Social Media Construction Towards Da'wah Activities: A Perspective From Peter L. Berger's Social Construction Theory

Konstruksi Media Sosial Terhadap Aktivitas Dakwah: Perspektif Teori Konstruksi Sosial Peter L. Berger

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the construction of social media in relation to da'wah activities from the perspective of Peter L. Berger's social construction theory. Social media has become a significant platform in influencing and shaping da'wah activities in the digital era. This article uses a qualitative approach based on literature review. The data obtained were then analyzed using Peter L. Berger's theory of social construction. The research findings indicate that with the presence of social media as a new technology, human lifestyles are undoubtedly going to undergo changes. Through a qualitative approach and literature study, this research analyzes how social media actively constructs and shapes da'wah activities. The study presents the key concepts of Berger's social construction theory and relates them to the role of social media in da'wah. The findings of this study provide insights into how social media influences and shapes da'wah activities in the digital era. This research has important implications for understanding the dynamics of da'wah in the digital context. With a better understanding of the construction of social media in relation to da'wah activities, da'wah activists can effectively utilize social media as a tool for spreading da'wah messages, building interactions with the audience, and developing da'wah strategies that are relevant to the current digital context.

Keywords: *social construction; social media; da'wah activities; Peter L. Berger's social construction theory*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konstruksi media sosial terhadap aktivitas dakwah dari perspektif teori konstruksi sosial Peter L. Berger. Media sosial telah menjadi platform yang signifikan dalam mempengaruhi dan membentuk aktivitas dakwah di era digital. Artikel ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan basis kajian pustaka. Data yang telah diperoleh kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teori konstruksi sosial Peter L.Berger. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dengan hadirnya media sosial sebagai teknologi baru, tentu saja cara hidup manusia juga akan mengalami perubahan. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif dan studi literatur, penelitian ini menganalisis bagaimana media sosial secara aktif mengkonstruksi dan membentuk aktivitas dakwah. Penelitian ini menyajikan konsep-konsep utama dari teori konstruksi sosial Berger dan mengkaitkannya dengan peran media sosial dalam dakwah. Hasil penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang bagaimana media sosial berperan dalam mempengaruhi dan membentuk aktivitas dakwah di era digital. Penelitian ini memiliki implikasi penting dalam memahami dinamika dakwah dalam konteks digital. Dengan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang konstruksi media sosial terhadap aktivitas dakwah, para penggiat dakwah dapat lebih efektif memanfaatkan media sosial sebagai alat untuk menyebarkan pesan dakwah, membangun interaksi dengan audiens, dan mengembangkan strategi dakwah yang relevan dengan konteks digital saat ini.

Kata kunci: konstruksi sosial, media sosial, aktivitas dakwah, teori konstruksi sosial Peter L. Berger.

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Introduction

The rapid development of communication and information media, both electronic and print media, has led to a massive influx of information. The abundance of circulating information in society has caused various socio-cultural and structural changes. In such conditions, individuals need to have sensitivity and an active role in selecting information that is beneficial to them. Furthermore, the emergence of social media has created a new channel for the dissemination of information in society, making it easier for users to access and consume the information they need and desire.

The presence of media has a significant influence on society. Media has the power to shape opinions and even change people's behavior. Along with this, the media brings both positive and negative values. However, efforts are directed towards shaping positive behavior in society, and thus, the media is expected to contribute through news coverage in the development of religious propagation (dakwah) within the community.

The development of social behavior in the information era is predominantly influenced by media constructions. Media is familiar with the concepts of agenda setting or framing to construct an event that has a wide impact on society. This is in line with the transformation of media information, which found its momentum since entering the reform era, which is more open towards freedom of expression as a foundation for the formation of societal order. Indeed, the impact of the transformation towards a more open information environment has caused drastic changes in societal behavior. These changes are particularly evident in the realm of religious behavior, among other aspects. The transformation of media information is seen to have influenced changes in religious behavior, as indicated by instances of societal morality sometimes disregarding religious values.

Therefore, the presence of media must be responded to in order to have a positive impact on the religious behavior of society and to uphold the values that have been embraced by the community. Media has the potential to bring negative effects on religious behavior, particularly when observed in the indiscriminate access to information by individuals, especially children and teenagers.

