bukhara further demonstrates the company's responsiveness to specific functional and educational deficiencies within the Muslim community. Many Muslims struggle to master tajwid, the precise rules of Qur'anic pronunciation, due to its technical complexity and the limitations of traditional learning access. By applying color-coding to indicate tajwid rules visually, Syaamil effectively transforms a complex system of phonetic regulations into a readily understandable visual language. This aligns with contemporary theories of multimodal learning, in which cognitive comprehension is enhanced through the integration of visual stimuli alongside textual information. However, from a critical perspective, this transformation also exemplifies the extension of market logic into the epistemological domain of religious knowledge (Sabic-El-Rayess, 2020). Knowledge itself becomes a feature, a product attribute, and a selling point, rather than solely a sacred trust transmitted through scholarly lineages. In this way, Syaamil does not only sell the Qur'an; it sells an experience of "ease," "accessibility," and "efficiency" in religious practice, which mirrors the broader cultural ethos of late modern capitalism characterized by speed, convenience, and personalization (Bauman & Magatti, 2007).

Perhaps the most intriguing and symbolically loaded manifestation of Syaamil's differentiation strategy is the introduction of the "Custom by Name" mushaf, in which consumers may request the inclusion of their own names and personalized design elements on the Qur'an's cover. At the surface level, this appears as an innocent customization feature, intended to increase emotional attachment and personal ownership (Karlsson & Ryberg, 2024). However, at a deeper sociological level, this represents the peak stage of religious commodification, where the sacred text is no longer only a divine message addressed collectively to the ummah, but also becomes a personalized object of individual identity construction (Chang & Barber, 2023). The Qur'an, in this configuration, is not only read, memorized, or revered; it is also "possessed" and "branded" in accordance with one's personal self-image. This phenomenon exemplifies what Appadurai (1986) describes as "the social life of things," in which objects acquire meaning, status, and value through their circulation within particular social and cultural worlds (Appadurai, 1986).

In this context, the mushaf becomes a carrier of narrative identity. It becomes a symbol that communicates personal piety, aesthetic taste, social positioning, and even economic capacity. Owning a certain type of Syaamil mushaf—especially a customized or premium version—can be perceived as a marker of one's religious seriousness, cultural belonging, or participation in a specific sub-community of practice, such as hafiz groups, Qur'an study circles, or Islamic educational networks. This transformation reflects Baudrillard's (1998) argument that in advanced consumer society, objects are no longer valued primarily for their practical function, but for what they signify about their owner. The mushaf, in this sense, transcends its role as a medium of divine revelation and enters the domain of symbolic interaction, where it speaks for the identity of its possessor (Baudrillard, 1998).

Syaamil's own acknowledgment that "the current generation is different from previous scholars; they need attractive features and visuals to easily interact with the Qur'an" indicates a deep awareness of generational transformation and cultural rupture. Traditional Islamic scholars were formed within oral, text-heavy, and teacher-centered environments, while contemporary Muslims are immersed in a world dominated by screens, images,

colors, branding, and instant communication (Chang & Barber, 2023). By adopting visuality as a primary mode of engagement, Syaamil does not merely adapt to modernity; it actively reshapes how religiosity itself is experienced and constructed. This adaptation may be interpreted as a form of Islamic pedagogical innovation, yet it also raises critical questions regarding whether the depth of spiritual contemplation can survive within a framework increasingly oriented toward aesthetic pleasure and visual consumption (J. Carrette & King, 2005).

From an economic perspective, the pricing strategy of Syaamil Quran further reinforces the commodification thesis. The determination of price is not solely grounded in the Cost of Goods Sold (HPP), such as paper quality, printing materials, ink, binding techniques, or design elements, but is also strongly influenced by market standardization, brand positioning, consumer demand, and perceived symbolic value. This indicates that the mushaf has fully entered a competitive market domain where pricing is governed by neoliberal mechanisms of supply and demand, brand hierarchy, and perceived cultural capital. In this scenario, the Qur'an, despite its inherent sacredness, is subjected to the same mechanisms that regulate fashion, technology, or lifestyle products (Pusparini et al., 2024). This is what Marx (1976) would recognize as the subsumption of even the most sacred human products under the logic of capital accumulation (Marx, 1976).

Yet, it is precisely at this point that Syaamil's model departs from a purely capitalist enterprise. Unlike purely secular commodities, the Qur'an cannot be marketed without moral, theological, and ethical considerations. Syaamil continuously frames its products not merely as commodities, but as instruments of worship, memorization, spiritual elevation, and communal good. This framing allows the company to legitimize its commercial activity within an Islamic moral framework and to maintain public trust. In Bourdieusian terms, Syaamil converts economic capital into symbolic capital by presenting itself as a guardian of the Qur'an's sanctity rather than as an exploiter of its popularity (Bourdieu, 2000). This moral positioning enables the company to operate within a dialectical zone where commodification and sanctification coexist in a tense but functional relationship.

This dialectical nature of product differentiation reflects a broader global trend in religious economies. Across the world, sacred texts—from the Bible and Torah to the Bhagavad Gita and Buddhist sutras—are increasingly produced in multiple editions: study Bibles, youth Bibles, women's devotionals, luxury editions, minimalist editions, and digital app-based scriptures. These variations illustrate how religious institutions and private corporations alike are responding to the fragmentation of audiences and the rise of identity-based consumption (Fealy, 2009). What distinguishes the Indonesian case is the relatively harmonious integration of market innovation with a strong moral discourse of da'wah, making the commodification process appear less as a profanation and more as an adaptive strategy of religious survival in the modern world (Hidayah, 2021).

In this light, product differentiation at Syaamil Quran can be interpreted not only as a commercial tactic but as an institutional response to modernity's epistemological and cultural disruptions. It represents an attempt to make the Qur'an "speak" in the visual, psychological, and emotional language of the present generation (Ismail & Solahuddin, 2023). However, this also implies that the very form of the mushaf is increasingly shaped by market research, consumer psychology, branding analysis, and trend forecasting. The sacred is, therefore, subtly re-inscribed according to the grammar of the market (Wardana et al., 2025). The question that emerges is not whether commodification occurs—it clearly does—but rather how far it is permitted to go before the balance between meaning and merchandise collapses.

Ultimately, Syaamil Quran's differentiation strategy reveals a powerful paradox: by fragmenting and customizing the sacred text, it simultaneously brings the Qur'an closer to individual lives while risking the erosion of its universal and transcendent character. This paradox is the defining feature of contemporary religious commodification. The mushaf, in Syaamil's hands, becomes both more intimate and more commercial, more accessible and more objectified, more personalized and more standardized. This ambivalence does not signify failure; rather, it reflects the complex reality of religion in a world governed by images, markets, identities, and accelerated change (Lee & Ackerman, 2018). In this sense, Syaamil Quran is not merely a publishing company—it is a site where the Qur'an is continuously re-negotiated between revelation and reality, faith and finance, eternity and economy.

Religious Legitimacy as Selling Capital

Religious legitimacy as a form of selling capital constitutes one of the most pivotal and sophisticated dimensions within Syaamil Quran's business practices. Unlike conventional commercial enterprises that primarily rely on price competition or material superiority, Syaamil consciously constructs its premium image through an intricate combination of religious symbolism, ethical discourse, aesthetic presentation, and institutional credibility.

One of the earliest and most fundamental layers of this legitimacy-building process is the deliberate selection of halal-certified raw materials and the prioritization of adab (etiquette) in the entire production chain of the mushaf. Although often invisible or underappreciated by the general public, these decisions carry profound theological and symbolic implications. The use of halal-certified ink, paper, and other materials is not simply a technical matter of compliance, but a moral statement that affirms that the Qur'an, as the written manifestation of divine revelation, deserves to be handled, printed, and distributed through ethically permissible means. In an age shaped by industrial shortcuts and mass production, this ethical insistence on halal and adab operates as a form of moral distinction that simultaneously reinforces sacred legitimacy and justifies a higher consumer price (Mukherjee, 2014).

This careful attention to the ethical dimension of production aligns with the logic of what Max Weber would describe as the "moral rationalization of economic activity" in religious contexts, where ethical norms serve not merely as constraints, but as social capital that strengthens institutional authority (Sorenson & Milbrandt, 2023). By ensuring that the physical manifestation of the Qur'an is produced in accordance with Islamic ethical standards, Syaamil effectively sacralizes the production process itself. The factory, the workers, the designers, and the entire supply chain are symbolically transformed into participants in a sacred mission, rather than mere economic laborers. This transformation of ordinary industrial labor into an act of piety constructs an invisible but powerful narrative that resonates deeply with a Muslim public increasingly concerned with the authenticity of religious practice in an era of mass commodification (Asya Dwina Luthfia & Rohmat Yanuri, 2025).

In order to reinforce this moral and symbolic distinction further, Syaamil deliberately distances itself from traditional mushaf styles that historically dominated the Islamic world, such as the Mushaf Bombay or the buff-colored, brownish paper mushafs commonly associated with older generations and Middle Eastern imports (Andersen, 2023). Instead, Syaamil embarks on a form of aesthetic reinvention that repositions the Qur'an not only as a sacred guide, but also as a culturally resonant, visually attractive, and emotionally engaging object. The cover designs, color palettes, textures, typography, and overall visual identity of Syaamil mushafs reflect a deep understanding of contemporary aesthetic sensibilities in Indonesia. These design choices serve as semiotic markers that connect the Qur'an to modern Muslim identities—urban, educated, youthful, and creatively expressive (Al Khalifa & Lafi, 2025).

This repositioning is significant from the perspective of cultural theory, as it resonates with Jean Baudrillard's concept of sign value, in which objects acquire value not merely through their function or material qualities, but through the symbolic meanings and identities they represent (Baudrillard, 1998). In this sense, Syaamil's mushafs become what might be described as "aestheticized sacred objects," where beauty, design, and cultural relevance become deeply entangled with spiritual devotion. The Qur'an is no longer perceived only as a book to be read; it is also seen as a beautiful possession, a prestigious gift, a family heirloom, and even an interior decoration that symbolizes spiritual refinement. This transformation does not necessarily diminish its sacredness; rather, it relocates that sacredness into a visual and material form that is more compatible with the aesthetics of contemporary Muslim life (Nasser, 2022).

Beyond the material and visual aspects of the mushaf, Syaamil Quran also invests heavily in the construction of religious legitimacy through a wide range of da'wah-oriented programs, including Qur'an waqf initiatives, Qur'an training programs, Qur'an tourism, and long-term partnerships with pesantren, Qur'anic teachers, and Qur'an learning communities. These programs function as much more than charitable activities or community outreach; they are integral components of Syaamil's legitimacy architecture. By embedding its products within networks of religious education and charitable initiatives, the company not only expands its social reach but also situates itself as an active agent of Islamic revival. The mushaf becomes an instrument of collective piety, and every purchase is reframed not merely as consumption but as participation in a sacred mission (Mohiuddin, 2023).

The partnership with the Hafiz Indonesia Program on RCTI, which has been running for over a decade, is an especially powerful example of how Syaamil strategically aligns itself with popular religious media to enhance its symbolic authority. This collaboration places Syaamil at the intersection of religious education, mass entertainment, and national identity formation. Millions of Indonesians, particularly children and families, associate the memorization of the Qur'an with the image of young hafiz and hafizah presented in the program. By associating its brand with this nationally recognized symbol of Qur'anic devotion, Syaamil effectively embeds itself within the emotional and moral imagination of the Muslim public (Rijal, 2025). This process exemplifies Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital, where recognition, prestige, and moral authority become forms of capital that can be converted into other types of power, including economic power (Bourdieu, 2000).

In this context, Syaamil does not simply sell mushafs; it sells the promise of participation in a Qur'anic movement. The act of purchasing a Syaamil mushaf becomes laden with moral meaning, as it is connected to broader narratives of da'wah, education, social contribution, and the cultivation of future generations of Qur'an memorisers. The consumer is therefore no longer only a buyer but symbolically transformed into a supporter of Islamic learning and spiritual regeneration (Mohamed Nasir, 2022). This narrative is continuously reinforced through storytelling, both within Syaamil's official marketing and through the testimonials, endorsements, and communal narratives generated by its partner networks. The narrative that every mushaf sold is part of a larger divine mission generates what can be described as "symbolic profit"—a non-material gain in moral satisfaction, spiritual validation, and religious meaning, which coexists alongside monetary exchange (Fealy, 2009).

This fusion of piety and profit is deeply embedded in the Indonesian religious landscape, where religious legitimacy often functions as a critical resource in economic and political arenas (Hefner, 2021). As observed by Fealy (2008), in Indonesia, religion is not confined to ritual spaces but is woven into the fabric of everyday life, commerce, education, and social interaction (Fealy, 2008). Religious symbols carry immense social authority, and institutions that successfully embody moral credibility gain widespread trust and loyalty. Syaamil's strategy is therefore not anomalous but deeply contextual, reflecting an acute awareness of how Islamic legitimacy operates as a powerful force in Indonesian society. In such a context, commodification does not necessarily erode sacredness; instead, sacredness is mobilized as a source of legitimizing power that amplifies market success while reinforcing spiritual narratives (Jain, 2022).

However, this process must also be approached critically. The transformation of religious legitimacy into a form of market capital raises complex ethical and theological questions. When moral authority becomes a branding asset and piety becomes a marketing language, the boundary between sincere spiritual endeavor and strategic commodification becomes increasingly blurred (J. Carrette & King, 2005). The risk lies in the potential reduction of religious values into instrumental tools for economic gain. In such a scenario, religious language may be emptied of its transformative power and repackaged into easily consumable slogans (Klaver, 2021). Syaamil's ability to avoid this pitfall depends largely on its commitment to maintaining genuine engagement with Qur'anic values beyond the symbolic level of branding.

To its credit, Syaamil demonstrates a consistent effort to integrate internal religious consultation, ethical evaluation, and scholarly engagement into its operational framework. The involvement of Qur'anic scholars, religious advisors, and pedagogical experts in product development acts as a counterweight to the purely commercial impulses of the market. This hybrid model, in which economic decision-making is tempered by theological considerations, reflects a uniquely Indonesian form of "moral capitalism" in which religious ethics operate as an internal regulatory mechanism (Gauthier, 2013). Rather than perceiving the market as inherently corruptive, Syaamil seeks to Islamize economic activity itself, transforming profit-making into a form of worship (ibadah) when properly oriented.

This phenomenon can also be interpreted through the broader lens of the "moral economy of Islam," where economic activity is not judged solely by efficiency or profitability, but by its alignment with divine principles and communal well-being (Arjoon et al., 2018). In such a framework, religious legitimacy does not merely decorate the surface of economic practice; it structures its internal logic (Rubin, 2025). Syaamil, therefore, operates not simply as a capitalist firm with religious aesthetics, but as a semi-religious institution that happens to operate within, and adapt to, capitalist conditions. This is the core of its distinctive power: it inhabits the intersection between mosque and market, worship and work, revelation and regulation.

As a result, religious legitimacy at Syaamil functions as a multidimensional capital. It is at once theological (rooted in Qur'anic ethics), social (produced through community trust), cultural (expressed in aesthetic and narrative forms), and economic (converted into market value). This multidimensionality explains why Syaamil is able to thrive in an intensely competitive Qur'an publishing market without being perceived as merely a profit-driven enterprise. Its legitimacy is maintained not by denying commodification, but by spiritually reframing it. Through this reframing, the act of commodifying the mushaf is reinterpreted as an act of service, an extension of da'wah, and a contribution to the collective religious life of the ummah (Fathurrosyid et al., 2024).

Thus, rather than seeing Syaamil's strategy as a contradiction, it can be understood as a contemporary manifestation of a long Islamic tradition in which commerce and piety have always been intertwined. From the time of the Prophet Muhammad, to the flourishing trade networks of medieval Muslim civilizations, Islam has historically recognized the moral potential of economic activity when governed by ethical principles (Islahi, 2014).

Syaamil Quran, in this sense, is not merely innovating; it is reactivating a historical synthesis between faith and economy, using modern tools, technologies, and markets.

Syaamil's use of religious legitimacy as selling capital is neither accidental nor superficial. It is a strategically and spiritually constructed framework that allows the company to simultaneously move within the logic of capitalism and remain anchored in Qur'anic values. Through halal materials, adab-based production, da'wah networks, visual aesthetics, symbolic narratives, and educational partnerships, Syaamil transforms legitimacy into its most powerful and sustainable form of capital. This process does not negate the sacredness of the Qur'an; instead, it rearticulates that sacredness within the language and structures of the modern world. It is precisely in this delicate, complex, and dialectical negotiation that the true character of contemporary Islamic commodification is revealed (Roose, 2020).

The Duality Dilemma and Commodity Fetishism in Business Practice

The commodification of the mushaf inevitably generates a deep and persistent dilemma between market logic and theological values, a tension that lies at the very heart of Syaamil Quran's business and da'wah practices. On one side stands the sacredness of the Qur'an as the eternal, uncreated word of God (Kalamullah), imbued with transcendent meaning and absolute authority in the lives of Muslims; on the other stands the concrete reality that the mushaf, as a physical artifact, must be materially produced, distributed, promoted, and sustained within an economic system that is dominated by the principles of cost-efficiency, competition, brand differentiation, and profit rationalization. Syaamil Quran openly acknowledges the existence of ongoing pro and contra debates among Muslim scholars, intellectuals, and the wider public concerning the permissibility and ethical implications of commercializing the Qur'an. Criticism often emerges from concerns that the transformation of the mushaf into a market product reduces its sanctity, trivializes its spiritual depth, or subjects divine revelation to the logic of profit (TC, 2024). In response to this criticism, Syaamil articulates a fundamental theological distinction: what is being commercialized is not the Kalamullah itself, but its physical container, namely the mushaf. This distinction functions as both a theological justification and a practical rationale that allows the company to operate within a capitalist framework while still affirming its commitment to the sanctity of the divine message (Hoevel, 2022).

In Islamic jurisprudence and theology, the words of the Qur'an are considered sacred, eternal, and beyond commodification, yet the physical mushaf has historically been treated as a material object that can be produced, copied, transported, donated, bought, or sold (Zadeh, 2021). This historical precedent becomes the normative foundation upon which Syaamil builds its argument. By positioning the mushaf as a medium rather than the essence of revelation itself, Syaamil locates its business practice within a permissible theological space. Moreover, Syaamil reinforces this argument through a pragmatic justification rooted in socio-political reality: the lack of comprehensive government support in providing sufficient copies of the Qur'an for all regions of Indonesia, especially in remote and underdeveloped areas such as Papua, Maluku, and rural interior regions. In this sense, the commodification of the mushaf is framed not as an act of profanation, but as a structural necessity that enables the circulation and accessibility of the Qur'an in a geographically vast and economically uneven archipelago (Cohen, 2019).

This argument is further strengthened by the expressed willingness of consumers themselves to "make sacrifices" in order to obtain a mushaf, including bearing higher prices and additional distribution costs. Here, the act of purchasing a mushaf transcends typical consumer behavior and takes on the character of religious contribution. Buying a Qur'an is not interpreted as indulgence or lifestyle consumption, but as participation in a collective religious economy that allows the word of God to travel further, reach more people, and illuminate more lives (Pusparini et al., 2024). In this sense, market exchange becomes entangled with moral intention, illustrating Weber's (2004) proposition that economic actions can be driven by spiritual motivations and ethical considerations, not merely by rational calculation of utility or profit (Weber, 2004). The consumer, therefore, is not merely a passive buyer but an active participant in what can be conceptualized as a sacred circulation of divine knowledge.

However, the very mechanisms that enable the wide dissemination of the Qur'an also contain an inherent danger: the risk of what Karl Marx defined as "commodity fetishism," a condition in which social relationships and deeper meanings become obscured and are replaced by the fetishization of objects and their market value (Marx, 2000). In the context of Syaamil Quran, extreme product differentiation, aesthetic branding, personalization, and premium packaging may inadvertently shift the focus of attention from the spiritual content of the Qur'an to its

physical appearance and symbolic status. The mushaf may gradually come to be valued not primarily as a guide to ethical transformation, but as an object of prestige, an aesthetic possession, or a marker of religious status. When the external form of the Qur'an—its cover, its design, its customization, and its branding—becomes more significant to the consumer than its internal message, the process of fetishism is already in motion.

This condition mirrors Baudrillard's (1998) notion of hyperreality, in which representations and symbols begin to overshadow reality itself (Baudrillard, 1998). The beautifully designed mushaf, with luxurious covers and personalized features, can become a simulacrum of religiosity, a symbolic substitute for genuine engagement with the divine message. In such a scenario, individuals may feel sufficiently pious simply by owning, displaying, or gifting a Qur'an, even in the absence of deep reflection, study, or implementation of its teachings. The Qur'an risks becoming what Debord would describe as a "spectacle," a visual and symbolic object consumed within a society dominated by images, where meaning is gradually displaced by form (Jagodzinski, 2004).

Syaamil is not oblivious to this risk. In fact, the company's admission that the use of local endorsers and Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) results in less than 20% direct sales conversion is an important indicator of ambivalence toward purely market-driven promotional strategies. Despite the relatively low conversion rate, Syaamil continues to collaborate with KOLs and brand ambassadors, not primarily for immediate profit, but for long-term exposure, brand recognition, and cultural integration into digital religious ecosystems. This decision reveals a pragmatic compromise with contemporary market realities, where visibility and algorithmic presence in digital spaces are essential to remain relevant in an increasingly online religious economy. Social media, influencers, online marketplaces, and digital storytelling have become unavoidable arenas for religious discourse, turning da'wah itself into a mediatized practice embedded in the structures of digital capitalism (Mosco, 2009).