However, on the other hand, the media is believed to contribute positively to the behavior of society, including in the religious domain. This can be seen from the various religious programs presented in both print and electronic media, which provide information on local and national issues. One of the contributions of the media is the cultivation of critical thinking among the public due to the openness of information.

In today's era, social media has become a trend and a phenomenal phenomenon that continues to grow and has become deeply rooted in social life. As we all know, the abundance of easily accessible applications on social media has become an inseparable part of our lives. Communication tools have become more complex and advanced, thanks to the rapid and wide-ranging internet connectivity. Society is increasingly indulged by the ease of accessing social media applications (Kurniawan, 2020).

Social media is an online platform where users can actively participate, share, and create content, including blogs, websites, social networks, forums, and more. Social networking, in

particular, is a fundamental form of technology-driven media used by people across the globe. Another definition describes technology-based media as online platforms that facilitate individual interactions through social media applications and similar technologies, transforming communication into interactive dialogue. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein explain that social media is an internet-based application built on the ideology and technology of Web 2.0, enabling the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Cahyono, 2016).

The activity of da'wah is increasingly vibrant, marked by the high response from various media outlets. In its development, the media is capable of constructing social realities and shaping public opinion in the midst of society. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct academic studies to assess the positive and negative impacts of the media on societal behavior in order to have scholarly qualifications. Of course, the positive and negative effects of the media depend greatly on the perspective used. Hence, this article focuses more on the religious aspect and its relevance to changes in behavior due to media information.

The process of da'wah also needs to find new formulations that are in line with the reality of the millennial generation. Da'wah through digital technology has become a necessity that should be embraced by everyone, including a da'i. The digital era, characterized by various technological advancements, makes it easier for a da'i or ustadz to disseminate religious teachings without being limited by space and time. Social media, which has developed worldwide, including in Indonesia, with its various platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and others, is a result of technological advancements.

The purpose of da'wah is oriented towards the personal and collective transformation of the community towards a better direction while minimizing wrongdoing. The idealism of da'wah faces the reality of societal life, which tends to prioritize pragmatism amidst the proliferation of popular culture and a tendency to neglect religion. This situation is not unrelated to the negative contributions of the media, which can influence and even alter the mindset and behavior of society, paradoxically conflicting with cultural and religious values.

Therefore, the impact of da'wah on social media is evident, resulting in both positive and negative factors. One of the positive factors is that da'wah on social media makes it easy for followers to access the latest information about religious lectures (kajian dakwah) whenever they want. However, one negative factor is that this media platform is often exploited to spread messages of hatred, anarchy, slander, and other negative messages.

Engaging in da'wah activities becomes a necessity by implementing continuous innovations to maintain the existence of the religion. In this regard, Islam, being a missionary religion, considers da'wah as a means to preserve its values. The process of transmitting da'wah messages from a da'i (preacher) to the targeted audience, known as mad'u, is conducted within the framework of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil (amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar).

In this context, this phenomenon is actually criticized from the perspective of da'wah journalism. Efforts are made to produce journalistic works that convey da'wah messages. This is aligned with the noble goal of da'wah activities, which is to guide individuals towards personal transformation through improving behavior based on a proper understanding of

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religion. Personal transformation aims to develop a complete individual with the qualities of faith and righteous deeds. The level of knowledge a person possesses is acquired from a teacher, including listening to religious lectures delivered by a da'i.

The dynamics of contemporary da'wah development are confronted with the complexity of community issues. Therefore, da'is must engage in their role professionally, in order to provide religious enlightenment to the community, helping them find solutions or unravel the challenges of life while remaining steadfast, consistent, and adhering to the religious values they believe in.

Therefore, Islam as a missionary religion necessitates its dissemination to society. Da'wah activities are believed to have an impact on the progress of Islam. Conversely, weak da'wah activities will lead to the decline of Islam. Da'wah is the foremost path and is an activity carried out with dedication. Embarking on the path of da'wah is a crucial factor that determines the fate of every Muslim in having a firm belief and ensuring the success of the da'wah journey itself (Masyhur, 1995).

Various issues accompanying the patterns and intensity of religious behavior in society today are closely related to the significant influence of social media. This phenomenon is worth examining within an academic paradigm. Interestingly, one aspect that has garnered limited academic attention is the role of media in this context. It is considered crucial to measure the social construction of social media in relation to da'wah activities.

Discussion
Da'wah and Social Media
Dakwah is a call to someone to engage in goodness and abandon evil. The term "dakwah" is often interpreted by some laypeople as preaching, religious lectures, and others. However, dakwah has a broader scope than those two terms. Among the various meanings of dakwah, for example, Imam Ghazali in one of his books stated that dakwah is a comprehensive program that encompasses all knowledge needed by humans to provide explanations about the purpose of life and to uncover the guidelines of life, so that they become individuals who can distinguish between what is permissible and what is forbidden (Taufik, 2013).

The human need for religious teachings should be disseminated wisely and intelligently through various means. Humans always require spiritual teachings in their lives to support the relentless flow of modernity. In order to balance this modernity, a new formulation is needed in conveying the messages of dakwah.

In the context of dakwah, the aforementioned formulation is referred to as "wasilah dakwah." Wasilah dakwah is the means or tool used to convey the message of dakwah. Wasilah, or in communication terms, known as media, is a tool that can attract attention to receive the message of dakwah. Media aims to enhance the intensity, speed, and extensive reach of communication (Ali Aziz, 2004).

Indeed, the speed of obtaining information is what the mad'u (partners in dakwah) truly expect, and in this regard, conventional media still has its role and function. For example, the wali songo (nine Muslim saints) of the past used these media as a tool to convey the message
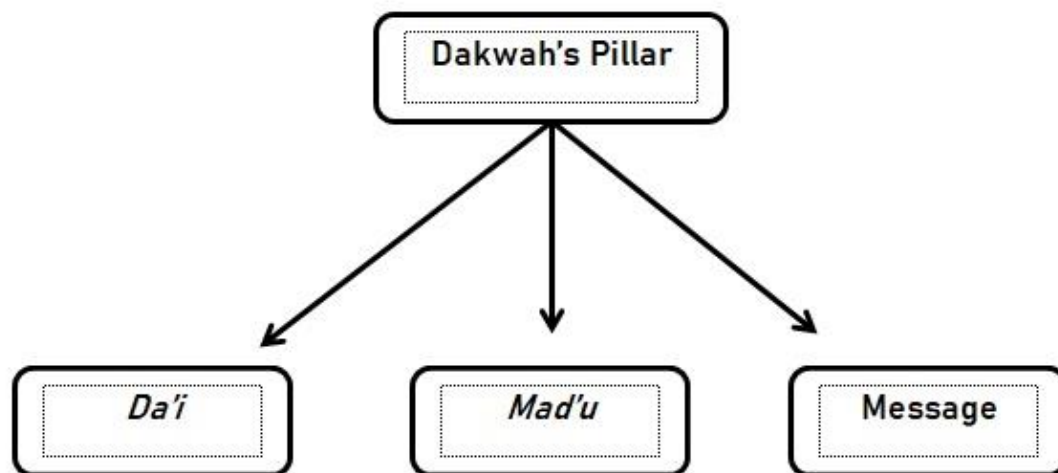
of dakwah through performing arts, entertainment, wayang (shadow puppetry), and others. The results were truly remarkable and highly communicative.

Indeed, the current condition presents a different challenge for da'i (preachers) in conveying the message of dakwah, as the society has become technologically literate. No longer relying solely on conventional media, da'i must optimize online media, social media, or digital media on a massive scale. This is because the issues faced in the current era are significantly different from those in the past.

Communication of dakwah through social media is not necessarily more efficient. Sometimes, what is presented on social media may not align with the teachings of religion, as there can be a focus on market demands rather than substance, simply to pursue fame or popularity (Said & Ibnu, 2016).

Absolutely, the use of media for dakwah purposes should be relevant, balanced, and in accordance with the truth. Sayyid Qutb explained that the message of dakwah should contain information that is not contradictory to the creed (aqidah) and Islamic law (syariat). As a result, the outcomes achieved should embody the principles of monotheism (tauhid), reality, balance, and conformity to the truth (Taufik, 2013).