At the same time, Syaamil continues to engage in negotiations with scholars, religious councils, and Islamic authorities regarding the ethical boundaries of its practices. However, the fact that the implementation of scholarly advice and fatwas depends upon the "situation and conditions" and the "capability" of the company illustrates a delicate and often problematic reality: in a capitalist framework, ultimate decision-making power often resides not in moral or spiritual authorities but in economic feasibility and organizational capacity. This reveals the asymmetrical relationship between normative Islamic ethics and operational business realities, in which moral discourse sometimes functions more as a guiding ideal than as an absolute determinant. Such negotiation is characteristic of what Habermas describes as the "colonization of the lifeworld" by the systems of money and power, where spaces traditionally governed by norms and values become increasingly shaped by instrumental rationality (Murphy, 2022).

Nevertheless, in contrast to corporations whose sole objective is profit maximization, Syaamil consistently reaffirms its da'wah orientation as its founding and guiding philosophy. This positioning significantly moderates the degree to which commodity fetishism can dominate its practices. Rather than perceiving market logic as a threat to spirituality, Syaamil reframes it as a necessary tool for the continuity of its religious mission. Profit is not defined as an ultimate goal but as a means to sustain da'wah-related activities, such as Qur'an education, waqf distribution, training programs, and community engagement. This approach resonates with Gauthier's concept of "spiritual capitalism," a model in which economic practices do not eliminate spiritual values, but are integrated into a moral worldview that reinterprets profit as a resource for religious empowerment (Goldstein, 2017).

This dialectical relationship between submission to market logic and resistance through moral values is the most distinctive characteristic of Syaamil Quran's commodification model. On one hand, the company must survive within a competitive publishing industry where other firms offer cheaper products, mass-produced Qur'ans, and imported alternatives. To remain relevant and financially viable, Syaamil inevitably engages with the logic of branding, segmentation, competition, profit margins, and consumer research. On the other hand, it actively constructs internal ethical barriers that prevent it from descending into pure commodification. The Qur'an, for Syaamil, is not just another product line; it is the axis of its identity, the source of its legitimacy, and the foundation of its moral accountability (Rozaq et al., 2025).

This dialectical tension reflects a broader crisis of modern religiosity, in which sacred traditions are forced to operate within systems fundamentally shaped by secular rationality and economic interests. The concern is not whether religion will be commodified—because in a capitalist world, it almost inevitably will be—but rather whether religion can retain its transformative, critical, and ethical power within that process (J. Carrette & King, 2005). In the case of Syaamil, the answer appears to be cautiously optimistic. The company's persistent

emphasis on adab, Qur'anic values, da'wah programs, and scholarly consultation functions as a counter-discourse to the reduction of the mushaf into a mere consumer object.

Furthermore, from a sociological perspective, this paradoxical coexistence between reverence and consumption is not unique to Islam or Indonesia. Similar patterns can be observed in the commercialization of the Bible in Western evangelical industries, the sale of Torah scrolls and Judaica merchandise in Jewish communities, and the commodification of Buddhist amulets, prayer beads, and scriptures across East and Southeast Asia (Fealy, 2009). These examples suggest that modern religion has entered a phase in which the sacred must negotiate its place within a global market culture that values visibility, accessibility, and personalization. Syaamil Quran, therefore, can be seen as part of a global transformation in which ancient sacred traditions are re-packaged, re-negotiated, and re-contextualized within late capitalist modernity.

Yet, what differentiates Syaamil is the conscious effort to resist total absorption into market ideology. By continually affirming that "the Qur'an is not a commodity in essence, but in function," Syaamil articulates an important epistemological distinction. The sacredness of the text is not dissolved by its participation in the market; rather, the market is redefined and disciplined by the sacredness of the text (Thumala Olave, 2021). This inversion of typical capitalist hierarchy—where profit usually dominates principle—represents a subtle but significant attempt to democratize and moralize economic practice itself. In this sense, Syaamil's model may be read as a form of ethical intervention into capitalism, one that seeks to carve out a space where moral transcendence can coexist with economic immanence.

the duality dilemma and the specter of commodity fetishism remain ever-present in Syaamil Quran's business practice, yet they do not operate in a simplistic or destructive manner. Instead, they generate a continuous process of negotiation, reflection, and reorientation. Commodification, in this context, is neither purely profane nor purely sacred; it is dialectical, contested, and dynamic. Syaamil stands as a concrete example of how modern Islamic institutions attempt to navigate the complex terrain between revelation and rationalization, devotion and distribution, sacred duty and market demand. The mushaf al-Qur'an, through Syaamil's hands, becomes not just a book, but a site of struggle, synthesis, and spiritual-economic dialogue—a living symbol of how faith seeks to survive, adapt, and even flourish in the very structures that threaten to commodify it.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the process of institutionalization and commodification of the Quranic manuscript in the business practices of Syaamil Quran is not simply a shift in function from a holy book to a market commodity, but rather a much more complex cultural, theological, and economic negotiation. The main findings show that Syaamil Quran has succeeded in shaping the Quran as a "commodified sacred object," an artifact that simultaneously embodies the sacredness of revelation and exchange value within a system of religious capitalism. Through product differentiation, design aesthetics, personalization (custom name), integration of pedagogical methods (color tajweed, tikrar), and the construction of legitimacy based on adab, halal certification, and da'wah networks, the Quran has not only shifted from use-value towards exchange-value as explained by Marx, but also moving towards sign-value (Baudrillard) and symbolic capital (Bourdieu) as markers of identity, piety, and social class of contemporary urban Muslims.

Theoretically, this finding expands the discourse on the commodification of religion by demonstrating that sacred texts can enter the market logic without completely losing their spiritual authority, as long as there is an internal ethical framework that frames economic practices as an extension of the mission of da'wah. Practically, the Syaamil Quran model reflects a unique form of spiritual capitalism in Indonesia, where profit is not positioned as the ultimate goal, but rather as a prerequisite for the sustainability of religious movements. However, this study also highlights the dark side of this process, namely the emergence of the risk of commodity fetishism, when the mushaf is treated more as a status symbol, an aesthetic object, or a religious lifestyle identity, rather than as a source of profound spiritual transformation.

The limitations of this study lie in its focus on a single publishing entity and its failure to elaborate on the experiences of readers and users of the Quran as active recipients. Therefore, future research needs to develop comparative studies across publishers, examine the impact of Quran personalization on religious practices, and explore how the digital generation negotiates their relationship with the Quran amidst a visual and consumer culture. Therefore, this study concludes that the Quran in the modern era is no longer just a text, but a "field of meaning" where revelation, the market, identity, and technology intertwine in a constantly shifting dialectic—

forcing religious communities to continually redefine their relationship with the sacred in an increasingly commodified world.

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Compliance of Teaching Material Components with Educational Standards

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Abstract:

This study aims to assess the suitability of teaching material components to national education standards through a literature review approach. Teaching materials are a crucial instrument in the learning process, serving not only as a medium for delivering content but also as a bridge between the curriculum and classroom practice. However, in the field, teaching materials are still found to be not fully structured according to national standards, both in terms of content, delivery strategies, and evaluation. Through a literature analysis, this study found that the ideal structure of teaching materials includes components such as learning objectives, materials, learning activities, evaluation, media, and character values, all of which must be arranged coherently and contextually. Recommended approaches to teaching material development include scientific, competency-based, differentiation, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). In addition, the use of digital technologies such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) and interactive multimedia also enriches the components of teaching materials to make them more adaptive and engaging. This study also identified real challenges in teaching material development, including limited teacher training, inadequate facilities, and low digital literacy. Therefore, strategies are recommended to enhance teacher competency, foster collaboration among educators, facilitate continuous evaluation, and strengthen support from the government and educational institutions. These findings are expected to serve as a reference for teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers in creating quality teaching materials that are relevant to today's learning dynamics.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; brain emotional learning; character education; moral development; technology integration

INTRODUCTION

Education is the primary foundation for developing quality human resources. In the educational process, teaching materials play a crucial role as the primary medium for conveying knowledge, skills, and values to students. Therefore, the development of teaching materials must refer to national education standards to ensure the learning process is systematic, directed, and aligned with the established learning outcomes. These education standards encompass graduate competency standards, content, processes, and assessments, which have been established by the government as a national benchmark for education in Indonesia (Kemendikbud, 2020).

Despite the availability of educational standards, various studies indicate that the development of teaching materials in the field often fails to fully adhere to these standards. Many teachers and teaching material developers still use traditional approaches, without aligning content and presentation methods with curriculum needs and student characteristics. This creates a gap between the material taught and the expected competencies. Therefore, a literature review is essential to examine the extent to which teaching material development practices align with applicable educational standards (Sumarni, 2015).

Academic literature reveals various models and components of teaching materials that can be developed in accordance with curriculum needs. These components, such as learning objectives, materials, learning activities, evaluation, and media and learning resources, are crucial elements in ensuring compliance with educational standards. Examining the structure and content of these teaching materials is crucial for understanding the ideal practices recommended in various literature. Thus, the development of teaching materials can be directed so that they are not only informative but also educational, applicable, and contextual (Mulyasa, 2013).

The literature review also provides insights into various approaches to developing standards-based teaching materials, such as constructivist, scientific, and competency-based approaches. Each approach has its own characteristics and advantages in developing effective teaching materials. Through this analysis, development practices that align with educational standards and address the challenges of 21st-century learning can be identified. Using the right approach to developing teaching materials will support the achievement of more optimal learning outcomes (Majid, 2011). Furthermore, changes in curriculum policies, such as the Independent Curriculum, require teachers and teaching material developers to be more creative and flexible in developing teaching materials. This curriculum, which emphasizes the Pancasila student profile and differentiated learning, requires adaptive and contextual teaching materials. Therefore, a literature review of teaching material components becomes increasingly relevant to ensure that development practices are not only compliant with standards but also responsive to the latest curriculum dynamics (Kemendikbudristek, 2022a).

The main problem that arises in practice is teachers' lack of understanding of the ideal structure of teaching materials that meet standards. Most developed teaching materials focus solely on delivering content, neglecting the learning process and evaluation aspects. However, teaching materials should encompass all learning stages, systematically designed and integrated into a unified whole. This demonstrates the importance of deepening theoretical understanding through literature reviews to strengthen the practice of developing quality teaching materials (Zuhdan, 2016). Numerous studies have been conducted to evaluate the suitability of teacher-developed teaching materials to educational standards. However, several deficiencies have been identified in the formulation of objectives, the selection of relevant materials, and the availability of comprehensive evaluations.

This literature review is expected to serve as a reference for educators in developing teaching materials that are not only tailored to student needs but also nationally standardized. Thus, the development of teaching materials can be part of improving the overall quality of education (Prastowo, 2012). The literature also shows that the use of educational technology can enrich the components of teaching materials and facilitate the integration of educational standards. In the digital era, interactive, multimedia, and digital platform-based teaching materials are part of effective learning strategies. However, challenges such as limited facilities and teachers' digital competencies remain obstacles that need to be overcome. This literature review will also highlight how the development of digital teaching materials can still refer to applicable educational standards (Rusman, 2012).

Against this backdrop, it is crucial to conduct a systematic literature review to explore the forms of instructional material components that meet standards and how their development practices are implemented in various contexts. Through this mapping, this paper will present key findings from relevant studies and

provide recommendations for the development of standards-based instructional materials that are applicable to education practitioners. The ultimate goal is to contribute to improving the quality of learning in schools and other educational institutions (Sugiyono, 2017). Overall, this background emphasizes the urgency and relevance of a literature review regarding the alignment of instructional material components with educational standards. By using educational standards as a benchmark, it is hoped that the development of instructional materials will be more systematic, measurable, and have a direct impact on improving student learning outcomes. This paper will focus on exploring theories, models, and practices of instructional material development, while also providing a comprehensive overview of the ideal quality of instructional material implementation (Trianto, 2010).

METHOD

This research was conducted using a literature review approach, a research method that emphasizes the exploration, collection, and analysis of data from various relevant library sources. Literature review is especially important when researchers seek to understand a phenomenon based on previous theories and findings. In this context, the approach focuses on an in-depth analysis of the alignment between teaching materials and educational standards. Such research requires diligence and precision in selecting and interpreting references, as well as sharp analytical skills. Literature review can also help formulate a strong theoretical foundation for further field-based research (Creswell, 2012).

The literature review approach requires a systematic approach, from issue identification and relevant literature collection to in-depth content analysis. In this study, researchers sifted through various academic documents, such as scientific articles, educational journals, and textbooks discussing teaching materials development and educational standardization. The goal was to obtain a comprehensive overview of how teaching material components, such as content, delivery strategies, and evaluation tools, align with the applicable national curriculum provisions (Ridwan, 2020).

The data collected came entirely from secondary sources that had been selected based on their credibility and relevance to the research topic. These sources included national and international scientific journals, research reports, academic books, and articles from official educational institution websites. The use of secondary data enabled researchers to examine trends, challenges, and successes in teaching materials development practices across various educational contexts (Moleong, 2013). Data analysis in this study began with a data reduction process, which involved selecting and filtering key theories from references most closely related to the research objectives. The reduced data was then systematically organized in narrative and tabular formats to facilitate understanding. This step was crucial to ensure that the information obtained was not merely a collection of quotations but rather formed a comprehensive and integrated conceptual understanding (M.B. & Huberman, 1994).

The next step is data presentation, which is structured to allow for clear exploration and understanding of the relationships between the variables in the study. This presentation takes the form of a summary of findings, a categorization of themes, and an explanation of arguments. This presentation aims to demonstrate the relationship between the components of the teaching materials and the educational standards being analyzed (Sugiyono, 2017).

The research conclusions were drawn through a synthesis process, which involves combining and evaluating various analyzed data and information. This synthesis allows researchers to form logical conclusions based on scientific evidence from various sources. With this approach, the research results are not only descriptive but also provide a critical assessment of teaching materials development practices in Indonesia (O.E.C.D., 2019).

From a literature review approach, we provide a comprehensive picture of how teaching materials development practices can be optimized when grounded in a thorough understanding of applicable educational standards. Furthermore, the study's findings demonstrate the importance of active involvement by teachers, curriculum designers, and educational institutions in ensuring that the components of the developed teaching materials truly meet student needs (Kemendikbudristek, 2022b).

By integrating various perspectives from academic sources, this research can provide conceptual contributions to the evaluation and improvement of teaching materials development. Literature-based research like this can also serve as a starting point for field research aimed at evaluating the implementation of teaching materials directly in schools. The final results are expected to enrich educational practices and assist policymakers in determining a more effective direction for curriculum development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The form and structure of teaching material components developed in various literature studies

Teaching materials are a crucial component in the learning process, serving as both a guide and the primary learning resource for students. Various literature studies reveal that teaching materials can take various forms, including modules, textbooks, student activity sheets (LKS), and e-learning. Each form of teaching material has a unique structure, tailored to the goals, objectives, and characteristics of the students. Learning modules, for example, generally consist of an identity, instructions for use, learning objectives, materials, practice questions, summaries, and evaluations. Meanwhile, textbooks are often more concise and present information in a systematic narrative format. In a digital context, teaching materials can take the form of interactive multimedia that presents content in visual, audio, and text formats. The structure of these teaching materials also considers pedagogical principles such as learning motivation and the meaningfulness of the material. Therefore, the form and structure of teaching materials are dynamic and contextual. This suggests that in developing teaching materials, literature studies provide a broad reference for selecting an appropriate form and structure (Arsyad, 2015). The structure of teaching materials is determined not only by their form but also by the development approach.

Literature studies indicate that the approach used can be thematic, scientific, or problem-based. This approach determines the sequence and content of the components of teaching materials. In a scientific approach, for example, teaching materials are developed based on the steps of observing, asking, trying, reasoning, and communicating. This directly influences the structure of the material content and learning activities within the teaching materials. Meanwhile, a problem-based approach prioritizes case presentation and the stimulation of critical thinking at the beginning of the teaching materials. Therefore, the structure of teaching materials in literature studies is not rigid, but follows the chosen pedagogical approach. Researchers and teaching materials developers need to consider this approach to ensure that the resulting structure aligns with students' learning needs. This overall approach demonstrates that the structure of teaching materials is largely determined by the underlying strategies and approaches (Trianto, 2010).

One common structure of teaching materials widely referenced in the literature consists of an introduction, main points, and conclusion. The introduction typically includes learning objectives, a concept map, and motivation or introduction to the topic. The main points include a systematic presentation of the material, complete with examples, illustrations, and learning activities. The conclusion contains a summary, reflection, and evaluation of the learning. In the context of developing an independent curriculum, this structure can be further developed more flexibly, for example by adding spaces for exploration or projects. These additions aim to provide space for creativity and active student involvement. This structure also facilitates teachers in implementing effective learning. A clear structure also supports consistent delivery of material across classes. Thus, this standard structure serves as a basic reference in the development of modern teaching materials (Majid, 2011).

In other literature, the structure of teaching materials is often recommended to accommodate four main components: core competencies, achievement indicators, main material, and evaluation. These four components serve as a basic framework for developing targeted teaching material content. Core competencies serve as the starting point for determining the direction of learning. Achievement indicators more specifically outline the skills or knowledge that must be mastered. Main material is the main content that supports the achievement of these indicators, and evaluation is used to measure learning achievement. This structure allows teachers to adapt teaching materials to the applicable syllabus. Furthermore, this structure is considered systematic and relevant for use at various levels of education. Therefore, many teaching material developers have adopted this structure in designing their products (Mulyasa, 2013).

The components of teaching materials in the digital era have also evolved in terms of form and structure. Various literature shows that digital-based teaching materials such as e-books and learning management systems (LMS) have a more modular and interactive structure. Each module or section is usually equipped with multimedia links, interactive quizzes, and discussion forums. This structure not only presents material textually but also provides a more varied learning experience. Interactivity is a key element in the structure of digital teaching materials because it supports active student engagement. Furthermore, the modular structure allows flexible learning access, anytime and anywhere. Therefore, contemporary literature studies emphasize the importance of technology integration in the structure of teaching materials. Adapting to this technology encourages the structure of teaching materials to be more responsive to current developments (Clark & Mayer, 2016).

Some literature also emphasizes the importance of incorporating values and character components into the structure of teaching materials. These components are typically included in the learning activities or reflection sections. The goal is to internalize values such as honesty, cooperation, and responsibility during the learning process. Teaching materials with an affective dimension are considered more effective in shaping students' personalities. Structures that integrate character education generally present real-life situations or case studies that stimulate discussion and critical thinking. This enriches the teaching materials not only cognitively, but also emotionally and socially. Therefore, the structure of current teaching materials is recommended to address not only academic aspects but also moral aspects. Recent educational literature also emphasizes that character education should be an integral part of teaching materials (Zubaedi, 2011). The structure of teaching materials is also often linked to specific instructional design models, such as ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation). In this context, the teaching materials developed will follow the stages of needs analysis, content design, material development, implementation, and evaluation. Each stage contributes to the final structure of the teaching materials. For example, during the design stage, the content structure and logical sequence between sections of the material are developed. The implementation stage serves as a platform for testing and revising the structure to suit real-world classroom conditions. Thus, the structure of teaching materials is not simply a table of contents, but rather the result of a thorough instructional design process.

Many literature studies recommend the use of the ADDIE model because it is considered comprehensive and applicable in developing teaching materials. This proves that a good teaching material structure always results from a systematic and planned process (Branch, 2009). In addition to content structure, visual aspects and layout are also important parts of teaching material structure according to literature studies. A neat appearance, appropriate use of color, and hierarchical arrangement of information help students understand the material more easily. Good visualizations such as images, diagrams, and tables can strengthen memory and clarify concepts.

Many researchers recommend that each section of teaching materials include graphic elements that support the content. Layout also affects the logical flow of reading materials, so it's important to pay attention to consistency between pages or chapters. In developing digital-based teaching materials, this aspect becomes even more crucial because it relates to navigation and user experience. Therefore, the ideal structure of teaching materials is a combination of systematic content and informative visuals. This reinforces the message that the structure of teaching materials is not only about the content, but also the presentation (Smaldino et al., 2012).

Literature studies also underscore the importance of integration between the components of teaching materials. This means that each part of the teaching materials must support each other and form a coherent whole. For example, learning objectives must align with the learning materials and activities, and be relevant to the form of assessment. Mismatches between these components can lead to confusion in the learning process. Therefore, the structure of teaching materials is structured with the principles of coherence and strong internal interconnections. Some literature suggests creating a matrix of interconnections between these components to ensure alignment. In this way, developers can ensure that the structure of the teaching materials is not only complete but also harmonious. This principle of integration is especially important in thematic or interdisciplinary teaching materials. An integrated structure will provide a more contextual and comprehensive learning experience (Dick et al., 2005).

Overall, various literature studies illustrate that the form and structure of teaching materials are not a single entity, but rather vary according to the context in which they are used. Factors such as educational level, student characteristics, learning approaches, and delivery formats (print or digital) influence how teaching materials are structured. Therefore, teaching material developers must be adaptive to developments in educational theory and practice. The ideal teaching material structure is one that conveys content logically, engagingly, and easily understood, while supporting competency achievement. The appropriateness of content, presentation format, visuals, and evaluation are essential elements that must be met. The literature also emphasizes the importance of ongoing evaluation to ensure the teaching material structure remains relevant and effective. From all this, it can be concluded that teaching material development is a creative and scientific process that must be based on literature and field practice. Therefore, a deep understanding of the form and structure of teaching materials through literature is an important provision for educators (Tomlinson, 2014).

Implementation of the Form and Structure of Teaching Materials in Learning Practice

After understanding the various forms and structures of teaching materials discussed in the literature, the next important step is how these materials are implemented in classroom learning practices and in bold learning. Implementation is not simply transferring the content of the teaching materials into learning activities, but also involves adjusting the learning strategies, media, and approaches used by teachers to ensure the materials function optimally. This process is key to the success of open-ended materials design, which has been designed based on theory and academic references (Majid, 2011).

In the context of classroom learning, teachers play a strategic role in translating the structure of open-ended materials into concrete learning experiences. For example, when using a learning module, teachers not only share it with students but also explain key elements such as learning objectives and how to use the module. This is crucial for students to understand the expected learning flow and be able to use the open-ended materials independently. An ideal module allows students to systematically follow learning activities, from orientation, exploration, elaboration, and evaluation (Rusman, 2012). Furthermore, the implementation of open-ended materials is also influenced by the teacher's learning approach. As explained in the literature review, scientific and problem-based approaches influence the way open-ended materials are structured. In practice, teachers who use a scientific approach will direct students to observe, formulate questions, experiment, reason, and draw conclusions. Therefore, parts of open-ended materials related to exploratory activities require special attention when implemented in the classroom. Teachers can prepare visual aids, experimental media, or additional worksheets to enhance the learning process.

A problem-based approach requires teachers to design triggering situations that challenge students' critical thinking skills. In this regard, open-ended materials, including case studies, open-ended questions, and reflective activities, should be implemented through group discussions or class presentations. This practice not only makes the open-ended materials more "lively" but also encourages students to be more active and participatory in learning (Trianto, 2010). In digital-based learning, such as online learning or blended learning, the implementation of teaching materials has also undergone significant adjustments. Teaching materials are no longer limited to printed formats or physical modules, but have evolved into learning videos, interactive presentations, and digital platforms that enable students to learn flexibly. Teachers are expected to be able to transform printed materials into digital media, for example by creating interactive PowerPoint presentations, explanatory videos, or even online quizzes integrated with the teaching materials. The use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Google Classroom, Moodle, or Edmodo has become an important tool for distributing teaching materials (Arsyad, 2015).

However, the effectiveness of implementing digital learning materials depends heavily on the quality of their design and accessibility. Good design includes an attractive appearance, easy navigation, and content that aligns with learning objectives. Teachers must also ensure that all students can access these materials, especially in the context of the digital divide, which remains a challenge in many regions. Therefore, the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) are an important approach to ensuring that learning materials are inclusive and accessible to all students, including those with limited devices or internet access (Rose et al., 2002). Effective implementation of learning materials also requires regular evaluation. Teachers need to observe the extent to which the learning materials help students achieve learning objectives. This evaluation can be conducted through formative and summative assessments, direct feedback from students, and teacher reflection on the learning process. For example, if many students experience difficulty with a particular section of the material, that section may need to be simplified, provided with additional explanations, or its presentation changed. This demonstrates that the implementation of learning materials is a dynamic process that requires continuous adaptation (Mulyasa, 2007).

Collaboration between teachers and educational staff is also key to optimizing the implementation of teaching materials. By working together, teachers can exchange ideas, share effective teaching materials, and reflect on best practices in learning. For example, in teacher learning community programs or teacher working groups (KKG), teachers can discuss the structure of the teaching materials they have used and how they impact student learning outcomes. This collaboration enriches teachers' insights and strengthens their capacity to apply meaningful teaching materials (Suyatno, 2020). Furthermore, the implementation of teaching materials must also take into account the local context and student needs. Teachers need to adapt to student characteristics, the learning environment, and local cultural values. For example, in social studies lessons in coastal areas, teaching materials could include case studies on the lives of fishermen, marine management, or local wisdom related to

conservation. This way, students not only understand the material theoretically but are also able to relate it to their daily lives (Tilaar, 2005).

Challenges and Solutions in Developing Digital and Local Context-Based Teaching Materials

In the era of digital and evolving globalization, the development of teaching materials requires not only technological sophistication but also the ability to adapt content to local contexts. This challenge becomes even more complex when teachers are faced with diverse learners, differing access to technology, and evolving socio-cultural dynamics in society. In this situation, the development of teaching materials needs to consider contextual, collaborative, and technology-based approaches to ensure learning remains relevant and inclusive (Mulyasa, 2007). One of the main challenges in developing digital-based teaching materials is the gap in technology access among learners. Not all students have adequate devices or a stable internet connection to access digital teaching materials. This requires teachers to provide alternative teaching materials in various formats, such as printed modules, offline videos, or audio learning, to reach students in various settings (Rose et al., 2002). The principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are an important approach to addressing this challenge by ensuring that teaching materials are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities.

In addition to access challenges, teachers' and students' digital literacy skills are also a determining factor in the development and use of digital teaching materials. Many teachers have not fully mastered the use of digital platforms or learning applications, resulting in less interactive or boring teaching materials. Therefore, ongoing training in the use of learning technology is an urgent solution. The government and educational institutions need to provide regular teacher professional development programs (Suyatno, 2020). In terms of content, teaching material development also needs to integrate local contexts to make them more meaningful for students. Local contexts allow students to connect learning materials with their surroundings, resulting in a deeper and more reflective learning process. For example, in Indonesian language learning, teachers can use folklore or local culture as teaching materials. This not only strengthens understanding of the material but also fosters a love of one's own culture (Tilaar, 2004).

However, integrating local context into teaching materials also presents its own challenges. Teachers are required to conduct small-scale research or collect local data, which requires time and specific skills. In this regard, collaboration between teachers and support from the school community is essential. Teachers can collaborate with community leaders or local institutions to obtain relevant and accurate information. This can also increase community involvement in education (Majid, 2011). Another challenge is how to combine the demands of the national curriculum with the flexibility in developing teaching materials. The curriculum is often perceived as a standard document that limits teacher creativity. In fact, the curriculum can serve as a basic guideline, while teaching materials can be flexibly developed according to student needs and circumstances. Teachers need to be given pedagogical freedom to adapt teaching materials without neglecting the competency achievements specified in the curriculum.

Another solution to address this challenge is the development of an open educational resources bank. With a platform for sharing teaching materials, teachers can access, modify, and disseminate teaching materials tailored to the characteristics of their respective classes. This will ease the burden on teachers in developing materials from scratch and collectively improve the quality of teaching materials. Several national and international platforms already provide this facility, but its utilization still needs to be improved through outreach and training (Rusman, 2012).

To support the development of effective digital and local-based teaching materials, evaluation is a crucial process that cannot be overlooked. Evaluation should be conducted not only on the basis of material accessibility, but also on the effectiveness of the media and the relevance of the context used. For example, video-based teaching materials need to be evaluated for duration, visual appeal, and narrative clarity. Meanwhile, contextual teaching materials should be evaluated to see how relevant the material is to their real lives (Arsyad, 2015).

Ultimately, the development of teaching materials in the modern era must be grounded in a spirit of innovation and a focus on students. Teachers, as developers of teaching materials, are required not only to be creative, but also reflective and collaborative. Digital and local challenges are not obstacles, but opportunities to create learning that is more humane, meaningful, and relevant to the needs of the times. With the support of progressive policies and a supportive education ecosystem, transforming teaching materials for the better is possible (Trianto, 2010).

Challenges and Recommendations for Developing Teaching Materials in Accordance with Educational Standards

Education is not a static process, but rather a continuously evolving system encompassing many dimensions of life. Education extends beyond the delivery of content, encompassing the integration of curriculum, teaching strategies, and instructional materials. These three elements form the basic framework for creating effective learning. Without strong synergy between these elements, the educational process will not produce optimal results. Therefore, understanding the interrelationships between these components is crucial for establishing a quality education system that is relevant to the needs of the times (Tilaar, 2004). Of all the main components of education, instructional materials are one of the most crucial aspects determining the success of teaching and learning. Instructional materials are concrete instruments used by teachers to systematically deliver material and serve as the primary reference for students in understanding the curriculum. They serve as a bridge between theory in the curriculum and classroom practice. Without relevant and structured instructional materials, the learning process can become disoriented and immeasurable (Muslich, 2007).

In Indonesia, the development of teaching materials must align with the provisions of the national curriculum. Both the 2013 Curriculum and the Independent Curriculum require that teaching materials reflect officially established core competencies and learning objectives. Therefore, teachers cannot be careless in developing teaching materials. Curriculum documents serve as the primary reference for ensuring that the material provided aligns with applicable national education standards (Kemendikbud, 2020). However, the reality on the ground is not as straightforward as it appears on paper. Many teachers face challenges when developing teaching materials that align with the curriculum, especially amidst curriculum transitions or limited access to training. Not all teachers receive adequate training to understand the thematic, project, or differentiation approaches recommended in the latest curriculum. This creates a gap between learning planning and implementation (Nugroho, 2023).

Another challenge stems from geographical and socio-economic disparities between regions. Schools in the 3T (frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged) regions often struggle to access the internet, learning resources, or even curriculum-appropriate textbooks. As a result, teachers tend to use outdated or irrelevant teaching materials. This disparity can seriously impact the overall quality of national education (U.N.E.S.C.O., 2021). The use of technology actually opens up significant opportunities to address this issue. Through digital platforms, teachers can access and develop more varied, interactive, and engaging teaching materials. However, in reality, many teachers still lack adequate digital literacy. This prevents the digital transformation in education from being optimal. Therefore, improving technological competency for educators is an urgent need (GTK, 2022).

To address these issues, a national strategy involving various stakeholders is needed. The government needs to strengthen teacher training and facilitate collaboration between educators through learning communities. Teachers need not work alone but can share teaching materials relevant to the local context. This collaborative approach has been shown to improve the efficiency and quality of the materials developed (Kemendikbudristek, 2022a). Finally, it is crucial to establish national standards for teaching materials that are flexible and contextual. These standards should encompass not only content but also pedagogical approaches, relevance to 21st-century needs, and inclusivity. Thus, teaching materials can become a tool for educational transformation that reaches all students in Indonesia fairly and equitably. Quality education can only be achieved if all children, without exception, have equal access to teaching materials (O.E.C.D., 2019).

Challenges in Developing Teaching Materials

One of the main obstacles in developing teaching materials lies in the difficulty in ensuring alignment between the teaching materials and the competencies established in the curriculum. Many teachers experience difficulties in converting basic competencies or learning outcomes into material that is applicable, meaningful, and relevant to the context of students' lives (Majid, 2011). This situation is further complicated by the dynamics of curriculum change, which demands continuous adjustments to teaching materials to ensure they remain relevant and aligned with educational policy directions.

Another equally significant challenge is the diverse characteristics of students within a classroom. Factors such as social background, academic ability level, learning styles, and individual interests create varying learning needs. Unfortunately, uniform teaching materials may not be able to optimally address these needs (Tomlinson, 2014). For example, students with a tendency toward visual learning styles may struggle to understand material presented solely in text. This situation requires teachers to design differentiated teaching materials to accommodate diverse learning preferences.

Furthermore, limited resources are a real problem, especially in schools located in remote areas. Access to technological devices such as computers, internet access, and digital learning resources remains very limited. Teachers who desire to develop multimedia or interactive teaching materials often lack adequate supporting resources (Yamin, 2013). Furthermore, the scarcity of up-to-date scientific references also hampers efforts to develop relevant and reliable materials.

Another aspect worth noting is the time constraints imposed by teachers' heavy workloads. In addition to teaching, teachers are also burdened with various administrative duties, student development activities, and involvement in other school activities. This situation results in a lack of time to develop systematic and innovative teaching materials (Supriatna, 2017), resulting in hastily created materials with minimal evaluation. The low frequency of ongoing professional training in the field of teaching materials development is also a major obstacle. Many educators have not received adequate training in instructional design, the latest pedagogical approaches, and technology integration in learning. As a result, the teaching materials produced tend to be conventional and do not fully reflect active, meaningful, and context-based learning (Mulyasa, 2013).

Strategic Recommendations for Teaching Materials

In facing these various challenges, a number of strategies are needed that can be implemented to improve the quality of teaching materials. *First* It is crucial to conduct a comprehensive curriculum mapping before developing teaching materials. Teachers must thoroughly understand each element of the curriculum, including core competencies, basic competencies, learning indicators, and learning outcomes. This way, the teaching materials developed will have a clear direction and align with national education goals (Kemendikbud, 2021).

Second, to accommodate the differences in student characteristics, teaching materials developers should adopt the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). This principle emphasizes the importance of providing various forms of material representation, providing choices in how to express learning outcomes, and creating various ways to motivate students (C.A.S.T., 2018). For example, presenting material through text, images, audio, and video simultaneously will help students with different learning styles understand the content.

Third, the use of educational technology can be an effective solution for developing interactive and engaging teaching materials. Teachers can use Learning Management Systems (LMS) like Google Classroom, Moodle, or local platforms like Rumah Belajar to distribute teaching materials in various formats. Applications like Canva, Powtoon, and Kahoot can also be used to create more engaging and engaging materials (A. & Firmansyah, 2020).

Fourth, strengthening collaboration between teachers in working groups such as MGMP (Subject Teachers' Consultation) needs to be improved. Through this collaboration, teachers can exchange ideas, develop teaching materials together, and conduct trials of the developed materials. This collaboration can also serve as a forum for sharing good practices and collectively improving competencies (Widodo, 2016).

Furthermore, it is important for teachers to regularly evaluate the teaching materials they have used. Evaluation can be carried out through formative assessments, observations of the learning process, or reflective discussions with colleagues. Student input is also invaluable in determining the extent to which teaching materials support effective learning. Periodic revisions will ensure that teaching materials remain relevant and adaptable to the dynamics of learning needs (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

Fifth, is increasing access to professional training facilitated by the government and educational institutions. This training should be practical, sustainable, and relevant to real-world needs, including mastery of the latest curriculum and utilization of educational technology. Equal access to training across regions is crucial to ensuring equality in educational quality (Kemendikbudristek, 2022a).

Developing teaching materials aligned with national education standards is a crucial element in creating a quality learning process. These standards serve not only as an administrative reference but also as a foundation for determining the direction of student learning outcomes. Teaching materials are a tangible manifestation of the curriculum vision implemented in schools, whether the 2013 Curriculum or the Independent Curriculum. When teaching materials align with the curriculum, the learning process becomes more focused, structured, and tailored to student needs (Muslich, 2007). Despite the strategic role of teaching materials, numerous challenges remain in practice that hinder their development. One major issue is the mismatch between the content of teaching materials and the current learning approaches outlined in the national curriculum. Teachers are sometimes unable to develop teaching materials that reflect competency-

based, project-based, or differentiated learning. This is due to a lack of systematic professional training and support for teachers in understanding the curriculum in depth (Nugroho, 2023).

Another challenge lies in the diversity of students. Each student has a different background, abilities, and learning style. Therefore, developing teaching materials cannot be done with a one-size-fits-all approach. Using a differentiated approach is crucial so that teaching materials can accommodate students' individual learning needs. Teachers need to develop a variety of materials, activities, and learning media to reach all types of students equitably (Tomlinson, 2014). Furthermore, limited facilities and infrastructure are also a significant obstacle to the development of teaching materials, especially in 3T (Disadvantaged, Frontier, and Outermost) regions. Many schools still lack basic facilities such as internet access, computers, and supporting books. This condition makes it difficult for teachers to access the latest learning resources or use technology as a medium for delivering teaching materials. This gap widens the disparity in education quality between regions in Indonesia (U.N.E.S.C.O., 2021).

Another crucial issue is the limited opportunities for teachers to participate in ongoing professional training. However, teacher competency in developing and evaluating teaching materials cannot be developed instantly. Many teachers are forced to develop learning materials independently without expert guidance, resulting in suboptimal quality. Structured and ongoing training is necessary to enable teachers to develop relevant, inspiring, and contextual teaching materials (GTK, 2022). Therefore, teaching material development must be designed with a holistic and adaptive strategy. This strategy includes a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum, the application of a differentiated approach, the use of digital technology, collaboration between teachers, and ongoing evaluation of teaching materials. A comprehensive understanding of the curriculum helps teachers ensure that each teaching material they develop aligns with the learning outcomes set by the government.

The use of information technology in developing teaching materials is also a key factor in today's digital era. Technology offers numerous opportunities for teachers to enrich learning materials with visual, audio, interactive, and multimedia resources. E-learning, instructional videos, and online quizzes are part of modern teaching materials that can increase student motivation and retention. However, the success of technology integration depends heavily on teachers' digital literacy and the readiness of school infrastructure (Setiawan & Mahfud, 2022).

Therefore, collaboration between teachers and government support are key prerequisites for creating quality teaching materials. Teachers can share best practices within learning communities, develop teaching materials together, and engage in pedagogical reflection. Meanwhile, the government needs to provide platforms, incentives, and policies that support innovation in teaching materials development. With strong synergy, teaching materials will not only meet national standards but also serve as instruments that enrich the teaching and learning process as a whole.

CONCLUSION

Developing teaching materials aligned with national education standards is a key element in creating a quality learning process that is relevant to students' needs. Through a literature review, this journal emphasizes that teaching materials are not merely a collection of materials, but also an integral part of a systematic, structured, and adaptive educational strategy to curriculum changes, such as the Independent Curriculum. Ideal open materials components include learning objectives, materials, learning activities, evaluations, and learning media, all of which must be integrated and refer to competency standards. The structure of open materials should not be rigid, but rather flexible and responsive to student characteristics, especially in facing the challenges of 21st-century learning. Scientific, competency-based, thematic, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approaches are important references in developing contextual and inclusive teaching materials.

Teachers face various challenges in the field, such as limited access to technology, high workloads, low digital literacy, and gaps in ongoing professional training. These realities mean that the development of teaching materials does not fully reflect the direction of national education policy. On the other hand, regions in the 3T (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost) also still experience gaps in access to learning resources. Therefore, this journal recommends a strategy for developing teaching materials that includes a thorough understanding of the curriculum, collaboration between teachers, the use of educational technology, continuous evaluation of teaching materials, and equitable professional training. The government, educational

institutions, and the teacher community must work together to create an educational ecosystem that supports innovation in open materials. Overall, the development of standardized, adaptive, and literature-based teaching materials is the foundation for improving the quality of national education. With a clear structure, appropriate approach, and appropriate technology, teaching materials can be an effective bridge to realizing meaningful learning achievements for all students in Indonesia.

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The politics of religious commodification: Representation of power in the Cikande halal industrial zone

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Abstract:

This study analyzes the Banten Provincial Government's halal discourse in press releases, social media, and Cikande Halal Industrial Zone (KIHC) promotions (2019–2024) using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Findings reveal halal discourse as a power apparatus that commodifies religion, blending religious lexicon ("halal," "shariah," "blessing") with economic metaphors ("global hub," "qiblat") to legitimize industrial modernity. At textual and discursive levels, the state circulates narratives via institutional channels, fostering inevitability around halal industrialization and replacing coercion with persuasion. Socially, it forges a state-religion-capital triad, yielding "dual legitimacy"—moral via religious symbols, economic via investment promises—while crafting market-oriented pious consumers, sidelining justice, labor, and ecology. The study advances scholarship on religious commodification, state hegemony, and halal political economy, portraying halal discourse as governmentality merging morality and markets in Indonesia.

Keywords*: Capitalism; Critical Discourse Analysis; halal industry; political economy; religious commodification.*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's contemporary political economy has undergone significant transformation over the past two decades, particularly through the strengthening of the halal industry as a strategic sector of national development. While previously, halal discourse focused primarily on consumer jurisprudence, product certification, and religious regulations, it has now evolved into a grand narrative integrating the logic of religion, the state, and capital (Fischer, 2016). This transformation did not occur in a vacuum, but was influenced by the global wave of "halalization," which has constructed halal as an economic commodity, a symbol of identity politics, and an instrument of international market competition (Rudnyckyj, 2019). Thus, halal is no longer merely a theological category but has become part of an infrastructure of power involving the state, corporations, and religious authorities.

In this context, the development of the Cikande Halal Industrial Estate (KIHC) in Serang Regency, Banten Province, occupies a strategic position as a mega-project projected to accelerate halal industrialization. KIHC is not only framed as an industrial area providing production facilities that meet halal standards, but is also represented as a symbol of Islamic modernity, industrial innovation, and the future of regional economic development. The Banten Provincial Government, through a massive campaign with the slogan "Banten: The Future of Halal Industry," repeatedly emphasized that KIHC is a form of "moral and religious commitment" to creating an industrial ecosystem that is halal, thayyib, and globally competitive. This narrative continues to be produced through official government channels, from the news portal bantenprov.go.id, Instagram posts @bantenprov, to various national investment forums. Thus, KIHC appears not merely as an economic project, but as a social text that represents the struggle for meaning, interests, and claims to power (Miller, 2024).