Therefore the pillars of da'wah must go hand in hand. As the following chart shows:

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          ┌─────────────────┐
          │ Dakwah's Pillar │
          └─────────────────┘
         ↙         ↓         ↘
   ┌────────┐  ┌────────┐  ┌──────────┐
   │  Da'i  │  │  Mad'u │  │  Message │
   └────────┘  └────────┘  └──────────┘
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The depiction of the pillars above seems to correlate with what Anthony Mayfield stated about the interconnectivity (connectedness) between various elements. Mayfield mentioned that the rapid growth of social media is due to the interconnectedness or interdependence between these elements. In this case, social media serves as a tool to convey specific messages to the public (Mayfield, 2008).

Besides the need for connectedness, there is also the element of community, which is equally important. The growth of social media is closely tied to the presence of communities. The larger a community, the more influential social media becomes. Social media enables the rapid formation of communities and facilitates effective communication. Communities share common interests, fostering harmonious relationships among different communities.

It is almost certain that anyone who owns a mobile phone also has accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Path, and so on. This condition has become a norm that changes the way we

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communicate in this digital era. Therefore, it is not surprising that social media can be interpreted as a platform on the World Wide Web that enables communication to occur in different time and space, including social interactions (Rulli, 2018). And it is from the function of social media as a tool for communication in different social contexts that the reality emphasized in this article arises.

The use of social media in dakwah has experienced significant development. The increasing features of social media have provided an alternative for delivering dakwah messages to partners in dakwah. For example, YouTube accounts are easily accessible by anyone and readily available for viewing. A da'i, for instance, can record a video and immediately share it through YouTube. Instantly, people will start watching the video. However, it is essential to consider the essence of dakwah itself. Prior filtering is necessary before sharing.

Regarding that matter, borrowing the terminology used by Mayfield, there are several characteristics that need to be known in social media. First, participation. Social media has a tremendous influence on the dynamics of societal development. Active participation by a significant portion of the global community, including Indonesia, indicates significant progress.

Several international media outlets also regularly report various data on social media activities in Indonesia. In fact, international media has dubbed Indonesia as the "Twitter nation." The British news agency BBC even expressed its admiration for this phenomenon. If translated into Indonesian, it would be roughly as follows:

"Indonesia is the third-largest country in terms of its population using Twitter and Facebook as social media platforms in their daily lives. Indonesia also holds the highest position in terms of social media users (Facebook) compared to other countries"(Morrisan, 2013).

From the data, it can be observed that social media activities in Indonesian society have experienced drastic growth. If utilized by Islamic scholars or da'is to propagate religious teachings, it is likely to receive a positive response. Considering that the majority of Indonesian society conducts their activities through social media, utilizing it for dakwah purposes can be highly effective.

Second, openness. Social media is not exclusive. As an online medium, anyone has the right to access information shared through social media. The principle of openness prioritizes mutual correction between both parties. Internet users on social media should adopt an inclusive attitude. Various suggestions, feedback, and even criticism should be accepted based on the existing reality. The principle is to provide access to information for anyone without limitations. Of course, openness should be guided by upholding decency and high moral values.

Third, conversation. Unlike conventional media, social media allows for two-way communication. In social media, more than two people can interact simultaneously in an unlimited space, enabling communication from various perspectives.

Fourth, community. One important component of social media is the existence of communities. Communities play a crucial role in the development of social media. Specific

groups of people are able to form emotional bonds with one another and share information to present various ongoing events.

Fifth, connectedness. Social media provides easy access to information and enables communication with anyone, including da'is. Islamic scholars who deliver lectures or sermons on specific occasions and then upload them on social media platforms (such as YouTube) create an interaction between the subject and the object of dakwah. Both parties are interconnected, resulting in interaction through social media.

Mayfield attempts to depict the workings of a social media platform like YouTube. He argues that YouTube accounts have the potential to generate or spawn numerous imitations on a large scale. By uploading an image or video, it can inspire communities to do the same. The process of becoming known becomes easier and faster through the dissemination of videos via YouTube. That's how a social media platform operates (Mayfield, 2008).

The existence of social media or the internet is not merely a discourse but has entered the realm of implementation. It is fitting for Islamic scholars and preachers to utilize social media to call for goodness. This approach has also been adopted by Middle Eastern scholars and Islamic intellectuals in Europe and America. They use mass media as their "dawah weapon." They establish networks through various media platforms such as cyberdawah, Islamic preaching websites, Twitter, Facebook, and others (Muhyidin, 2002).