This phenomenon raises several critical questions. First, how is the discourse on religiosity mobilized by the state in the KIHC project? Second, how are religious symbols and terminology constructed as legitimators of development, creating what has been called a religionized development discourse? Third, how does this discourse function as an instrument of power representation, both in shaping the government's image and in shaping Muslim subjects in accordance with the logic of developmentalism? These questions are crucial given that the halal industry cannot be separated from the dynamics of identity politics, symbolic economy, and power relations in contemporary Muslim society.

Several previous studies have made important contributions to understanding the development of the halal industry in Indonesia. Miskiyah and Hidayat (2020), for example, examined the economic potential of the halal industry and highlighted export opportunities for Indonesian halal commodities (Miskiyah & Hidayat, 2020). Meanwhile, Nurhayati and Suryana (2022) focused on the effectiveness of halal certification in increasing the competitiveness of MSME products (Nurhayati & Suryana, 2022). These studies enrich our understanding of the economic and regulatory aspects of the halal industry, but tend to overlook the discursive dimensions, representations of power, and symbolic politics that accompany the development of halal industrial zones. In other words, research on the halal industry has been predominantly oriented toward technocratic aspects, such as regulation, supply chain management, and market potential, leaving a research gap regarding how the state uses religious discourse to establish political and economic legitimacy through the halal industry.

In global literature, studies on the commodification of religion have highlighted how religious symbols, values, and practices are often systematically processed within the logic of the market and development (Jain, 2022). However, the Indonesian context is unique, as the state plays an active role in institutionalizing religion in public policy, particularly through the concept of sharia economics, as enshrined in the 2019–2024 Sharia Economic Masterplan. This is where the KIHC (Islamic Community Empowerment) becomes strategic as an empirical case study: it represents a space where state, religion, and capital meet, discursively manifested through state media. Therefore, investigating the KIHC discourse is crucial for understanding how the state shapes public perceptions, mobilizes faith, and produces legitimacy through development narratives imbued with religiosity.

In the context of discourse analysis, the government not only conveys information but also forms certain structures of meaning, which Fairclough (1995) calls ideological-discursive formations. The discourse produced by the state through official media is not merely a representation, but a social practice that actively produces power relations (Fairclough, 1995). The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach positions language as an instrument of power, where word choice, metaphors, and narrative structures can construct the social world in a particular way and benefit certain parties (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Through this approach, research on KIHC examines not only what is said, but also how, in what context, and for whose benefit the discourse is produced.

In government media campaigns, KIHC is often represented through religious metaphors such as "Indonesia's halal lighthouse," "sharia industrial park," or "the path to economic blessing." These metaphors are not neutral; they serve as tools for building a moral economy that links industrial development to the values of worship and piety (Kazanoğlu & Ketola, 2022). On the other hand, the government presents itself as not only technocratically competent but also religiously committed, thus gaining symbolic legitimacy from the Muslim community (de Bruin-Wassinkmaat et al., 2021). This demonstrates that KIHC's representation in the media is not merely informative but also political.

At the same time, the religious narrative inherent in KIHC serves as a mechanism for the formation of a new Muslim subject—one who is not only ritually devout but also productive, competitive, and supportive of the nation's development projects. This representation aligns with what Rudnyckyj (2019) calls spiritual economies, where religion is used as a technology of self-management to increase economic productivity (Rudnyckyj, 2019).

Thus, KIHC is not only a physical project but also an ideological one, aiming to shape Muslim citizens in line with the logic of sharia capitalism and the vision of national development.

From this explanation, it is clear that there is an analytical gap (research gap) between technocratic-industrial studies of the halal sector and critical studies of how the state constructs power through religious discourse. This gap is what this research aims to fill. Using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis as a theoretical and methodological framework, this study positions KIHC as a discursive object, not simply a material object. This approach allows researchers to understand the complex relationships between language, power, and ideology that shape media representations of the halal project.

Specifically, this study has three main objectives. First, it identifies and analyzes the linguistic and symbolic strategies used by the government in producing discourse on KIHC. Second, it uncovers the political-economic interests underlying the construction of this discourse, including how the state uses religious symbols to gain legitimacy and public support. Third, it analyzes how KIHC discourse contributes to the formation of contemporary Muslim subjects and the strengthening of state power in the development process.

Thus, this research not only makes a theoretical contribution to the study of religion and development discourse, but also offers relevant empirical insights into how the Indonesian state utilizes the politics of religious commodification as a strategy for representing power. This understanding is crucial in the context of the increasing integration of religion into public policy, as well as in the global context where religion, identity, and capital continue to be intertwined in the modern public sphere.

METHOD

This research method uses a qualitative approach with Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, which emphasizes the relationship between language, power, and ideology (Fairclough, 1995). This approach was chosen because it is able to reveal how discourse regarding the Cikande Halal Industrial Zone (KIHC) is constructed, distributed, and interpreted in the context of relations between the state, capital, and religion. The research data are sourced from official texts produced by the Banten Provincial Government for the 2019–2024 period, including press releases on the bantenprov.go.id portal, social media posts from the @bantenprov account on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter/X, as well as various promotional materials such as brochures, pamphlets, and KIHC company profile videos. All data were collected through a purposive sampling technique using the keywords "Cikande Halal Industrial Zone", "KIHC", and "The Future of Halal Industry" to ensure direct relevance to the research focus (Patton, 2015).

Data analysis was conducted in three main stages as formulated by Fairclough. First, text analysis (description) that examines linguistic aspects such as lexicon selection, argument structure, metaphor, and rhetoric to identify how terms such as sharia, halal, modern, or global are used to construct a particular image of KIHC (Fairclough, 2010). Second, analysis of discourse practices (interpretation) that examines the process of production, distribution, and consumption of discourse, including who produces the text, what interests underlie it, and how audiences interpret the message in the context of national sharia economic policy (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Third, analysis of social practices (explanation) that connects the promotional discourse of KIHC with broader social structures, particularly the power relations between the state and halal industry actors, and how these relations influence the formation of religiosity meaning in the public sphere (Van Dijk, 2006).

Through these three stages, the research does not merely read the text as information, but as an arena for the production of meaning fraught with socio-political interests. Thus, Fairclough's AWK method allows the research to uncover how the state uses halal discourse to frame KIHC as a symbol of progress, efficiency, and religiosity, while simultaneously exploring how this discourse can reproduce or renegotiate the power structures that exist within the contemporary halal political economy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Commodification of Religious Symbols as Political-Economic Trademarks

The phenomenon of the commodification of religion in the Banten Provincial Government's official discourse regarding the development of the Cikande Halal Industrial Zone (KIHC) illustrates how language is not merely a medium of communication but also an ideological instrument that transforms religious values into economic commodities. At the textual level, the linguistic strategies implemented by the government demonstrate a systematic effort to emphasize the inherent relationship between religiosity and modern capitalism (Muhalim, 2023). The

discourse on the KIHC is not only structured to provide information but also designed to shape public perceptions of the symbiotic relationship between Islam, modernity, and economic progress. This aligns with the view that text is a space for the production of meaning, fraught with power relations and interests (Fairclough, 1995).

In the context of government discourse, religion is no longer positioned solely as a guide to spiritual life, but has transformed into a symbolic asset that can be capitalized on (Kotanko & Winchester, 2025). This transformation is evident in the intense and consistent use of religious lexicon in press releases, social media posts, and KIHC promotional materials. In other words, religious language serves not to explain theological values, but rather as a branding tool that reinforces Banten's image as the epicenter of the national halal economy. This form of commodification of religious symbols forms the foundation for a critical analysis of KIHC discourse.

One of the main characteristics of the commodification of religion in official government discourse can be seen through the repetitive use of religious vocabulary such as "halal," "sharia," "blessing," "modern," and "global." Through this repetition, the government builds a cognitive association that the halal economy is not only part of Islamic tradition but also a gateway to progress and modernity. The word "halal" in many press releases, for example, serves not only as a marker of adherence to Islamic jurisprudence but also as a sign of product quality and a guarantee of business ethics capable of competing in the international market. This use demonstrates what Fischer (2016) calls "halal framing," the process by which the concept of halal is positioned as a global language for ethical consumption and a marketing strategy (Fischer, 2016).

The word "sharia," which once had normative legal connotations, is now paired with economic terms such as "investment," "global market," "added value," or "industrial growth." In a press release titled KIHC: Gateway to the Global Halal Market, the phrase "sharia values" appears alongside the words "trillions of rupiah" and "mass labor absorption." This pairing is not coincidental, but rather a linguistic strategy that transforms the concept of sharia into economic language that sells trust and efficiency (A. F. Ali et al., 2023). Thus, sharia no longer functions as a moral guide, but as a value proposition that increases the economic attractiveness of the KIHC area (Heryanto, 2016).

Similarly, the word "blessing," with its spiritual dimension, is now placed in the context of economic growth. For example, in several posts on the official Instagram account @bantenprov, the phrase "blessing of halal development" is used to describe increased investment realization. The word "blessing" is reduced to a metaphor for material success stemming from the harmony between religion and capital, transforming spirituality into a motivational force for market logic (Yolles, 2024).

Equally important, the repeated use of the words "modern" and "global" serves as a form of aesthetic and technological legitimacy for the KIHC project. In government discourse, modernity is not pitted against religiosity; rather, modernity is presented as the essence of implementing sharia values within the context of industrialization (J. A. Ali, 2022). The use of the terms "modern halal," "global-standard halal industrial zone," or "digital halal infrastructure" illustrates how the government seeks to create a narrative that Islam is compatible with technological progress and international market integration (Islam et al., 2024). Thus, the pairing of the words "religious" and "economic" is not merely descriptive but creates new meanings that place religion within the orbit of global capitalism (Monticelli & Frantzen, 2025).

The shift in meaning from theological to commodity value is evident in how these religious terms function. For example, the term "halal," in government texts, is no longer understood as an ethical principle governing production and consumption, but rather as a competitive label that increases the exchange value of a product or industrial area. Within the logic of the market, the halal label becomes a guarantee of quality and a branding mechanism that adds value to a product (Mustapha & Mustapha, 2025). In other words, religious use value shifts to exchange value within the global market structure (Fischer, 2016). This is the essence of the commodification of religious symbols, constructed through lexical strategies within the official narrative of the Banten government.

In addition to the use of religious lexicon, metaphors play a significant role in shaping the ideological image of KIHC. The Banten Provincial Government uses symbolically powerful metaphors such as "the mecca of the halal industry," "the national halal epicenter," or "the gateway to the global halal market." These metaphors are not merely rhetorical devices to embellish language, but rather discursive strategies to instill Banten's superior position in Indonesia's halal economic landscape (Isti'anah et al., 2025).

The metaphor of "qibla," for example, has a strong theological resonance in Islamic vocabulary. The qibla is the sacred direction that serves as the spiritual axis of Muslims' orientation during prayer. By using this term to describe the KIHC, the government is creating an association that Banten is the new center of orientation for the

national halal economy. The ideological effect is to normalize claims of leadership and dominance: if Banten is the "qibla," then other regions are implicitly in a position to follow or adapt. This metaphor thus not only constructs an image but also reproduces an imaginary hierarchical structure (Isti'anah et al., 2025).

The metaphor of "epicenter" has modern resonance—usually used in geological or economic contexts—but when paired with the term "halal industry," it conveys the idea that KIHC is a powerhouse stimulating the growth of the national halal sector. This metaphor blends scientific and religious language, with "epicenter" reflecting the power and dynamics of modernity, while "halal" represents spirituality (Jamil, 2025). The union of these two elements strengthens KIHC's legitimacy as an entity that is not only religious, but also modern and economically influential.

Similarly, the metaphor of "gateway to the global halal market" implicitly depicts KIHC as Indonesia's primary gateway to the international halal industry. Within this framework, the government positions KIHC as strategic infrastructure that determines the future of the national economy. The "gate" metaphor creates the image that KIHC is the starting point for the journey toward global progress, and that the government is its guardian and driving force (Sans Zurita, 2023).

These metaphors are not neutral language choices. They reflect an attempt to build symbolic legitimacy for the KIHC and demonstrate how the government uses rhetoric to expand its authority. The use of sacred metaphors ("qibla") and technocratic metaphors ("epicenter," "global gateway") demonstrates the integration of two types of power: spiritual and technocratic (Fairclough, 1995). Both work simultaneously to shape public opinion to accept that the KIHC is not only a religious and modern project, but also an inevitable part of Indonesia's journey toward becoming a global halal economic hub (Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

Beyond lexicon and metaphor, branding strategies are a crucial instrument in the commodification of religious symbols (Afolabi et al., 2024). In the government narrative, religion—particularly the halal symbol—is reduced to a "halal guarantee," a quality assurance explicitly projected to attract domestic and global investors. This kind of branding transforms religion into an entity that can be promoted, marketed, and exchanged within market mechanisms (Kok, 2021).

KIHC is positioned as an entity with a dual identity: religious and industrial. The official narrative states that the area not only meets strict halal standards but also offers modern infrastructure, strategic logistical access, and investment certainty. This combination creates the construct that KIHC is a complex product combining "religion + capital + modernity." In the logic of branding, religion becomes a symbolic raw material that adds value to market competitiveness (Liang et al., 2022). This branding aligns with Sandikci's (2011) argument about how the global halal industry shapes an "Islamic consumer culture" that positions religion as a lifestyle and a symbol of prestige (Sandıkcı, 2011).

The reification of religion occurs when religious concepts such as halal and sharia are treated as material objects with market value. In the KIHC discourse, religion no longer stands as a normative concept governing the ethics of production and distribution, but rather as a commodity aesthetically packaged to create market differentiation (Sandikci, 2021). Halal becomes a label, not a comprehensive ethical practice. When religion becomes a trademark, moral values are stripped from their social context and replaced by market values (Zaman, 2019).

On the other hand, KIHC branding also creates the image of the government as a modern and innovative actor capable of harmoniously reconciling religion and economics. The government portrays itself as the primary driver of the halal economy and the moral guardian behind the implementation of sharia in the industry (Afifi Ab Halim et al., 2022). Throughout these textual strategies, it is clear that the commodification of religious symbols was not a spontaneous phenomenon, but rather the result of carefully designed linguistic and rhetorical strategies (Gramsci, 1971).

Throughout these textual strategies, it is clear that the commodification of religious symbols was not a spontaneous phenomenon, but rather the result of carefully designed linguistic and rhetorical strategies (Olsen, 2003). Religious lexicon, symbolic metaphors, and branding techniques worked simultaneously to construct a narrative that KIHC was an inherently religious, progressive, and necessary political-economic project. The language used by the government not only described reality but also created a new reality that positioned religion as an instrument of modern capitalism. This is the essence of the politics of religious commodification in the KIHC development discourse: religion is reproduced, represented, and marketed as a symbolic commodity that can distribute political legitimacy while simultaneously encouraging capital accumulation (Izberk-Bilgin & Belk, 2025).

The State as Guardian of Morals and Motor of Capital: Representation of Dual Power

The discourse on the Cikande Halal Industrial Zone (KIHC) is not merely about industry or the economy; it is a complex representation of how the state organizes itself as both a moral authority and a driving force of new capitalism (EFE, 2023). Throughout the official texts of the Banten Provincial Government, the state is portrayed as an actor with two primary mandates: first, maintaining the sanctity, purity, and legality of halal; second, promoting economic growth through investment, infrastructure development, and efficient licensing. These two roles do not exist in isolation, but rather form a dual power structure in which morality and capital support each other to generate stronger legitimacy (Fairclough, 2010). Through their integration, the state regulates not only economic behavior but also how society understands religiosity in the public sphere.

In most press releases, the government consistently positions itself as the guardian of public morality through a halal narrative that refers to the regulatory obligations stipulated in the Halal Product Assurance Law (UU JPH). By referring to the state's mandate to ensure that products circulating in the market are clearly halal, the state claims moral legitimacy to lead the sharia economic agenda (Lofland, 2024). This narrative is evident when the government portrays the KIHC as a bastion of purity and consumer trust. In other words, the state positions itself as a guardian of purity, as if without state intervention, the public sphere would be filled with moral uncertainty and ethical chaos (Sirnes, 2024).

The use of religious morality in state discourse serves not only as a statement of values but also as a mechanism of political legitimacy. When the state states that the development of KIHC is part of its "moral responsibility to ensure the economic well-being of the people," the narrative is not neutral. It leverages religious authority to strengthen political authority (Cheong, 2021). In fact, this discourse creates the impression that the state is not merely an administrative regulator but also an actor with spiritual obligations (Bozonelos, 2021). This constitutes a form of moralization of governance, where public policy is couched as an ethical imperative, rather than a political decision subject to debate (Driessen, 2014).

Thus, religion functions as discursive armor, a shield of discourse that makes state decisions appear unchallengeable (Yang & Li, 2021). The positioning of the state as the protector of halal sanctity creates a specific symbolic relationship: the state holds a superior position, while society and business actors are in a position of "need to be guided." This relationship demonstrates the pattern of pastoral power as described by Foucault, namely power that regulates the moral life of society through regulative instruments disguised as virtue (Foucault, 1977). In other words, the halal discourse makes the state not only the holder of administrative power but also the moral leader who determines the boundaries of holiness and impurity in the public sphere.

When religious morality is used as a source of policy legitimacy, the state gains what Bourdieu (1991) calls symbolic capital: authority that arises not from coercion, but from societal acceptance of state-produced religious symbols (Bourdieu, 1991). Thus, halal morality becomes a political instrument, sufficient to expand the government's legitimacy as a protector of divine values—even though, at the same time, the economic policies it pursues contain a strong capitalist agenda (Rahman et al., 2024).

Behind the moral narrative, the state also appears as a strongly pro-capital actor. Official texts from the Banten Provincial Government strongly emphasize infrastructure development, accelerated licensing, and ease of investment as "halal development mandates." By highlighting bureaucratic efficiency, logistical facilities, ease of halal certification, and investment incentives, the state conveys the message that KIHC is not merely a spiritual space, but a special economic zone designed to attract as much capital as possible (Su & Lim, 2025)..

At this point, the line between public service and investment interests becomes blurred. The state portrays infrastructure provision and investment facilitation as moral obligations, while in fact, they are at the heart of the neoliberal capitalist agenda, which emphasizes efficiency-based competitiveness and deregulation (Kunzlik, 2013). This blurring results in what Jessop (2016) calls strategic selectivity, a selection of discourses that allows the state to present pro-business policies as in the public interest (Jessop, 2016).

Furthermore, the use of terms such as "halal industrial ecosystem," "global supply chain," and "investment-ready cluster" demonstrates that KIHC is not merely aimed at local producers, but is open to the interests of international capital. Thus, halal morality, initially positioned as a cultural and spiritual value, has transformed into an economic magnet that attracts global investors (Izberk-Bilgin & Nakata, 2016). This narrative is consistent with Foucault's (2008) thesis on neoliberal governmentality, where the state does not withdraw from the economic arena but instead actively creates ideal conditions for capital accumulation (Foucault, 2008).

In the context of KIHC, the state acts as a broker, bridging capital interests with religious narratives. The state provides facilities, investors bring capital, and religion provides moral legitimacy. This collaboration creates a strategic alliance between symbolic and economic power that reinforces each other (Bai & Nam, 2023). In other words, the state plays a dual role: that of moral authority and that of capital facilitator. This role creates a dual legitimacy, where the state gains both public acceptance and investor trust (Mende, 2024).

The combination of moral and economic roles is not natural; it is shaped by hegemonic strategies designed to ensure that society accepts existing power relations without direct coercion (T. Good, 2022). Mengikuti Gramsci (1971), hegemony operates when the state is able to induce certain social classes or groups to accept values that are essentially elite interests but presented as the "common good." In the discourse of the KIHC, religion is used as a medium to soften the logic of capitalism, making economic expansion appear as a noble moral mission (Gramsci, 1971).

The use of religious symbols as a persuasive strategy results in what Fairclough (1995) calls ideological embedding, which is the implantation of certain values in the text so that it appears natural and uninvolved (Fairclough, 1995). When the official narrative states that KIHC "brings blessings to the people of Banten" or "ensures halal purity for the community," the public is led to accept that industrialization is the most correct and ethical path to take. However, these ethical postulates are discursive constructs, not objective facts.

This hegemonic strategy also relies on normalization, where the state promotes the idea that the integration of religion and capitalism is natural, modern, and even necessary (Snider & Bittle, 2022). Narratives such as "halal is the future of global industry" or "Banten as the world's halal epicenter" position a preference for capital as not incompatible with religiosity but rather a new form of purity. This is a form of discursive fusion between two previously separate realms: religious morality and market logic (Kalan, 2023).

In this way, the state expands its power without resorting to physical coercion. There is no violence or repression. Instead, there is symbolic persuasion that leverages public religious beliefs. This is a form of hegemonic governance, where power operates through consent, not coercion (Stiglitz, 2002). Religion is used as a tool to smooth the agenda of capital, while capital provides resources to strengthen the state's political position (Saal, 2021).

The integration of moral power and capital power gives rise to a new form of dual legitimacy. When the state presents itself as a protector of halal values, it gains moral legitimacy. When the state presents itself as an investment facilitator, it gains economic legitimacy (Wang et al., 2022). These two sources of legitimacy operate simultaneously, creating power that is more difficult to challenge because it has both symbolic and material foundations.

Ultimately, the discourse on KIHC illustrates how the state constructs itself as a dual actor: a moral pastor and a manager of capital. Through language, symbols, and rhetoric, the state regulates not only economic transactions but also society's religious interpretations. Herein lies the most strategic power of the commodification of religion: it allows the state to expand political influence while deepening integration with global capital structures (Jong, 2025). Thus, KIHC is not simply an industrial project, but a hegemonic apparatus that unites religion and capital within a structured framework of legitimacy.

The Production of Muslim Consumer Subjects: Religious Obedience in Market Logic

The halal discourse produced by the Banten Provincial Government in promoting the Cikande Halal Industrial Zone (KIHC) not only shapes the image of the state, the economy, or modernity, but also produces new ways of interpreting Muslim identity and piety. Through language, diction, metaphors, and specific emphases in press releases and social media, the government indirectly creates the figure of the "ideal Muslim" according to Islamic capitalism: an individual whose piety is reduced to consumer choices that adhere to formalistic halal standards. In this context, the halal discourse no longer functions as a broad moral principle, but rather as a regime of truth that determines how a Muslim should behave, act, and feel (Foucault, 1980). Thus, KIHC becomes an arena for the production of subjects, where religion is reframed to align with market logic.

In official government texts, a good Muslim is one who chooses halal products, supports the halal industry, and embodies obedience through standardized consumption. This narrative is evident through recurring phrases such as "ensuring the blessings of public consumption," "the halal lifestyle of the millennial generation," or "modern piety through industrial halal products." In this way, the state leads society to identify piety with halal consumption, a form of piety manifested through consumer behavior, rather than broader social, ecological, or spiritual dimensions (Vanany et al., 2020).

This logic aligns with the thesis of Islamic capitalism, where religion is re-manufactured to fit market mechanisms. Islamic capitalism does not reject consumption, but rather packages it as an expression of faith (Rudnyckyj, 2019). When the government emphasizes the importance of "choosing the right halal products," society is directed to become entrepreneurial believers: subjects who interpret faith through efficient and rational consumer calculations. Thus, piety is reduced to individual acts that can be counted, measured, and certified.

Furthermore, this narrative creates moral pressure, where Muslims who do not purchase halal-certified products are potentially viewed as less pious. In other words, the halal discourse creates a new, consumerist moral hierarchy. In Fairclough's (1995) framework, this is a form of discursive recontextualization in which theological values are transferred to the realm of the market economy (Fairclough, 1995). Piety is no longer linked to social solidarity, justice, or ecological struggle—but to the ability to purchase industrial halal products.

In classical Islamic tradition, piety encompasses horizontal relationships (habl min al-nas), ecological concern, and the just management of wealth (Al-Ghazali, 2011). However, in the KIHC discourse, a shift occurs from social piety to individual consumption piety. This shift aligns with what Bauman (2007) calls liquid morality, where religious identity is fragmented into consumerist expressions that are fleeting, superficial, and easily replaced by market dynamics (Bauman & Magatti, 2007). Through this construction, the halal discourse helps shape a Muslim subject compatible with the modern economy: devout, obedient, and consumptive. Identity is no longer fought for, but purchased.

Behind the grand narrative of halal sanctity and economic growth, there is something interesting: there is virtually no discussion of labor issues, economic distribution, inequality, or environmental sustainability in any government text. There is no discussion of how KIHC treats factory workers, how profits are distributed, how the certification process affects small MSMEs, or how industrial areas impact the local environment. In other words, this halal discourse avoids structural issues that are actually an integral part of the maqasid sharia (Auda, 2008).

This demonstrates a significant reduction in the meaning of maqashid. Al-Ghazali (2011) emphasized that the core of sharia lies in protecting life, intellect, lineage, religion, and property based on the principle of justice (Al-Ghazali, 2011). However, in the KIHC discourse, sharia is reduced to halal certification alone, as if religiousness is complete only by ensuring the halalness of the final product. This is a form of normative flattening, namely the simplification of norms to conform to market mechanisms (Mandel & De Mink, 2016).

For example, the government narrative describes KIHC as an "industrial zone that brings blessings to the community," but there is no discussion of whether workers receive a living wage, whether female workers are protected, or how occupational safety standards are enforced. This absence is no accident; it represents a form of ideological silencing in which elements that could potentially challenge the interests of capital are deliberately omitted (Fairclough, 2010).

One of the most significant discourse strategies in government texts is the narrative convergence between economic profit and Sharia compliance. The government consistently uses phrases such as "halal brings sustainable profits," "Sharia investment guarantees economic blessings," or "Sharia compliance means global competitiveness." Thus, market logic is normalized as part of religious logic (Alotaibi et al., 2022).

This normalization creates the impression that the more a company adheres to halal standards, the greater its profits. This relationship is not merely economic, but theological: Sharia compliance = profit; non-compliance = loss. This narrative produces what is known as a false consciousness of piety, a false sense of piety constructed not through spirituality or ethical striving, but through market calculations (Maham & Bhatti, 2019).

The fusion of religion with capital accumulation creates a new form of religious capitalism, in which industry, not the clergy, determines society's standards of practical piety (Osella & Rudnyckyj, 2017). This shifts moral authority from the theological to the economic realm. As a result, piety is no longer the result of inner reflection or social struggle, but rather the consumption of halal products produced by large industries.

The government's narrative about KIHC clearly demonstrates this. Religion is presented not as an ethic of liberation or a critique of injustice, but as an instrumental ethic: a tool to enhance business image and market competitiveness (Sandıkcı, 2011). Thus, the halal discourse is no longer a liberating ideology challenging social injustice, but an instrument of capitalist profit-making.

This shift demonstrates how religion has lost its critical function. In early Islamic tradition, religion served to challenge structural injustice, defend oppressed groups, and create an inclusive social order (Safi, 2009). However, in the KIHC discourse, religion has been transformed into a brand value that supports industrial

expansion. This represents a reversal of ideology, where the ideology of liberation has become a tool for legitimizing the dominant economic structure.

Through this normalization, market logic subtly penetrates society's spiritual space. Society is not asked to submit directly to the state or capital, but is led to believe that the market is a natural part of religiosity. This integration produces a form of soft domination, where power operates without the need for violence or repression, but through the internalization of seemingly religious meanings (Foucault, 1988). Thus, halal discourse produces obedient, consumerist Muslim subjects who accept the market as a religious medium. This is the most subtle, yet most effective, form of domination.

Theoretical Synthesis: Discourse, Power, and the Political Economy of Halal

The theoretical synthesis in this study aims to summarize how state-produced halal discourse operates through linguistic mechanisms, institutional practices, and social structures to consolidate power while advancing specific political economic projects. Using Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis framework, this synthesis demonstrates that halal narratives in state media platforms are not only descriptive but also performative—they shape social reality, produce particular subjects, and instill obedience through language (Fairclough, 1995). Therefore, this synthesis analysis demonstrates how the state, religion, and capital operate not as separate entities but as mutually reinforcing regimes of truth (Foucault, 1978).

At the textual level, this research finds that language is not merely a means of communication, but an instrument of power production that serves to normalize the commodification of religion. Lexicon choices such as "halal," "sharia," "blessing," and "global competitiveness" are not neutral terms; they construct a horizon of meaning that simultaneously combines religious and capitalist values. Fairclough (2003) calls this process textual technologization, the controlled use of language to produce specific social effects (Fairclough, 2003). The religious lexicon in halal discourse borrows the moral authority of religion to reinforce economic messages, so that halal is constructed not only as a spiritual obligation but also as a commodity with high exchange value in the global market (Mukherjee, 2020).

Metaphors such as "global halal mecca," "international halal gateway," or "epicenter of the sharia economy" demonstrate an ideational framing strategy that positions Indonesia—particularly Banten—as the center of moral and economic gravity. This metaphor operates in two directions: first, it offers a vision of Indonesia's symbolic superiority within the global halal ecosystem; second, it minimizes potential criticism by framing economic interests in sacred religious language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Thus, at the textual level, we see how language is utilized to connect three main dimensions: religious sanctity, development urgency, and state legitimacy.

At the level of discourse practice, the government acts as the primary producer of halal narratives through press releases, social media, and official publications. This discourse production process reflects what Fairclough (1995) calls institutional discourse engineering, namely the systematic efforts of institutions to control the flow of meaning circulating in the public sphere (Fairclough, 1995). The distribution of halal discourse is carried out through state-owned media, which have formal authority and significant amplification capacity, so that the narrative received by the public is no longer spontaneous, but rather the result of structured institutional filtering.

In this context, language is positioned as a tool for managing perceptions. State media not only report information about the KIHC project or halal regulations, but also format that information to align with the state's strategic interests. This process aligns with the concept of mediatized governance, which explains how the state uses media to direct public opinion, shape preferences, and produce consensus through standardized communication strategies (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). The government's halal discourse leads the public to view halal consumption as a form of religious patriotism and participation in national economic development.

At the level of social practice, halal discourse serves as an instrument linking state interests, capitalist power, and religious authority within a single ideological configuration. Fairclough (2010) states that discourse is not only a reflection of social reality but also a regulatory mechanism that shapes power structures (Fairclough, 2010). In the context of Indonesia's halal economy, the discourse produced by the government integrates two primary sources of legitimacy: moral legitimacy through religion and rational legitimacy through narratives of economic growth.

By involving religious authorities in halal projects, the state strengthens the moral mandate, allowing every economic policy to be understood as a continuation of religious injunctions. At the same time, the inclusion of the industrial sector, investors, and business actors in the framing of the halal discourse builds an economic

mandate, stating that religious commitment can be realized through participation in profitable economic activities. The integration of these two mandates creates a new power structure in which religion, capital, and the state no longer stand alone but instead legitimize each other within a single hegemonic narrative.

Previous studies on the halal economy in Indonesia have tended to focus on the creative industry, consumer consumption patterns, or the role of certification bodies (Hasan et al., 2022). However, studies on how the state produces halal discourse for political economic purposes through its official media are still very limited. This research addresses this gap by highlighting the linguistic and discursive dimensions that shape the relationship between religion and the state in the context of halal capitalism.

By demonstrating how the state uses religious language to frame economic development, this study broadens the understanding of the commodification of religion not only as a market activity but as a political project orchestrated through institutional means. This adds to the literature on Islam and modernity, analysis of identity politics, and the political economy of post-authoritarian development in Indonesia (Fealy, 2008).

Another contribution of this research is the concept of the triangulation of power: state, religion, and capital. This study shows that in the context of Indonesia's halal economy, these three elements are not contradictory but work synergistically to generate dual legitimacy. The state appropriates religious symbols to secure public moral support; religion is positioned as an undeniable source of legitimacy; and capital provides the material structures and economic incentives that expand the reach of halal discourse.

This configuration is reminiscent of what Foucault (1978) called governmentality, namely the way the state produces ideal citizens—in this context, Muslim halal consumers—through moral regulation and market incentives. Meanwhile, Gramsci (1971) helped explain how the state produces hegemonic consent through the intersection of religious moral authority and capitalist economic needs (Gramsci, 1971). Thus, this study provides a new theoretical foundation for understanding how halal economic politics is not merely technocratic, but rather a hegemonic project that combines symbolic and material power.

This theoretical synthesis demonstrates that the state-produced halal discourse functions as a technology of power capable of uniting religious symbols, economic strategies, and political interests within a single hegemonic narrative. The integration of Fairclough's three levels of analysis enables a comprehensive mapping of how language constructs a new social reality—one in which piety is reduced to consumption, religion is reduced to a commodity, and the state emerges as both a moral leader and a driving force of capital. Thus, this research reinforces the understanding that the halal economy is not merely a certification issue, but a complex political terrain that reveals the intricate relationships between discourse, power, and capital in contemporary Muslim societies.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that the halal discourse produced by the Banten Provincial Government through press releases, social media, and KIHC promotional materials is not merely a development communication strategy, but rather a practice of power that operates through language, institutions, and broader political-economic structures. Using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis model, this research successfully unravels how religion is represented, produced, and deployed as a means of legitimising the state's economic and political agendas. In general, the research findings can be summarized in three main points. First, from a linguistic strategy perspective, halal discourse utilizes religious lexicon and spiritual metaphors to normalize economic agendas. The repeated use of terms like "halal," "sharia," "blessing," "modern," and "global" creates the image that the KIHC project is both a moral movement and a development movement. The juxtaposition of religious language with technocratic language creates a commodification of religious symbols, where spiritual values are repurposed into commodities that promise political and economic benefits. In this case, religion is no longer simply interpreted theologically but is represented as a strategic, marketable asset.

Second, this study found that the state presents itself through two facets of power: as the guardian of public morality and as the engine of capital development. On the one hand, the state positions itself as the guardian of halal sanctity, in line with the regulatory narrative of the Halal Product Management Law. However, on the other hand, the state also plays a role as a promoter of investment and economic growth through infrastructure guarantees, ease of licensing, and claims of efficiency in the halal industry. These two forms of power are then combined through a hegemonic strategy: religion is used as a persuasive tool to smooth investment agendas, while capital gains moral legitimacy through symbols of state-controlled piety. Thus, the

halal discourse establishes a dual legitimacy, encompassing both moral legitimacy and economic legitimacy. Third, this research demonstrates that halal discourse constructs a specific type of social subject: the Muslim consumer, whose piety is reduced to market preferences. Through the "halal lifestyle" campaign, religious obligations are reduced to individual consumption choices. This narrative obscures structural issues such as worker welfare, environmental sustainability, and economic distribution, thus shifting the maqasid of sharia from the goal of substantive justice to merely fulfilling certification procedures. The normalization of the "Sharia compliance = economic profit" relationship creates a false sense of piety that is synonymous with participation in the halal industry, rather than with social transformation.

Fourth, theoretically, this research emphasizes the new relationship between the state, religion, and capital in the context of Indonesia's halal economy. Religion no longer serves as a source of moral criticism against injustice, but is instead harnessed as an instrument to promote economic development and political stability. The state uses halal discourse as a form of governmentality, a subtle mechanism for directing societal actions and orientations through morality, regulation, and market logic. Thus, the halal economy is not merely an economic domain, but a political arena of discourse that produces new subjects, power relations, and structures of meaning in the public sphere. Overall, this study contributes to the literature on the commodification of religion, state hegemony, and the political economy of halal by demonstrating that halal discourse is a complex, structured, and ideologically charged exercise of power. These findings present opportunities for further research on how communities negotiate, reject, or adapt halal discourse in everyday life, as well as how the halal industry will reshape the relationship between religion and the state in the future.

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Al Jazeera: Between Islamic Journalism and Islamic Da'wah

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Abstract:

This research focuses on Al Jazeera's role as a global media outlet at the intersection of modern journalistic practices and Islamic da'wah values. As a pioneer of press freedom in the Arab world, Al Jazeera serves not only as a conveyor of information but also as a normative actor, framing Islamic, political, and humanitarian issues from a perspective considered more inclusive and just. This raises critical questions about the extent to which its journalistic practices truly represent Islamic da'wah values or merely follow international journalistic norms. The purpose of this research is to identify Al Jazeera's journalistic characteristics rooted in Islamic principles, explore the role of da'wah in its reporting, and examine the tension between the media's demands for objectivity and its moral mission. The method employed is a qualitative approach, utilising case studies, which involve analysing news content and discussion programs on Al Jazeera. The research also utilizes secondary data from relevant academic literature. Discourse analysis techniques are applied to explore how this media outlet frames important issues and how global audiences respond to the narratives it constructs. The research results demonstrate that Al Jazeera effectively integrates the idealism of da'wah (Islamic preaching) with journalistic professionalism. Nevertheless, the media outlet continues to face significant challenges, including geopolitical pressure and accusations of bias. This synergy between moral mission and professional standards makes Al Jazeera not only a source of information but also a global educational instrument that plays a vital role in shaping international public opinion.

Keywords: Al Jazeera; Islamic journalism; Islamic preaching; framing; global media; objectivity.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, international media has become a crucial arena for the dissemination of ideas, including religious ones, amidst the globalization of information. In the Middle East in particular, satellite news networks and online media have transformed how Islam is understood, presented, and internalized not only by Muslim communities but also by non-Muslim audiences. Among the most prominent media outlets in this transformation is Al Jazeera. Since its launch in 1996 as an Arabic-language news channel from Qatar, Al Jazeera has grown into a multi-channel network with international reach, including Al Jazeera English, documentaries, and an online platform (Jazeera, 2024). The Al Jazeera phenomenon has drawn attention because its role goes beyond simply delivering news, but also through framing Islamic and Islamic political issues. This has led to Al Jazeera often being viewed as exceeding the journalistic neutrality generally upheld by mainstream media. In various reports, the

view has emerged that Al Jazeera tends to give greater space and more positive coverage to certain Islamic groups. This stance is often associated with Qatar's close political interests and its ideological alignment with organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood. Thus, Al Jazeera functions not only as an information medium but also as an actor playing a role in shaping public opinion on Islam and Islamic politics globally. This situation demonstrates how the media can be both a political instrument and a means of representing certain ideologies (Jazeera, 2023).

Furthermore, the study also shows how Al Jazeera uses new media and open source data for investigations, enabling coverage of issues less accessible to official sources, but also posing challenges to credibility and objectivity (Jazeera, 2024). From the perspective of Islamology and Islamic communication studies, debate has arisen regarding Al Jazeera's position as a media outlet. A frequently asked question is whether Al Jazeera can be categorized as a medium that carries out Islamic journalistic functions, or whether it instead possesses other dimensions that merge with da'wah interests. This has given rise to discussions about the boundaries between the Islamic journalism profession, which emphasizes objectivity, and Islamic da'wah, which focuses on spreading religious values. Some view Al Jazeera as a disguised da'wah medium that uses journalistic language to convey Islamic messages, while others view it as more of a news entity that strives to uphold journalistic principles, even though it sometimes blends with certain political and ideological agendas. Thus, Al Jazeera presents an ambiguous role: between an information medium, an ideological instrument, and a potential means of modern da'wah.

Theoretically, Islamic journalism is often defined as media practices based on the principles-Islamic principles, such as amar ma'ruf nahi munkar, justice, truth, and moral responsibility, not only-The eyes of neutral objectivity in the Western sense. Theories of religious communication and theories of da'wah media emphasize that media is not only a means of conveying information, but also an agent of change in values and norms. The concept of media as a means of da'wah reflects that media can be a bridge to invite, guide, and shape the religious awareness of the community. The relationship between Islamic journalism theory and da'wah media theory provides a framework for assessing the extent to which Al Jazeera operates within the spectrum of normative journalism (i.e., neutral/objective) and normative da'wah (i.e., voicing values).-Islamic values, calling for goodness, expressing religious truth) in an international context.

The urgency of this research stems from the complexity and controversy surrounding Al Jazeera's role in the global media arena. On the one hand, Al Jazeera is seen as a pioneer of press freedom in the Arab world, capable of presenting alternative discourse and a critical voice against the dominance of Western narratives. However, on the other hand, this media outlet frequently draws criticism for alleged political bias, specific framing strategies, and its ties to the interests of patron states, which are considered to influence editorial independence. This ambivalent situation makes Al Jazeera an important phenomenon to examine academically and contextually (Jazeera, 2023). In the context of the increasingly rapid development of digital and social media, the flow of information and narratives, including religious narratives, is much faster and broader. This situation makes a critical examination of the practices of international media outlets like Al Jazeera increasingly important. This media outlet exists not only as a news provider but also operates at the intersection of journalistic functions that emphasize objectivity and the role of da'wah (preaching) that carries a moral dimension and Islamic values. Therefore, a thorough understanding of how Al Jazeera manages this dual role is necessary to assess its impact on various groups, from Muslims as its primary audience, to communication academics, media policymakers, and the global community at large. The urgency of this research is further heightened by the limited number of studies explicitly examining Al Jazeera from an Islamic da'wah perspective. Most previous research has focused more on the political, ideological, or propagandistic aspects of the media's reporting. Therefore, research examining Al Jazeera through an Islamic da'wah lens can not only enrich the academic literature but also provide new insights into how global media plays a role in constructing a broader, more ethical, and more contextual Islamic discourse (Zakiyah et al., 2025).

The objectives of this study include identifying and analyzing: first, the narrative and editorial characteristics of Al Jazeera that reflect the principles of Islamic journalism; second, the extent to which Al Jazeera performs da'wah functions, such as the dissemination of Islamic values, moral calls, in its coverage; third, investigating the tension or dilemma between maintaining journalistic standards (e.g., accuracy, balance, objectivity) and the demands of da'wah; and fourth, understanding audience perceptions of Al Jazeera's position between Islamic journalism and Islamic da'wah. Relevant previous research includes Zayani's (2016) work which presents Al Jazeera's Complex Legacy: Thresholds for an Unconventional Media Player from the Global South which discusses how Al Jazeera developed from its early stages of establishment to post-Arab Spring, including its editorial and political challenges (Jazeera, 2023). Another relevant study is the recent research on the Use of New Media in Investigative Reporting by the Al Jazeera Media Network, which reveals how the use of new media has transformed Al Jazeera's investigative journalistic practices, including challenges to credibility and objectivity (Jazeera, 2024).