These five characteristics are also aligned with the changing times. For instance, research conducted by Hua Hu from the School of Information at Wuhan University in China indicates that the characteristics of social media are a result of the induction of the present era. The characteristics of social media vary from one period to another. Therefore, the development of existing social media platforms should be accompanied by technical changes so that the alignment between social media characteristics and social media trends can provide guidance or guidelines for technological social media.

Social Media Social Construction

The presence of social media in society today is indeed crucial and can even influence people's mindset and behavior. When an event is constructed by the media as a message of dakwah (religious preaching) and accessed by the public, including the Muslim community as the target audience, the media's construction of texts or visual content in the context of dakwah becomes a hope for the development of dakwah through social media, which is believed to have a significant impact. This pattern is also used by Burhan Bungin in observing the social construction of media related to television advertisements (Bungin, 2008).

In social construction theory, there are several figures who have developed or supported this theory, including Derrida, Habermas, Berger, and Luckmann. According to the concept of social construction of reality by Berger and Luckmann, individuals and society are placed as objects in the processes of externalization, objectification, and internalization. They also see individuals and society as creators of social reality that is constructed in each stage of construction (Berger, 1966).

It is a process of meaning-making that individuals engage in with their environment and the external aspects outside themselves, consisting of the processes of externalization,

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internalization, and objectification. Externalization is the individual's adjustment to the socio-cultural world as a product of human creation, objectification is social interaction in the intersubjective world that is institutionalized or undergoes institutionalization processes, and internalization is the individual's identification within social institutions of which they become members.

The term "social construction of reality" is defined as a social process through actions and interactions in which individuals continuously create a reality that is subjectively shared and experienced (Poloma, 2004).

The origin of social construction comes from Constructivism, which started with the ideas of cognitive constructivism. According to Von Glasersfeld, the understanding of cognitive constructivism emerged from the writings of Mark Baldwin, which were widely developed and disseminated by Jean Piaget. However, if we delve deeper, the fundamental ideas of Constructivism actually began with Giambatissta Vico, an epistemologist from Italy who can be considered the precursor of Constructivism (Suparno, 1997).

In the field of philosophy, the concept of constructivism has been present since Socrates discovered the soul within the human body, Plato explored reason and ideas (Bertens, 1999), and Aristotle introduced terms such as information, relation, individual, substance, matter, essence, and others. Aristotle stated that humans are social beings, every statement must be proven for its truth, and that facts are the key to knowledge (Bertens, 1999).

Aristotle is also the one who introduced his famous statement "Cogito ergo sum," which means "I think, therefore I am." Aristotle's renowned words became a strong foundation for the development of constructivist ideas to this day. In 1710, Vico, in his work 'De Antiquissima Italorum Sapientia,' expressed his philosophy by saying, "God is the creator of the universe, and humans are the masters of creation." He explained that 'knowing' means 'knowing how to make something.' It means that a person only truly knows something if they can explain the elements that constitute it. According to Vico, only God can understand the universe because only He knows how to create it and what it is made of, while humans can only know what they have constructed (Suparno, 1997).

So far, there are three types of constructivism: radical constructivism, hypothesis realism, and ordinary constructivism:

a.   Radical constructivism acknowledges only what is formed by our minds. The forms are not always representations of the real world. Radical constructivists disregard the relationship between knowledge and reality as a criterion for truth. For them, knowledge does not reflect an objective ontological reality but rather a reality shaped by one's experiences. Knowledge is always the construction of the knowing individual and cannot be transferred to passive individuals. Therefore, construction must be done by oneself towards that knowledge, while the environment provides suggestions for the occurrence of that construction.

b.   Hypothesis realism considers knowledge as a hypothesis of the structure of reality that approximates reality and moves toward genuine knowledge.

c.   Ordinary constructivism embraces all the consequences of constructivism and sees knowledge as a representation of reality. Individual knowledge is viewed as a representation formed from objective reality within oneself (Suparno, 1997).