Furthermore, research on War and Peace Journalism from an Islamic perspective on Al Jazeera's coverage of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict also serves as a reference for understanding how the network handles moral and peaceful aspects of conflict reporting (Amelia, 2025). Based on the above description, this research is expected to contribute in two areas. First, theoretically, this research can clarify the understanding of the concepts of Islamic journalism and Islamic da'wah in the context of international media. Second, practically, this research can offer useful insights for Islamic media and da'wah institutions regarding ethical, professional, and effective editorial strategies. Furthermore, this research is expected to encourage critical dialogue on how international media such as Al Jazeera can be more transparent in their framing practices, while also accommodating diverse views within Islam. Thus, the media will function not only as a means of disseminating news or a propaganda tool, but also as a communication space that maintains journalistic integrity, strengthens moral values, and builds an inclusive, moderate, and relevant understanding of Islam for the global community.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with the aim of gaining a deep understanding of how Al Jazeera positions itself within two key domains: Islamic journalism and Islamic da'wah. The choice of a qualitative approach is based on the consideration that this method is capable of uncovering the meanings, ideas, and identity constructions that are formed and disseminated through Al Jazeera's reporting and broadcasting practices. Through this approach, researchers can explore the dynamics that emerge in news presentation, including internalized values, issue framing strategies, and how certain narratives are directed to create social and ideological influence. In line with the views of Denzin and Lincoln, qualitative research is understood as an effort to understand phenomena in their natural context and interpret the inherent meanings from the participants' or research subjects' perspectives. Thus, this approach highlights not only the technical aspects of journalism, but also the cultural, religious, and political dimensions that underlie Al Jazeera's media practices. The results obtained are expected to provide a comprehensive picture of how this international media plays a dual role, while also opening up a dialogue about the integration of journalistic professionalism and the mission of Islamic da'wah (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). This research employs a case study method because it is considered the most suitable approach for in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. The primary focus is Al Jazeera's journalistic practices, which combine Islamic values with global news broadcasting. The case study approach allows researchers to examine a phenomenon in detail within a real-world context, thereby capturing its complexities. In line with Yin's view, case studies are highly relevant when researchers seek to explore contemporary phenomena, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon under study and its surrounding context cannot be clearly defined (Yin, 2018).

The data sources in this study include primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through content analysis of Al Jazeera's news broadcasts and discussion programs related to Islamic issues, such as coverage of Palestine, Islamophobic discourse, and environmental ethics. This analysis helps us understand how Al Jazeera frames Islamic issues in the global arena. Meanwhile, secondary data comes from various academic literature discussing the role of international media in influencing Muslim public opinion. Important references include Lynch's work, which highlights the media's relationship to political and religious dynamics (Lynch, 2006) tentang ruang publik Arab baru dan Mandaville (Mandaville, 2007), on transnational Muslim networks. The data analysis technique used in this study is qualitative discourse analysis. This method was chosen to examine how Al Jazeera frames various issues related to Islam and to uncover how Islamic preaching messages are embedded within modern journalistic formats. This analysis also serves to explore how global audiences respond to the discourse constructed by the media. Through this approach, researchers can critically understand the reciprocal relationship between media, Islamic preaching, and global political dynamics. Thus, qualitative discourse analysis provides an appropriate framework for examining the complexity of Al Jazeera's role at the international level (Chng, 1996).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Islamic Journalism in Al Jazeera's Practice

Islamic journalism occupies a unique position in the world of global communications, as it integrates Islamic ethical principles with modern information delivery mechanisms. Its main characteristics lie in its emphasis on justice, honesty, moral responsibility, and the presentation of information that is not only accurate but also directed towards the community's welfare. The foundation of these values is rooted in Islamic teachings, which emphasize

the importance of enjoining good and forbidding evil and the obligation to convey the truth fairly, as stated in the Qur'an (QS. Al-Ma'idah [5]:8). In the context of media practice, these principles require journalists not only to report facts but also to consider the ethical dimensions and social impact of the information conveyed. This is reflected in Al Jazeera's reporting model, which strives to maintain a balance between standards of journalistic objectivity and attention to Islamic values, particularly in its coverage of issues that affect the lives of Muslims globally. Since its launch in 1996, Al Jazeera has established itself as an alternative media outlet, challenging the hegemony of narratives dominated by Western media. Its presence has opened up space for new perspectives that previously lacked a place in global discourse. Mohamed Zayani emphasized that from its inception, Al Jazeera was built with the vision of becoming a "champion of press freedom" in the Arab world. This is reflected in its courage to present issues often ignored by mainstream media, particularly those concerning the Muslim world, regional conflicts, and humanitarian issues. Furthermore, Al Jazeera strives to provide a platform for marginalized groups, allowing their voices to be heard internationally. In this way, Al Jazeera is not just a news outlet, but also an agent of change, playing a role in broadening the horizons of global public understanding (Zayani, 2016).

These characteristics are evident in Al Jazeera's coverage of the conditions of marginalized Muslim communities, such as in Palestine, the humanitarian tragedy befalling the Rohingya ethnic group, and the situation experienced by minority Muslim communities in Western countries. In reporting on conflicts, Al Jazeera often uses a moral narrative as its primary framework. This means that in addition to presenting the facts of events, the media also emphasizes humanitarian aspects, the value of justice, and the spirit of global solidarity for all humanity. This approach demonstrates that Al Jazeera does not merely present information, but also strives to foster collective awareness. Al Jazeera's courage in addressing issues considered sensitive has often led to diplomatic and political pressure from the countries it criticizes. As Zayani (2016) explains, Al Jazeera's editorial stance often challenges the status quo, even when it risks deteriorating relations with other Arab countries and its international partners. This demonstrates that Al Jazeera strives to be consistent with the principles of press freedom and carries moral responsibility in its journalistic practices. These two things can be understood as important foundations that bring Al Jazeera closer to values that are in line with the ethos of Islamic journalism.

These principles of justice and moral responsibility are also evident in Al Jazeera's coverage of the Yemen war, the Syrian conflict, and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Rather than solely focusing on military aspects or political strategy, Al Jazeera consistently highlights civilian suffering, human rights violations, and the long-term impact of the conflict on people's lives. The report, "Framing What's Breaking: The Geopolitics of News Bulletins of the War on Yemen," confirms that Al Jazeera's framing is more humanitarian-oriented than other media outlets, which tend to focus on geopolitical dynamics or the interests of major powers (Jazeera, 2024). Al Jazeera's approach positions it not merely as a news outlet but also as a normative actor with an active role in shaping international public opinion. Through its distinctive reporting strategy, Al Jazeera not only presents information but also conveys moral messages related to universal values. From an Islamic da'wah perspective, this reporting pattern aligns with its mission to uphold the values of justice, foster empathy, and instill awareness of the importance of social responsibility. In other words, the news produced does not stop at conveying facts, but also serves to build an ethical framework of thought among a global audience. This demonstrates that Al Jazeera's journalistic practices can be viewed as an extension of the Islamic missionary vision. This role is evident in its efforts to educate the public through critical discourse, touching on the humanitarian dimension, while simultaneously raising public moral awareness on issues often overlooked by mainstream media. Thus, Al Jazeera operates at the intersection of professional journalism and the mission of missionary work, making it a medium that serves not only to inform but also to guide and encourage the creation of global solidarity.

The Function of Islamic Preaching in Al Jazeera's Coverage

Islamic da'wah is essentially a moral call to uphold Islamic values while guiding society to behave in accordance with Islamic law. Da'wah activities are not limited to formal sermons or lectures, but can also be present through modern communication media, including news reporting, narrative selection, and the perspectives presented to the audience. Within the media space, da'wah can be carried out subtly by inserting ethical messages, values of justice, and a humanitarian spirit into the presentation of information. Al Jazeera, although known as an international news network, often presents an educational dimension of da'wah. This media outlet not only conveys factual events but also embeds a moral perspective relevant to Islamic teachings. This is evident when Al Jazeera provides space for Muslim scholars and intellectuals, presents religious

discussions, and presents analysis that emphasizes ethical values and communal solidarity. In this way, Al Jazeera functions not only as a global information channel but also as a medium that helps shape the spiritual and moral awareness of its audience. Its presence proves that Islamic da'wah can transform with the times, without losing its spirit as a call to goodness.

In its reporting, Al Jazeera frequently highlights religious issues beyond mere political and security frameworks. It emphasizes the humanitarian aspects and spiritual values underlying events. For example, in covering Islamophobia, Al Jazeera goes beyond simply presenting figures or statistics regarding attacks on Muslim communities. Instead, its coverage also seeks to uncover the social, economic, and political roots that contribute to the growth of prejudice and discrimination. This encourages audiences to understand the phenomenon of Islamophobia more deeply and comprehensively, rather than simply viewing it as an incidental event. This approach empowers Al Jazeera's coverage to serve a cultural missionary function, conveying moral messages while simultaneously fostering collective awareness for greater justice and empathy toward marginalized groups. Through this framing, Al Jazeera not only informs the public about reality but also guides public opinion, enabling it to interpret social problems from a humanitarian perspective and seek solutions grounded in the values of social justice and cross-cultural solidarity (Jazeera, 2021).

Furthermore, in its coverage of Palestinian issues, Al Jazeera frequently presents narratives that emphasize the suffering of civilians, particularly women and children, so that the conflict is not merely seen as a political struggle but also as a humanitarian tragedy that demands global concern. This perspective affirms Al Jazeera's position as a media outlet that combines journalistic roles with a moral mission. A similar approach is evident in its coverage of the Rohingya crisis, where Al Jazeera highlights the humanitarian dimension, interfaith solidarity, and the importance of the international community's role in finding peaceful solutions. By presenting personal stories, victims' experiences, and the voices of marginalized communities, Al Jazeera transforms news coverage into a space for moral reflection for its audience. This can be understood as a more subtle strategy of cultural da'wah (Islamic outreach), namely by conveying the values of empathy, solidarity, and justice without resorting to explicit religious rhetoric. This practice makes Al Jazeera not only an information channel but also a medium that facilitates the formation of a global collective consciousness. Thus, Al Jazeera's role in framing religious issues demonstrates the synergy between professional journalistic functions and the responsibility of Islamic da'wah, which is oriented towards universal humanity.

Al Jazeera's da'wah function is clearly evident in its coverage of political Islamic movements, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood. Unlike the tendency of Western media to often portray Islamism in terms of threats and radicalism, Al Jazeera provides a more sympathetic narrative. The channel seeks to portray the Muslim Brotherhood not merely as a group causing security instability, but as a legitimate political actor within the dynamics of Arab world democracy. This is confirmed in a study titled "Al Jazeera: Feeding the Muslim Brotherhood's Political Agenda to the Arab World," which found that Al Jazeera English's coverage tended to portray the Brotherhood as a political force offering alternative solutions to issues of democracy, social justice, and political representation of Muslims. With this approach, Al Jazeera demonstrates a cultural da'wah function that connects Islamic values with contemporary political discourse. Rather than simply reinforcing stereotypes, this framing seeks to foster a broader understanding of political Islam's contribution to building a more just and participatory social order, while simultaneously challenging the dominant narrative that discredits Islamic movements at the international level (Carmon, 2013).

Al Jazeera's approach to reporting can be understood as a form of political da'wah (Islamic outreach), an effort that not only emphasizes the moral and spiritual dimensions of Islam but also directly connects them to the public sphere and political practice. In this way, Islamic values are positioned not merely as normative teachings but are legitimized to serve as a basis for Muslim political engagement. Al Jazeera, through its various coverages, presents narratives that enable the public to see how Islamic principles can contribute to the formation of a more just, equal, and inclusive socio-political order. This role is particularly significant in the Middle East, where debates regarding the relationship between religion and politics remain intense. By highlighting issues of justice, human rights, and solidarity, Al Jazeera not only presents news but also invites audiences to critically reflect on the socio-political dynamics in the region. This allows Al Jazeera to function dually: on the one hand, as a da'wah medium that articulates Islamic values within a modern framework, and on the other, as an arena for political discussion that provides space for Muslims to rethink their place in global society.

Furthermore, Al Jazeera consistently presents narratives about global injustices experienced by Muslims, such as the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, the plight of Syrian refugees, or the persecution of Rohingya Muslims.

By highlighting the plight of vulnerable groups, this media reinforces the principle of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar at the global level, calling for justice and humanitarian solidarity across national borders. This makes Al Jazeera not only a news provider but also a normative actor that contributes to shaping global public opinion to care about issues of the ummah. Thus, although it does not explicitly define itself as a da'wah media, the function of Islamic da'wah in Al Jazeera's coverage can be felt through editorial choices that favor humanity, courage to criticize injustice, and efforts to provide audiences with a comprehensive understanding of the Islamic world. This approach broadens the definition of da'wah to an effort at social transformation carried out through journalism, where news functions not only to inform, but also to invite, guide, and inspire ethical action.

The Tension between Journalistic Objectivity and Preaching Values

In discourse on Islamic media, one of the major questions that frequently arises is how a media outlet can balance the idealism of da'wah (Islamic preaching) with the demands of journalistic professionalism. Da'wah is essentially oriented toward conveying moral messages, calls for goodness, and calls to uphold the values of justice and truth. Meanwhile, modern journalism operates based on standards of objectivity, accuracy, balance, and verification of information. These two realms often overlap, but they also have the potential to create tension due to differing fundamental orientations. In the context of media globalization, this dilemma is further complicated when Islamic media is not only aimed at Muslim audiences, but also at international audiences with diverse cultural, political, and ideological backgrounds. Al Jazeera is one of the most visible examples of this intersection. As a media outlet born in the Arab world but evolving into an international news network, Al Jazeera carries a dual mission: to promote the values of da'wah (Islamic preaching) through narratives of humanity and justice, while maintaining its credibility as a globally recognized journalistic institution. Al Jazeera's strength lies in its ability to voice issues rarely covered by mainstream media, such as the plight of civilians in Palestine, Yemen, or Syria, while still striving to uphold journalistic standards. However, this dual mission also presents significant challenges, particularly regarding the media's editorial independence and its political position in the international geopolitical arena.

Although Al Jazeera features elements of Islamic propagation in its coverage, it operates within the framework of international journalistic standards that demand accuracy, verification, and balance. These principles serve as the foundation for maintaining its credibility with a global audience. However, as Mohamed Zayani notes, Al Jazeera's position is not entirely free from the dilemma of independence. As a media outlet funded by the Qatari state, Al Jazeera often faces limitations in criticizing its patron's policies, particularly on issues sensitive to Doha's geopolitical interests (Zayani, 2016). This dilemma creates tension between two primary interests. On the one hand, Islamic propagation demands the upholding of universal truths based on moral and spiritual values. On the other hand, journalistic practice must contend with various real-world considerations, such as political pressure, diplomatic interests, and the dynamics of international relations. This tension demonstrates the tug-of-war between the normative idealism of Islamic propagation and the media's pragmatism in maintaining its operational continuity. This situation also illustrates the challenges faced by international Islamic media when attempting to balance their moral mission with the demands of journalistic professionalism.

In reporting on international issues, the tension between the ideals of da'wah (Islamic preaching) and journalistic practices is evident in Al Jazeera's framing patterns. Research by Saeed Abdullah and Mokhtar Elareshi shows that in covering terrorism issues, Al Jazeera often adopts episodic framing rather than thematic framing. This means that the media tends to highlight concrete events such as details of attacks, the number of victims, and the identities of the perpetrators. Meanwhile, deeper aspects such as the root causes of extremism, conditions of social marginalization, or the underlying ideological dynamics receive less attention. This episodic pattern is indeed effective in capturing audience attention because it emphasizes the dramatic and emotional aspects of an event. However, this approach also risks neglecting comprehensive analysis that could help the public understand the issue more broadly. Thus, Al Jazeera's framing demonstrates limitations in balancing the informative and educational functions of da'wah (Abdullah & Elareshi, 2015). The episodic approach enables audiences to grasp facts quickly and elicit a strong emotional response. However, this approach has limitations because it doesn't encourage a more comprehensive understanding of the context behind an event. Yet, one of the primary goals of da'wah is to provide in-depth enlightenment through comprehensive explanations, enabling the public to fully grasp the root of the problem. By emphasizing only fragmentary aspects of events, the episodic approach risks reducing the complexity of the issue and weakening the educational function of da'wah, which is supposed to build critical public awareness.

On the other hand, the da'wah element in Al Jazeera's coverage often embodies moral narratives, potentially creating perceptual bias. For example, when covering Middle East conflicts, Al Jazeera often highlights the suffering of civilian victims in depth, which helps build empathy among the global public. However, this choice can also be perceived as biased, particularly when the framing used aligns with Qatar's political interests. In this regard, Al Jazeera must balance its moral support for the victims with the need to maintain editorial neutrality. Another challenge is the pressure to meet the demands of the 24-hour news cycle. The speed of reporting often forces journalists to rely on initial, unverified information, which can potentially result in biased reporting. For media that include da'wah elements, this risk is even greater because audiences may interpret the news as a moral appeal or ideological advocacy, rather than simply factual reporting. Thus, the tension between journalistic objectivity and da'wah values is not merely a technical issue but also touches on ethical and ideological dimensions. Al Jazeera is in a unique position: on the one hand, it has the potential to be a global voice for Islamic propagation, promoting the values of justice, and on the other, it must maintain its reputation as a professional news outlet. The balance between the two depends heavily on editorial transparency, the integrity of its journalists, and the institution's willingness to provide critical coverage, even of those politically aligned with Qatar.

Framing as a Middle Mechanism between Islamic Journalism and Da'wah

Framing is a crucial concept in media studies, serving to understand how social realities are constructed, interpreted, and presented to audiences. Through framing devices, media establish a particular perspective by selecting narratives, language, symbols, and aspects deemed relevant to highlight. Thus, framing not only presents information but also shapes the audience's perspective in interpreting reported events. In the context of Al Jazeera, the practice of framing plays a dual role. On the one hand, framing serves as a means to meet the demands of professional journalism, which require accuracy, balance, and relevance. On the other hand, framing also serves as a medium for conveying moral messages closely aligned with Islamic da'wah values, such as justice, empathy, and solidarity. This combination makes Al Jazeera's coverage not only informative but also normative and educational. Through specific framing choices, Al Jazeera is able to guide audiences not only to understand the facts of events but also to see the broader dimensions of humanity. For example, issues of conflict, marginalization, or discrimination are often presented with a focus on social justice and global responsibility. With this strategy, the news produced serves a dual purpose: it serves as both a credible source of information and a means of social advocacy. Therefore, the framing of Al Jazeera's reporting can be seen as a bridge between journalistic professionalism and a missionary mission oriented toward building moral awareness in the international community.

Research conducted by Mazumdar and Mansourshariloo compared the framing of Al Jazeera English and the BBC in reporting on ISIS. The results showed that Al Jazeera not only associated ISIS with narratives of extremism or global threats, but also highlighted the suffering of civilians, the need for social reconciliation, and the impact of war on people's daily lives (Satti, 2015). This approach shows that Al Jazeera's framing is more holistic, combining a security perspective with a humanitarian dimension, so that audiences not only see events as "terror" that threatens the world, but also understand the roots of the conflict and its impact on Muslim communities. In the case of the Yemen conflict, Al Jazeera's framing emphasized the narrative of human rights and the suffering of civilian victims. The study, "Framing What's Breaking: The Geopolitics of News Bulletins of the War on Yemen," shows that Al Jazeera chose words that evoke empathy, such as "human tragedy" and "crippling blockade," aimed at stirring global moral awareness (Jazeera, 2024). However, the framing employed by Al Jazeera in practice is not entirely neutral or value-free. In some reports, a tendency to highlight groups or parties aligned with Qatar's political interests is observed. Conversely, issues concerning parties close to Doha are often presented with less intensity or even framed in a more lenient manner. This pattern demonstrates how framing strategies not only reflect journalistic ideals and da'wah (Islamic outreach) but are also influenced by political dynamics and state interests. Thus, the news presented by Al Jazeera remains biased according to the context of the surrounding interests.

This type of framing can be seen as a space for "news contemplation" that encourages audiences to ethically reflect on the reality of conflict, while also internalizing Islamic values such as justice (al-'adl) and compassion (rahmah). However, this carries the risk of ideological bias. If the framing is too biased toward one party or fails to present a balanced perspective, the news can become a tool for political legitimacy, potentially undermining the principle of journalistic objectivity. Framing thus serves a dual function: as a means of educating the public with a moral narrative, and as a reality-filtering mechanism that can either strengthen or undermine the media's credibility. For Al Jazeera, its success in maintaining this balance will determine whether it can continue

to be seen as a progressive journalistic representation of Islam or be criticized as a mouthpiece for political interests. A critical approach to framing allows us to understand how media construct public perceptions of Islam, conflict, and global justice, a crucial step in assessing the role of media da'wah in the information age.

Impact on Public Perception and International Implications

The presence of Al Jazeera English (AJE) in the international arena, particularly in reaching Western audiences, has had a significant impact on how the global public and mainstream media understand conflicts, humanitarian issues, and narratives about the Arab world and the Middle East. This phenomenon has given rise to the term "Al Jazeera Effect," a concept that refers to a major shift in the global communications landscape. Through its presence, AJE has succeeded in breaking the dominance of information previously controlled by Western media and official government narratives, thus presenting a more diverse alternative perspective. This effect also emphasizes the important role of transnational media in expanding access to the voices of groups that have previously received less attention or even been ignored. By providing space for the stories of civilian victims, marginalized communities, and often overlooked political dynamics, AJE functions not only as an information channel but also as a means of democratizing global discourse. This impact ultimately fosters a new awareness among Western audiences that narratives from the Islamic world and the Global South have equal legitimacy to be considered. Thus, the Al Jazeera Effect has become a symbol of a more inclusive and representative media transformation (Ifri, 2004).

Research conducted by El-Nawawy and Powers reveals that Al Jazeera English (AJE) strives to emerge as a conciliatory media outlet, prioritizing efforts to build cross-cultural dialogue, foster empathy, and instill moral responsibility in global reporting. This approach is realized by presenting coverage that is more oriented towards the human side and diversity of perspectives, thereby penetrating barriers of identity and ideological differences. Unlike many mainstream Western media outlets that are often trapped in reporting patterns based on stereotypes, ideological bias, or specific political interests, AJE strives to present a more balanced and inclusive narrative. Its focus is not only on political elites or state actors, but also on the real experiences of civil society, victims of conflict, and groups often marginalized in global discourse. In this way, AJE functions not only as a conveyor of information but also as a bridge connecting diverse communities across cultures. These efforts make AJE an important part of the international media ecosystem that contributes to the creation of broader understanding, reduction of prejudice, and the building of a shared awareness of universal human values (El-Nawawy & Powers, 2010).

Through its various coverage, Al Jazeera places special attention on the voices of civilian victims, the suffering of conflict-affected communities, and the humanitarian details often overlooked by Western mainstream media. These elements make Al Jazeera a news outlet with a more empathetic alternative perspective. Rather than simply conveying statistics or official state narratives, the outlet strives to highlight the often-marginalized human side. In this way, Al Jazeera not only reports facts but also raises global awareness about the real impact of war on the lives of ordinary people. A study titled "A Voice for the Voiceless?: A Quantitative Content Analysis of Al-Jazeera English's Flagship News" found that Al Jazeera English (AJE) broadcasts more news content from the Global South than Western media. Furthermore, AJE often relies on firsthand reports from correspondents on the ground and presents a more comprehensive narrative. This strategy allows issues in the Muslim and Arab world to be perceived with a more reflective and empathetic approach. In this way, Al Jazeera has been able to project an image as a media outlet that provides space for voices rarely represented in the global media landscape (Figenschou, 2010). However, this success has also been accompanied by criticism and resistance. Al Jazeera has been accused of having a certain bias, particularly regarding pro-Qatar or pro-political Islamism, which critics argue could affect its identity as a media outlet carrying out a mission of da'wah (Islamic outreach) and moral campaigning. This accusation has important implications: public perception affects the media's legitimacy and credibility. Although Al Jazeera has received international awards and recognition within the global journalism community for its bold reporting, criticism has persisted over claims that in some cases it has avoided direct criticism of Qatari policies or those closely linked to Doha.

This dual perception demonstrates that Al Jazeera operates in a highly complex discursive space, where the media is not only a channel for information but also an arena for discursive battles. For some audiences, Al Jazeera's courage in highlighting the suffering of oppressed communities, raising issues ignored by the mainstream media, and emphasizing humanitarian values represents a form of cultural da'wah relevant to the needs of the times. They believe Al Jazeera has succeeded in presenting a more humane journalism that emphasizes not only factual aspects but also champions global solidarity and social justice. However, for others,

especially governments or groups subject to criticism, Al Jazeera is often perceived as a threat. The narratives it constructs are considered to exceed the limits of journalistic objectivity, leading to the labels "propaganda" or "partisan media." Such criticism typically arises when Al Jazeera's coverage is perceived as emphasizing a particular perspective without providing a more comprehensive structural analysis. This situation illustrates the fundamental dilemma facing international Islamic media: how to maintain a balance between the moral mission of da'wah, the ideals of justice, and journalistic professionalism, without falling into political bias or the interests of particular states. In this context, Al Jazeera can be understood as a concrete example of the eternal tension between the media's function as an instrument of da'wah, an agent of social change, and a global political actor that is inseparable from strategic interests (Figenschou, 2010).

Internationally, public perception of media credibility has a far-reaching impact. Media perceived as independent, ethical, and capable of maintaining integrity tend to gain greater legitimacy, while also opening up opportunities to reach audiences across cultures and religions. This credibility also influences the extent to which a media outlet can contribute to shaping global discourse, whether related to foreign policy, the distribution of humanitarian aid, or public diplomacy. In the context of Al Jazeera, if the media consistently prioritizes factual accuracy and aligns its coverage with a humanitarian framework, it will position itself not merely as an international news channel but also as a normative actor with the power to shape global opinion. Through this approach, Al Jazeera has the potential to become an example of contemporary Islamic journalism that integrates information and da'wah missions. This means that the media does not simply present data and events but also instills moral awareness, invites audiences to understand the value of justice, and fosters empathy for marginalized groups. Al Jazeera's success in maintaining this reputation will contribute to improving Islam's image internationally. By emphasizing universal values such as justice (al-'adl), compassion (rahmah), and human solidarity, Al Jazeera demonstrates that Islam is not only about religious rituals, but also about moral principles relevant to global issues. Thus, this medium has the potential to play a significant role in creating bridges for intercultural dialogue and strengthening moral diplomacy in the modern era (El-Nawawy & Powers, 2010).

However, if bias in reporting is not balanced by transparency of sources, thorough verification, and representation of diverse views, public trust in Al Jazeera could decline. The media's credibility, both as a channel for Islamic propagation and as an international journalistic institution, is largely determined by its ability to maintain a balance between moral idealism and the principle of news objectivity. Al Jazeera's success lies not only in voicing humanitarian values, but also in consistently presenting complete and fair facts. In this regard, criticism from various parties, including the government, ruling groups, and even patron states like Qatar, must be addressed openly and professionally. Without a consistent stance, there is a risk of the perception that the missionary mission being promoted is merely a cover for a particular political agenda. If this occurs, Al Jazeera's legitimacy as a neutral and trustworthy media outlet will be further questioned. Therefore, Al Jazeera's greatest challenge is not only maintaining its reputation as an alternative media outlet that advocates for marginalized groups, but also ensuring that every report is ethically, professionally, and transparently accountable. Only in this way can the media remain a credible global reference (News, 2020).

Synergy and Challenges

Thus, Al Jazeera occupies a unique and strategic position, at the intersection of the ideals of da'wah (Islamic preaching) and journalistic professionalism. As a media outlet rooted in the Arab world but with a global audience, Al Jazeera faces a complex dilemma. On the one hand, it carries a mission to present an alternative narrative that is more just and humane, and promotes universal Islamic values such as justice (al-'adl), compassion (rahmah), and solidarity (ukhuwwah). On the other hand, it must also maintain international standards of journalistic professionalism that demand accuracy, independence, verification, and balance. Synergy between these two dimensions can be achieved by strengthening balanced news framing practices, ensuring a rigorous news verification process, and providing space for a diversity of voices in every report (El-Nawawy & Powers, 2010). In its various reports, Al Jazeera demonstrates its capacity as a media outlet capable of making a significant contribution to the development of global public discourse. One example is seen in its coverage of humanitarian crises in several conflict zones, such as Yemen, Palestine, and Syria. In this context, Al Jazeera focuses not only on presenting victim data or a chronology of events, but also emphasizes the profound humanitarian dimension. The channel frequently highlights the suffering of civilians, particularly vulnerable groups such as children and women, and showcases their voices often overlooked in mainstream media coverage.

Al Jazeera's editorial approach extends beyond the emotional aspect to linking the suffering to broader political analysis and conflict structures. In this way, audiences are encouraged to understand that humanitarian

crises do not occur in a vacuum, but are intimately connected to power dynamics, international policies, and recurring practices of structural injustice. This reporting strategy enables Al Jazeera to function not only as a conveyor of information but also as a means of public education. Its coverage encourages audiences to become more than mere news consumers, but also to view global realities from a moral, critical, and reflective perspective. In this way, Al Jazeera successfully combines its journalistic mission with the values of cultural da'wah, which are oriented towards the universal well-being of humanity (Satti, 2015).

Al Jazeera's strategy can be understood as strengthening its da'wah function in a more comprehensive sense, not limited to the verbal delivery of religious teachings but also through social education relevant to humanitarian issues. In each of its reports, Al Jazeera strives to show a different perspective on global reality, particularly regarding issues of injustice, marginalization, and conflict affecting vulnerable groups. This kind of reporting goes beyond simply presenting data or a chronology of events, but also encourages audiences to develop empathy and moral awareness. Thus, Al Jazeera's role goes beyond the function of conventional media, which is merely to inform. It also inspires audiences to understand the importance of humanitarian values, justice, and solidarity across borders. From an Islamic da'wah perspective, this step aligns with the mission of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar, which emphasizes the call to goodness and the rejection of injustice. Furthermore, this strategy also demonstrates the media's ability to function as an agent of social change, building critical public opinion, and motivating concrete actions based on spiritual and ethical values. In this way, Al Jazeera asserts itself as a global media outlet that combines the power of information with a moral mission.

Nevertheless, Al Jazeera's journey has not been without significant challenges, particularly those related to geopolitical pressure. One major obstacle it faced was the 2017 diplomatic crisis, when Qatar was blockaded by several Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt. This situation demonstrated how the political position of a patron state can directly impact editorial freedom and public perception of Al Jazeera's independence. During the crisis, Al Jazeera was frequently accused of being a political tool of Doha, perceived as spreading narratives aligned with Qatari interests, calling its objectivity into question. This political pressure created a dilemma for Al Jazeera: on the one hand, it sought to maintain its identity as an international media outlet with professional journalistic standards, while on the other, it faced accusations of bias that eroded its credibility. This situation also exposed the fragile boundaries between its mission of da'wah (Islamic outreach), the idealism of press freedom, and the realities of global politics fraught with competing interests. The 2017 crisis emphasized that media, especially those with ideological or religious bases, never truly exist in a political vacuum. Al Jazeera serves as an example of how international media can function as both an instrument of diplomacy and a target of geopolitical pressure. Thus, Al Jazeera's primary challenge is not only maintaining the quality of its coverage but also maintaining its legitimacy as a media outlet with integrity amidst the tug-of-war of global interests (Miles & Jazeera, 2017).

Besides geopolitical challenges, one of the criticisms frequently directed at Al Jazeera is the accusation of ideological bias, particularly regarding its alleged closeness to and support for political Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood. These accusations are often exploited by political opponents to undermine Al Jazeera's credibility in the eyes of the international public. By highlighting perceived partisan ideological affiliations, critics attempt to create the impression that Al Jazeera is not truly independent, but rather pursues a specific agenda aligned with the political interests of Qatar or certain Islamist groups. This criticism is often used as a weapon in regional and global political rivalries. For some, this narrative of partisanship serves to negate Al Jazeera's contribution to providing alternative voices and addressing the plight of marginalized communities. As a result, the media's reputation becomes vulnerable to delegitimization, particularly among Western audiences sensitive to issues of objectivity. However, it is important to note that such accusations also reflect broader political dynamics, where the media is often used as a tool for discursive battles. Thus, the challenge for Al Jazeera is to maintain transparency, ethical consistency, and journalistic quality in order to prove its independence amidst accusations of ideological bias (Carmon, 2013).

One of the major challenges facing media in the Arab world, including Al Jazeera, is the persistent limitations on press freedom. Journalists often face threats, pressure, and even detention when reporting on sensitive issues that touch on political or ruling interests. This situation presents a serious dilemma for Al Jazeera, as it is committed to providing critical coverage that highlights injustice, while also ensuring the safety of its journalists and field staff in vulnerable situations. To address this challenge, Al Jazeera needs to continue developing editorial strategies that maintain critical reporting space without posing undue risk to its media staff. In this regard, building collaborative networks with international media outlets, journalist organizations, and human rights institutions is a crucial step in strengthening its position and protecting credibility. Furthermore, the

application of strict ethical standards, combined with the use of digital technology to verify data, document evidence, and expand the reach of news, is becoming increasingly relevant as a tool for maintaining professionalism. However, the core issue remains how Al Jazeera can balance its moral mission, which is often oriented towards Islamic da'wah values, such as justice and solidarity, with the demands of journalistic objectivity. This balance is a key determinant of whether Al Jazeera can continue to be viewed as credible or be perceived as partisan. If this balance is successfully maintained, Al Jazeera has the potential to evolve into a distinctive model of global Islamic media: a medium that not only delivers factual information but also serves as a means of cultural da'wah, inspiring social change. As such, Al Jazeera can play a strategic role in shaping international public opinion that is more just, empathetic, and aligned with universal humanitarian values (Zayani, 2016).

However, maintaining this balance is no easy task. In practice, Al Jazeera must continually contend with accusations of bias, indirect censorship, and pressure from governments and interest groups who feel disadvantaged by its coverage. This situation requires the editorial team to be more careful in defining issues, selecting sources, and designing framing that is not only informative but also ethically accountable. Furthermore, the presence of social media and the flow of digital information exacerbates both challenges and opportunities for Al Jazeera. On the one hand, social media provides a space for Al Jazeera to reach a wider audience, especially the younger generation who are more critical and selective in consuming information. On the other hand, the flood of information in the digital space gives rise to the risk of misinformation and disinformation, which, if not anticipated, can undermine the credibility of the media institution. Within this framework, Al Jazeera's ability to adapt to technological dynamics, maintain editorial independence, while upholding its moral mission and values of da'wah (Islamic outreach) is key to its sustainability. If successful, Al Jazeera will become more than just a news provider; it will also become a global actor, playing a role in shaping discourse on justice, humanity, and solidarity across nations.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights Al Jazeera as a media phenomenon with a unique position, as it stands at the intersection of journalistic professionalism and Islamic da'wah (Islamic outreach). As a media outlet born in the Arab world with a global audience, Al Jazeera has successfully established an image as an alternative source of information that challenges the dominance of Western narratives while simultaneously promoting values of justice and humanity. Through a framing strategy that emphasizes moral and humanitarian aspects, Al Jazeera plays a role not only in conveying information but also in educating the public and raising awareness of global issues such as the Palestinian conflict, the refugee crisis, and systemic injustice. However, this study also highlights the dilemma Al Jazeera faces due to its dual role. Its commitment to maintaining journalistic objectivity often clashes with geopolitical pressures, the interests of patron states, and regional political dynamics. This situation often gives rise to accusations of ideological bias, potentially reducing its credibility in the eyes of international audiences. Therefore, Al Jazeera needs to develop strategic measures, such as increasing transparency, tightening news verification, and expanding space for diverse perspectives, to maintain its credibility as a global media outlet. Theoretically, these findings enrich the discussion on the concepts of Islamic journalism and da'wah through media, by demonstrating the potential for synergy between the two. Ethical, critical, and public-interest news presentation can bridge the gap between Islamic da'wah values and standards of journalistic professionalism. Practically, this study recommends that other Islamic media outlets consider Al Jazeera a benchmark for managing editorial staff that balances spiritual interests and professional demands. Al Jazeera's future success will largely depend on its ability to maintain harmony between da'wah ideals, journalistic ethics, and the ever-changing dynamics of global politics. If this balance is consistently maintained, Al Jazeera has a significant opportunity to become a model for global Islamic media, combining the power of information with a mission of just social change.

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Rationalization of the Search for God in the Story of Prophet Moses AS: An Analysis of the Qur'anic Story

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the story of the Prophet Moses (AS) in the Qur'an as an attempt to rationalize the search for God, emphasizing the story's relevance to contemporary religious understanding. The research method employed is a qualitative study with a library approach, utilising thematic analysis of verses from the Qur'an that recount the spiritual journey of Prophet Moses (AS). Data were collected from primary sources in the form of the Qur'anic text and secondary literature in the form of classical and modern interpretations, then analyzed descriptively and analytically. The results of the study indicate that the story of the Prophet Moses (AS) not only presents a historical narrative, but also contains rational, spiritual, and ethical dimensions that emphasize the role of reason and experience in finding God. These findings confirm that the Qur'anic story can serve as a model for faith education that is both argumentative and reflective, with practical applications. The implication of this study is the need to develop the study of the Qur'anic story as a contextual method of religious learning, especially to strengthen moderate religious literacy in the modern era. The originality of this study lies in the focus of its analysis, which places the story of the Prophet Moses (AS) not merely as a prophetic history, but as a rationalization of the search for God that is actual and relevant for today's readers.

Keywords: experiential theology; Islamic education**;** Quranic Narrative; Prophet Moses; rational faith.

INTRODUCTION

The stories of the prophets in the Quran serve not only as historical narratives but also as a means of educating on faith, morality, and rationality. In the increasingly complex conditions of modern society, the challenges of secularization, value relativism, and spiritual crisis have become real phenomena (Nisa & Bakri, 2024; Yılmaz, 2021). Younger generations often experience confusion in understanding religion, tending to understand rituals formally without deepening their values, so that religious practices easily become trapped in rigid legalism (Said, 2018). In this context, the story of the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) holds great relevance: it depicts a prophet's struggle to confront tyranny, rationally search for God, and guide his people toward freedom and truth.

Another social phenomenon that strengthens the relevance of this research is the growing need for more contextual, reflective, and experience-based religious education methods (Arifin, 2016). In Indonesia, religious learning about faith (Pohl, 2006). Therefore, examining the story of Moses from the perspective of rationalizing the search for God is crucial for addressing current social and religious education challenges.

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Integrating the Maqasid Shariah and Green Constitution Approaches in Addressing Illegal Investment: An Analysis of the Dynamics of National Legal Reform

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Abstract:

This study examines the integration of Maqashid Shariah and the Green Constitution as a conceptual framework for reforming Indonesia's legal system in response to the growing threat of illicit investment. Utilizing a normative-juridical approach and a descriptive qualitative method, the research is based on primary sources including statutory regulations and constitutional provisions, as well as secondary materials such as Islamic jurisprudence, academic journals, and legal documents. The findings demonstrate that reactive legal enforcement alone is insufficient to combat the complexity of investment-related fraud. The principle of ḥifẓ al-māl in Maqashid Shariah highlights the ethical imperative to protect wealth proactively, advocating for transparency, equity, and distributive justice in financial regulation. Simultaneously, the Green Constitution anchors environmental sustainability and social justice as constitutional obligations, emphasizing the role of law in safeguarding both present and future generations from systemic economic harm. Together, these two frameworks form a transdisciplinary legal model that transcends legal formalism by incorporating moral, spiritual, and ecological values into investment governance. The study concludes that national legal reform must adopt an integrative approach to ensure not only legal certainty, but also ethical legitimacy and sustainable public welfare. This conceptual synthesis contributes to the evolving global discourse on ethical finance and constitutional justice, offering practical recommendations for policymakers, academics, and regulatory institutions in developing fair and preventive investment laws.

Keywords: Accountability; Constitutional Justice; Ethical Investment; Financial Regulation; Green Constitution.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing prevalence of illicit investment practices in Indonesia underscores a significant issue within the country's legal system and financial sector governance. Despite the authority held by the Financial Services Authority (OJK) to conduct public education, revoke business licenses, and file legal actions against entities conducting unauthorized fundraising (S. D. Ahmad, 2023). The problem persists. Moreover, the rapid advancement of digital technology, which has not been matched by adequate public literacy, has further facilitated illegal investment actors in offering schemes beyond OJK's regulatory oversight. On the other hand,

criminal law has been applied to cases of illegal fundraising; however, this reveals that both the preventive and Therefore, an integrative approach is needed one that goes beyond legal-formal aspects and incorporates moral, religious, and ecological values in responding to the complexity of this issue. In this context, the approaches of Maqasid Shariah and the Green Constitution become relevant to be integrated as a conceptual framework for formulating transformative and sustainable legal policies and regulations.

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Jihadist Group's Criticism of Bassam Tibi's Thoughts

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Abstract:

This study examines the ideological tension between Bassam Tibi's reformist Islamic thought and the responses of jihadist groups in Indonesia. The research aims to explore how these groups interpret Tibi's rejection of the Islamic state and his call for contextual reinterpretation of Islamic teachings as a threat to the purity of Islam. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach and content analysis method, the study draws on primary sources, including Tibi's works and jihadist writings, as well as secondary academic literature. The findings reveal that while Tibi promotes an ethical and contextual understanding of Islam aligned with democratic values, human rights, and pluralism, jihadist groups oppose these interpretations and perceive them as part of a Westernization agenda. They assert that Islam must remain a comprehensive system that includes political and military dimensions, rejecting secularism and reinterpretation as forms of deviation. This study concludes that the conflict between reformist and jihadist Islamic perspectives reflects a broader epistemological struggle within contemporary Islamic discourse. The research contributes to academic debate by offering a deeper understanding of the ideological contestation surrounding Islam and modernity. Furthermore, it emphasizes the need for a contextual and dialogical approach to Islamic teachings as a means to foster moderation and coexistence in plural societies.

Keywords: Islamic reform; jihadism; political Islam; Secularization; textualism.

INTRODUCTION

One of the main problems facing Indonesia regarding jihadism is radicalization, which often leads to acts of violence. Groups espousing jihadist ideology are often involved in acts of terror and violence with the aim of establishing a caliphate or Islamic state (Chalmers, 2017). Radicalization is a major challenge in Indonesia, where groups embracing jihadist ideology are often involved in acts of violence and terrorism. They aim to establish a caliphate, or Islamic state, in accordance with their interpretation of Islamic teachings. According to M. Imdadun Rahmat in Islam and Radicalism in Indonesia, the process of

radicalization occurs not only among individuals but also spreads to broader social groups. This indicates that radicalization is a phenomenon affecting many levels of Indonesian society (Rahmat, 2005a).