In the theory of social construction, there is a similarity among the three types of constructivism, where constructivism is seen as an individual cognitive process of interpreting the existing reality. This process occurs through social relationships between individuals and their environment or the people around them. Individuals then construct their own knowledge of the perceived reality based on pre-existing structures of knowledge, which Berger and Luckmann refer to as social construction.

Social construction is a contemporary sociological theory proposed by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann. In the constructivist paradigm, social reality is viewed as a social construction created by individuals. Individuals are considered free human beings who engage in relationships with one another. They become the determinants in the social world they construct based on their will. Individuals are not victims of social facts but rather creative media of production and reproduction in constructing their social world (Basrowi & Sukidin, 2002).

Berger and Luckmann's work titled "The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge" represents an effort to discuss the sociology of knowledge in a theoretical and systematic framework. Through this work, Berger seeks to restore the essence and role of the sociology of knowledge in the development of sociology.

First, redefining the concepts of "reality" and "knowledge" in a social context. A sociological theory should be able to explain that social life is continuously constructed. Everyday social phenomena in society are always in a process, discovered through social experiences. Therefore, the focus of society is directed towards the forms of comprehensive understanding (Erlebniss) of social life in all its aspects (cognitive, psychomotor, emotional, and intuitive). In other words, social reality is implicit in social interactions, expressed socially and manifested in actions. Such social reality is found in intersubjective experiences. Through intersubjectivity, one can explain how a particular social life is continuously formed. The concept of intersubjectivity refers to the dimension of the general consciousness structure transitioning to individual consciousness within a specific group that is integrating and interacting with each other.

Second, finding the appropriate methodology to investigate intersubjective experiences within the framework of constructing reality. In this regard, it is necessary to recognize that what is called society is inevitably constructed from both objective and subjective dimensions because society itself is a cultural creation of society (in which intersubjective relationships exist) and humans are creators of their own world. Therefore, in observing social phenomena, it is necessary to select and focus on aspects of development, change, and social actions. By doing so, we can understand the social order or social structure created and maintained by society in everyday interactions.

Third, choosing the appropriate and relevant logic. Researchers need to determine which logic should be applied in the effort to understand social reality characterized by its pluralistic, relative, and dynamic nature. The question for Berger is what kind of logic should be mastered to ensure that sociological interpretations are relevant to the general consciousness structure? The sociology of knowledge must delve into everything considered as "knowledge" in society.

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Berger believes that the sociology of knowledge should focus on the structure of the common-sense world. In this regard, social reality is approached through various approaches, such as the mythological approach, which is irrational, the philosophical approach, which is moralistic, the practical approach, which is functional, and all types of knowledge contribute to common sense. The complex, selective, and acceptive knowledge of society requires the sociology of knowledge to select forms of knowledge that signify social reality. Moreover, the sociology of knowledge should be able to perceive knowledge within the structure of individual consciousness and distinguish between "knowledge" (subject-object matters) and "consciousness" (subject's self-relations).

Furthermore, because Berger's sociology of knowledge focuses on the common-sense world, it needs to employ both logical and non-logical principles. This includes thinking in terms of "contradiction" and "dialectics" (thesis, antithesis, synthesis). Sociology is required to have the ability to synthesize social phenomena that appear contradictory within a systematic, scientific, and convincing interpretive system. The dialectical thinking ability is evident in Berger's thoughts, similar to Karl Marx and some existential philosophers who recognize humans as paradoxical beings. Therefore, it is not surprising that everyday life contains both objective and subjective dimensions (Berger, 1990).

Social media, which has become prevalent in society, seems to be the most popular "menu." The significant number of users is a clear indication that society increasingly needs this "menu." Mayfield states that nearly every day, people around the world use social media. One example is YouTube, where 100 million various videos are served daily, and Facebook has 123 million daily users (Mayfield, 2008).

As more people utilize social media as a platform for interaction, the opportunities for various forms of behavior increase. Public opinion can easily be shaped through the power and effectiveness of social media. This opinion can influence social media users to behave according to their own interpretations. Therefore, both conventional media and social media can bring both positive and negative moral values (Errika, 2012).