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The "Promised Land" Claim in the Legitimacy of the Israeli Occupation: Examining the Relevance of Max Weber's Theory of Authority

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the relevance of Weber's theory of authority in relation to the phenomenon of the Promised Land claim and its impact on the legitimacy of the Israeli occupation. The results and discussion in this study show that the Zionist political movement successfully utilised Jewish theological themes as the basis for the establishment of the state of Israel, in this case, the Promised Land claim becomes a doctrine that functions as a political aspiration and is believed to be rooted in divine and religious authority, revealing that Weberian tripartite classification of authority have limitations in explaining the form of legitimacy that comes from theological claims. The conclusion of this study is that the the Promised Land claim effectively functions as theological legitimacy in the Israeli occupation, offering a new form of authority distinct from Weberian tripartite classification of authority (traditional, charismatic, rational-legal).

Keywords: authority; israel; legitimacy; promised land; zionism.

INTRODUCTION

The Israeli occupation of Palestine is a complex political issue involving conflicting historical narratives and territorial claims (Pratama et al., 2023, p. 192). Within the dynamics of this conflict, various justifications have been put forward by the Israeli side to defend its political policies in the Palestinian territories, including the claim to the "promised land" (Amro & Yatiban, 2024, p. 297). The concept of the promised land holds deep theological significance for the Jewish people, which was then used by the Zionist movement as one of the most important bases for constructing a narrative of historical rights and the legitimacy of the establishment of the state of Israel in Palestinian land (Gündüz, 2024, p. 5). Although previous studies have touched on the promised land claim in this conflict (Rabinovich, 2022), a comprehensive analysis of how theological claims specifically function as a source of legitimacy distinct from existing (conventional) categories still requires further exploration. Therefore, this study aims to examine in more depth the role of

the promised land claim in the legitimacy of the Israeli occupation, while also testing the relevance of Max Weber's theory of authority in explaining this legitimacy phenomenon.

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Jihad Resolution and the Spirit of Struggle: Historical Traces of the Battle of November 10, 1945

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Abstract:

The resolution of jihad on the November 10, 1945 incident became a major history of Indonesia after independence. However, this event is rarely depicted from the perspective of the role of religions in Indonesia, especially through religious fatwas during this battle. One of them is the fatwa of KH. Hasyim announcing, before the meeting attended by NU consuls throughout Java and Madura on October 22, 1945, all meetings of ulama agreed that the result of the deliberation was a decision regarding jihad as part of the struggle for independence. This article discusses the fatwas and appeals issued by several religions in Indonesia when the battle took place on November 10, 1945 in Surabaya. Research shows that there was a jihad fatwa to encourage resistance to the events of November 10, 1945. This was shown in the First People's Sovereignty Newspaper, an Islamic fatwa published through the People's Sovereignty Newspaper published on November 9, 1945, the contents of which were namely 60 Miljoen Kaoem Moelimin Indonesia Siap Melawan Fi Sabilillah, and dated November 24, 1945, the contents of which were in the Perjuangan Alim Oelama Menentoekan Hoekoem.

Keywords: Indonesian Independence; Jihad fatwa; Resistance movement; 10 November 1945.

INTRODUCTION

Several weeks after the proclamation of independence, in an atmosphere of uncertainty following Japan's defeat and political instability, Surabaya became one of the cities that played a crucial role in maintaining independence. To maintain this independence, President Soekarno, through his envoy, asked KH. M. Hasyim Asy'ari about the law of maintaining independence. In response to this question, Kiai Hasyim answered firmly, it is clear for Muslims to defend their homeland from foreign threats. President Soekarno from Jakarta sent someone to a prominent Kiai in East Java and Rais Akbar from the NU organization, namely KH. Hasyirn Asy'ari, who was a resident of the Tebuireng Jombang Islamic Boarding School, asked KH. Hasyim Asy'ari to consider data from

Gunseikabu that Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari was a prominent figure in Java. Sukarno asked for an opinion from KH. Hasyim Asyari, "Is the law defending the homeland, not defending Allah, defending Islam or defending the Qur'an? Once again defending the motherland?"

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Inclusive soteriology of Aswaja theology: An analysis of Jauharah al-Tawhid and its implications for intra-religious dialogue

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Abstract:

This study aims to extract the inclusive soteriological formulation of Aswaja from the text Jauharah al-Tawhid and the tradition of syarh, assess its implications for the design of intra-Islamic dialogue, and develop operational tools in the form of SOPs, checklists, rubrics, and facilitation protocols that are publicly accountable. The study uses a two-track qualitative approach. The text track is carried out through a close hermeneutic reading of ibarat-syarh by mapping usul/furu and the status of *dalil* (qat'i/zanni). The application track involves interviews and FGDs with facilitators, kiai, and community activists. Data were analyzed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis, supplemented by source-method-researcher triangulation, member-checking, audit trail, and a Delphi-based consensus test. The research findings formulate five principles of Aswaja's inclusive soteriology: firmness in proposals (qathi), openness in furu (zanni), rejection of *takfir* (contempt) against sinners, *tawaqquf* (religious tolerance) in the face of inconclusive evidence, and recognition of the *udhr bil-jahl* (the evil-doer) and ahl al-fatrah (the people of fatrah) as soteriological variables. These principles are mapped into dialogue SOPs in the form of issue classification, freezing of khilafiyyat (the wrong-doer), reason-giving procedures, *tawaqquf* (the wrong-doer), restorative language, the udzr bil-jahl protocol, and official clarification channels. The findings can be applied in the Religious Moderation program, the framework for Islamic intra-faith dialogue, the design of community-based conflict prevention policies, curriculum development in Islamic universities, and mediator training. These results are useful for Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), government institutions, interfaith organizations, and community facilitators in promoting tolerance and reducing sectarian tensions. This research introduces a two-track Delphi-based model that weaves classical texts into a community policy framework, as an example of "hermeneutics that yields policy." Its contribution lies in combining normative theology with practical instruments of facilitation, offering transferable design principles for building tolerance and religious dialogue in a structured manner.

Keywords: Inclusive soteriology, aswaja, jauharah al-tawhid, religious moderation, intra-community dialogue*.

INTRODUCTION

The *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* (Aswaja) tradition, which encapsulates the jurisprudence of the four schools of thought, the creed of Ash'ari-Maturidi, and the Sufism of Junaydi-Ghazali, forms the foundation of

Islam in Indonesia. Within this framework, salvation (soteriology) is understood as the interconnectedness of referenced is Ibrahim al-Laqani's Jauharah al-Tawhid, along with classical and modern commentary, which demonstrates its relevance in building the concept of inclusive soteriology. The term soteriology itself is understood as the theological doctrine of salvation, as contained in the Quranic tradition and Islamic theology (Khalil, 2007).

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Different opinions of ulama in Fiqh Waqf: Epistemological, methodological, and contextual analysis

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Abstract:

This study critically examines juristic disagreement (*ikhtilaf*) in waqf jurisprudence through an integrated epistemological, methodological, and contextual analysis, while exploring the pathways toward harmonizing classical doctrines with contemporary socio-economic demands. Using a qualitative, library-based research design, the study analyzes classical fiqh sources from the four Sunni schools, foundational works of uṣūl al-fiqh, contemporary academic discussions, and modern fatwas. The research scope encompasses the conceptual foundations of waqf, the validity of various asset types, istibdal, temporary waqf, and contemporary innovations, including cash waqf, waqf-linked *sukuk*, and digital *waqf*. The findings reveal that ikhtilaf is rooted in divergent epistemic commitments regarding textual authority, legal causation, and public interest, as well as methodological distinctions in legal reasoning and contextual influences across historical periods. Major challenges include the increasing complexity of financial instruments, fragmented regulatory frameworks, and limited capacity among waqf managers to operationalize maqasid-oriented governance. The study recommends strengthening collective ijtihad, developing maqasid-driven regulatory frameworks, and establishing measurable evaluative standards for modern waqf practices. Practical implications highlight the need to integrate classical fiqh reasoning with contemporary governance principles to ensure that waqf remains socially transformative and aligned with sustainable development objectives. This research formulates a normative–analytical model that synthesizes maqasid-oriented reasoning with juristic diversity, providing a conceptual platform for harmonizing waqf jurisprudence and enhancing the strategic relevance of waqf in the modern era.

Keywords*: cash waqf; digital waqf; epistemology; fiqh methodology; Islamic legal theory.*

INTRODUCTION

Waqf, as one of the most enduring Islamic philanthropic institutions, has been deeply embedded in the socio-economic fabric of Muslim civilization throughout history. Its development cannot be separated from the formative teachings of Islam, particularly the Qur'anic encouragement of charity and the prophetic model of social solidarity. The classical definition of waqf as *habs al-ashl* or the permanent dedication of an asset, and *tasarruf al-manfa'ah* or the continuous distribution of its benefits for public welfare, illustrates the

centrality of generosity and sustainability in Islamic ethical thought. Historically, waqf has played an essential role in building mosques, madrasahs, libraries, public kitchens, caravanserais, hospitals, irrigation the path of God and the prophetic emphasis on ṣadaqah jāriyah, which positions waqf as an instrument of perpetual charity with profound spiritual and social significance.

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Integration of Maqāṣid Al-Sharīʿah in the Design of Hybrid Financial Contracts (Uqūd Murakkabah)

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Abstract:

This study aims to critically examine how maqāṣid al-sharīʿah can be systematically integrated into the design, structuring, and evaluation of uqud murakkabah (hybrid contracts) as a core driver of contemporary Islamic financial innovation. Grounded in key concepts such as maqasid, hybrid contracts, maslahah, hilah, and the principles of uṣūl al-fiqh, this research adopts a qualitative library-based methodology, drawing on classical jurisprudence, contemporary scholarship, international Sharia standards, and DSN-MUI fatwas. The scope of analysis includes conceptual foundations, methodological linkages, and practical applications of hybrid contracts in financing, home ownership structures, and sukuk engineering. The findings demonstrate that maqasid integration requires hybrid structures that ensure clarity, transparency, justice, real economic substance, and effective safeguards against hilah and exploitative risk configurations. Key challenges include contractual complexity, limited practitioner awareness of maqasid, and a tendency to mimic conventional financial instruments. Practical recommendations include strengthening maqasid-oriented regulatory frameworks, enhancing the capacity of Sharia Supervisory Boards, and developing measurable evaluation instruments. The study contributes an integrative normative-analytical framework that operationalizes maqasid within hybrid contract design to enhance ethical and welfare-oriented outcomes in Islamic finance. This research introduces a structured maqasid-hybrid contract integration model, offering an actionable evaluative tool for regulators, Sharia boards, and industry practitioners to ensure substantive Sharia compliance beyond formal legality.

Keywords: hybrid contracts; Islamic legal theory; justice; maqāṣid al-sharīʿah; maslahah; risk governance.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of the Islamic finance industry in the last two decades demonstrates a structural shift in global financial behavior, where Muslim and non-Muslim markets increasingly demand ethical, transparent, and socially responsible financial instruments. This transformation is not only driven by demographic growth in Muslim-majority countries but also by the rising global awareness of the need for finance that aligns with moral values and socio-economic justice (Auda, 2008). In Indonesia in particular, which hosts the world's largest Muslim population, the Islamic finance industry has entered a new phase characterized by rapid product diversification,

strengthened regulatory support, and significant development within digital financial ecosystems. These changes have intensified the complexity of financial engineering and presented new challenges for aligning innovation with the substantive goals of Sharia (A. A. Karim, 2017). Within this dynamic environment, hybrid contracts, also known as uqud murakkabah, have emerged as one of the most influential innovations, offering flexibility and adaptability in designing contemporary sharia-compliant financial products.

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Fiqh Analysis of Cryptocurrency Through the Istihsan Method Approach: A Study of Feasibility as an Asset or Sil'ah in a Sharia Perspective

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Abstract:

This study examines the legal status of cryptocurrency using the istihsan method in Islamic jurisprudence and analyzes its position within Indonesia's positive legal framework. Cryptocurrency is defined as a digital asset based on blockchain technology that lacks physical form but possesses economic value and tradable utility. A normative legal research approach is employed, integrating conceptual, theological, and maqāṣid al-sharī'ah perspectives. The scope of the study focuses on the feasibility of categorizing cryptocurrency as *sil'ah* (a lawful commodity) and its regulatory compliance in the national legal system. The findings indicate that cryptocurrency may be considered permissible as a commodity when it fulfills the requirements of clear utility, lawful ownership, and absence of excessive gharar or qimar; however, it remains prohibited as a medium of payment replacing the Indonesian Rupiah. Under Indonesian law, crypto assets occupy a dual status: illegal as a form of legal tender, yet legal as a traded commodity regulated by Bappebti, with mandatory consumer protection and Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing (AML-CTF) measures. The major challenges concern price volatility and vulnerabilities to cybercrime and financial abuses. Practical implications underscore the need for adaptive regulation, Sharia-compliant due diligence standards, and improved public financial literacy. This research advances contemporary Islamic legal studies by establishing istihsan as a methodological framework for addressing digital economic transformation, while offering normative support for strengthening sharia-compliant crypto regulation in Indonesia.

Keywords: blockchain; consumer protection; digital asset; istihsan; Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah.

INTRODUCTION

Islam is a religion with comprehensive and universal teachings. Comprehensive because its teachings encompass all aspects of life, including ritual (worship), ethics, law, politics, economics, and social (muamalah). Universal, meaning it can be applied in all times and places (shâlih li kulli zamân wa makân) until the end of time. Islam provides complete guidance for its followers to live harmoniously in this world and believe in Allah (Nurdiana et al., 2025). Furthermore, Islamic teachings are not limited to a particular nation or region, but rather

apply to all humanity worldwide. Based on the historical approach in Islamic legal tradition, the Prophet's companions employed two distinct methods for conducting istinbat (legal judgment). First, a broader group of companions used ra'yu (reason), considering *illat* (cause) and *maslahat* (public interest), as well as the spirit of rarely considered maslahat and changing times, except in urgent circumstances. Among this group were Abdullah ibn Umar, Zaid ibn Thabit, and Ibn Abbas (Gadapi, 2024).

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Problem-based learning as a catalyzer for understanding the yellow books

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Abstract:

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of PBL into the learning of yellow books at PMDG Campus 4. The focus of the study includes the impact of PBL and pedagogical innovation in Islamic boarding schools, as well as potential challenges and effective implementation strategies. This study uses a case study method with a qualitative approach, where data is collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The research subjects consisted of teachers, grade XI students, and the implementing committee involved in the learning program. The results of the study indicate that the Panca Jiwa PMDG is aligned with the student-centred PBL approach, and the core principles of PBL can be applied, yielding potential benefits in the learning of yellow books. The program implementation includes constructive, collaborative, contextual and independent learning. The findings of this study indicate that the PBL model approach can not only deepen students' contextual understanding, but also develop 21st-century skills to face contemporary challenges by upholding Islamic values. Thus, the right and accurate strategy reduces the challenges faced in implementing the PBL model in the learning of yellow books.

Keywords: Islamic education; Islamic boarding school; problem-based learning; teacher centered learning.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) have long been the foundation of traditional Islamic education in Indonesia, with yellow books (classical Islamic texts) at the core of their curriculum (Hizbulloh et al., 2023). Traditional pesantren pedagogy is teacher-centered, or *taqlid*-based, in which students passively receive knowledge through methods such as sorogan and bandungan, with an emphasis on memorization rather than critical analysis. The learning environment in pesantren often feels monologic due to the lack of participatory interaction between students and teachers (Hafniati, 2021). This approach reflects the essentialist tradition in Islamic education, which prioritizes the transmission of knowledge over the development of inquiry skills.

On the other hand, the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model offers a student-centered, constructivist paradigm. It engages small groups of learners in solving authentic, open-ended problems, replacing reliance on one-way lectures (Servant-Miklos, 2020). Constructivist theory emphasizes that knowledge is actively constructed through interactions with content and context, with the teacher acting as a sole authority facilitator (Ramadhannita, 2023). PBL aligns with Kolb's experiential learning cycle, which includes stages of concrete

experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation (Sinaga, 2023). Contemporary literature encourages the transformation of Islamic education toward a more contextual and critical approach, responding to the modern era's demands for analytical and collaborative skills (Kurniawan, 2024). However, the implementation of PBL in Yellow Book learning faces structural and cultural challenges. The dense, monolithic characteristics of classical texts, laden with specific terminology, make adaptation difficult to a problem-based scenario. The Islamic boarding school culture that respects the hierarchy of knowledge also has the potential to give rise to resistance to learning models that encourage student autonomy.

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Prayer and Character Building as Core Predictors of Spiritual Growth: Lessons from Christian Higher Education for Global Well-being

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Abstract:

The world today faces multiple crises—ecological, social, and moral—that call for the emergence of a generation with a strong spiritual foundation, resilience, and clarity of values in every aspect of leadership. This study explored six dimensions of spiritual growth—Abide in Christ, Live by God's Word, Pray in Faith, Fellowship with Believers, Witness to the World, and Minister to Others—within the context of Christian higher education. Data were collected from 132 students at Universitas Advent Indonesia using the Spiritual Growth Assessment Process (LifeWay Christian Resources). Descriptive analysis revealed that "Pray in Faith" (M = 4.25, SD = 0.59) and "Abide in Christ" (M = 4.33, SD = 0.61) were the strongest practices, whereas "Minister to Others" (M = 3.54, SD = 0.94) indicated lower engagement. Correlation analysis revealed strong associations among the dimensions, with the highest between Witness to the World and Minister to Others (r = 0.881, p < 0.001). Multiple regression demonstrated that Minister to Others (β = 0.31, p < 0.001), Pray in Faith (β = 0.25, p = 0.01), and Live by God's Word (β = 0.21, p = 0.03) significantly predicted Fellowship with Believers. The model accounted for 62% of the variance (R² = 0.62, p < 0.001). These findings confirm that prayer and moral formation are pivotal to spiritual growth, emphasizing the transformative role of Christian higher education in shaping graduates who unite intellectual competence with moral integrity and spiritual maturity.

Keywords: Christian higher education; global well-being; moral character; prayer; Spiritual growth.

INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century is characterised by complex worldwide issues such as ecological crises, social injustices, moral failings and cultural fragmentation. In addition to technical expertise, addressing such problems requires internal resources based on values and spirituality (Fauziah, 2024). According to academics, a high spiritual quotient (SQ) is one of the keys to both individual and group success, as it enables people to use spiritual principles to make moral decisions, develop resilience and contribute to sustainable solutions (Thakadipuram, 2024). Recent meta-analytical evidence confirms that spiritual intelligence (SQ) significantly correlates with academic achievement. This shows that SQ functions as an independent predictor alongside emotional intelligence in higher education (Zhou et al., 2024).

The spiritual quotient is linked to personal success and the development of values that promote global welfare. It encompasses qualities such as compassion, humility, integrity and transcendence, which are essential for addressing

global issues that require collaboration and moral responsibility (Fauziah, 2024). For instance, the application of SQ values in higher education has been shown to enhance student motivation and identity formation, positioning spirituality as a driver of civic engagement and service orientation (Shephard & Egan, 2018). Thus, cultivating SQ in academic environments contributes to preparing students for leadership roles that require not only competence but also moral clarity and spiritual maturity.

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Islamic Religious Education Learning Strategies in Shaping the Religious Character of Grade III Students

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Abstract

This study analyzes Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning strategies in shaping the religious character of third-grade students at SDN Emo Kurniaatmaja through a qualitative case study approach. The objectives of the study were to identify learning strategies, evaluate their effectiveness, and analyze supporting and inhibiting factors in the formation of religious character. Data were collected through participant observation of 12 learning sessions, in-depth interviews with 3 PAI teachers and 25 students, and analysis of curriculum documents and Lesson Implementation Plans (RPP). The results showed that contextual-based strategies—such as bullying simulations to instill tolerance values and direct practice of distributing takjil—increased student participation by 78%. The role of teachers as spiritual role models (34%) and habituation of worship (29%) were the dominant factors in the predictive model of religious character. Although the PAI time allocation was only 2 hours/week, the integration of hidden curriculum such as calligraphy of Quranic verses on classroom walls successfully strengthened the internalization of values. The study's conclusion confirms that a holistic strategy design that combines teacher role models, contextual learning, and school system support can optimize the formation of religious character in public elementary schools with limited time. These findings suggest that teacher training should be based on Islamic personality competencies and that the Islamic Education (PAI) time allocation policy should be revised to be more flexible.

Keywords: contextual learning; hidden curriculum; Islamic Religious Education; religious character; role models.

INTRODUCTION

Character education has become a top priority in the development of the Indonesian education system, in response to the challenges of the digital era and globalization, which have drastically impacted the moral and spiritual dimensions of the younger generation. The rapid flow of information and technological distractions have given rise to the phenomenon of secularization and the degradation of religious values, thus demanding a strong foundation for character education from an early age. The importance of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in elementary schools cannot be ignored. As stated by Tantika Tri Hapsari and colleagues, PAI plays a central role in instilling faith, morals, and social values through a values-based approach, habituation of worship, and teacher role models, with adaptive strategies

to the challenges of globalization (Tantika Tri Hapsari et al., 2025). This research supports the view that PAI must be modified to be more innovative, integrative, and collaborative between schools, families, and communities. Furthermore, in the context of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, with the dominance of technology and digitalization, Islamic Religious Education remains relevant as a moral and ethical guide for the younger generation. The PAI curriculum, which integrates technology and digital literacy, helps students sort information and develops responsible and empathetic character traits (Santi, 2025).

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