The role of social media, including YouTube, in delivering religious messages (dakwah) is capable of shaping public opinion and guiding society towards improvement. This can be exemplified by the dakwah activities of Ustadz Abdul Shomad (UAS). He gained rapid popularity due to his dakwah activities being uploaded on social media. It is easy for social media users to find his dakwah materials and preaching style. In addition to UAS, there is also Gus Baha' or KH. Bahauddin Nursalim, whose dakwah has garnered sympathy from netizens through the program 'Narasi', hosted by Najwa Shihab. Therefore, it is not surprising that many fans follow Gus Baha's dakwah. It can be said that Gus Baha' has become a YouTube star.

Ustadz Abdul Shomad is easily recognized by many people in Indonesia and even worldwide. He uploads video lectures delivered in public gatherings, such as in mosques, halaqahs, government institutions, and others. By posting his dakwah videos, hundreds of people can enjoy his sermons without having to gather in large crowds. This is one of the advantages of social media.

However, there are also harmful effects resulting from social media. It is not uncommon to find crimes or immoral behavior caused by the influx of information into social media content without prior filtering. The proliferation of videos containing violence, discrimination, or even terrorist content can be accessed by social media users. The ease of access to various forms of information sometimes leads individuals to forget about decency and appropriateness. People can easily criticize others without considering ethical aspects (Errika, 2012).

Social Media Effects
Below are the detailed positive effects of social media on society, including its impact on dakwah activities:
a.   Facilitating interaction with a wide range of people
Social media enables easy interaction with anyone, including our favorite celebrities who also use popular social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.
b.   Expanding social connections
Social media allows us to have a broad network and connections. This has a positive impact on individuals seeking friends or life partners from distant places or foreign countries.
c.   Overcoming distance and time barriers
In the current era of social media, long-distance relationships are no longer a major obstacle as we can still interact with others anytime, regardless of the physical distance between us.

d.   Easier self-expression
Social media provides a new platform for individuals to express themselves. Ordinary people, introverts, or those who are always nervous speaking in public can finally voice their opinions freely.
e.   Rapid spread of information
With social media, anyone can quickly disseminate new information at any time, allowing others to access it whenever it is shared on social media.
f.   Cost-effective
Compared to other forms of media, social media is more cost-effective as we only need to pay for internet access to use social media platforms.

The negative effects of social media are as follows:
a.   Alienating close relationships
Individuals trapped in social media often risk neglecting the people in their daily lives, leading to a distancing effect on their real-life relationships.
b.   Decreased face-to-face interactions
Due to the ease of interaction on social media, individuals may become less motivated to meet others in person, resulting in a decline in face-to-face interactions.
c.   Internet addiction
The convenience and ease of using social media can lead individuals to become dependent on it, eventually leading to internet addiction.

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d.   Vulnerability to negative influences

Just like in real life, if we do not carefully select the people in our social circles on social media, we become more susceptible to negative influences.

e.   Privacy issues

With social media, anything we upload can be easily seen by others, potentially compromising our personal privacy. Therefore, it is advisable not to share private matters on social media.

f.   Conflict escalation

With social media, everyone has the freedom to express their opinions, ideas, and thoughts. However, excessive freedom without proper control often leads to potential conflicts and eventual divisions.

The Effect of Social Media on Social Change in Society

Research has shown that social media has both positive and negative impacts. The positive impact of using social media has brought about significant changes in society towards the betterment, while the negative impact tends to erode the values and norms in Indonesian society.

With the advent of social media as a new technology, it inevitably leads to changes in human lifestyles. Some of these changes include the effectiveness and efficiency in obtaining information without being limited by time, location, and high costs.

These changes affect social relationships and disrupt the equilibrium of social relationships and various institutions within a society, including values, attitudes, and behavioral patterns among different groups. People can now directly communicate with the president through social media to provide constructive suggestions, criticisms, and ideas. This approach tends to replace conventional methods where individuals had to become representatives or members of parliament and engage in demonstrations in front of the presidential palace to express their aspirations.

This transformation demonstrates how social media has influenced the way people participate in the political process and provides broader access to express their opinions and aspirations. However, it is important to note that the use of social media also has negative consequences, such as the spread of fake information, online conflicts, and excessive time consumption. Therefore, it is crucial for individuals to use social media wisely and responsibly.

From an economic perspective, the increasing interest of the public in social media has led many individuals in our society to benefit from conducting business through these platforms. As a result, people become more reliant on social media, which in turn affects their daily lives. Accessing social media at all times has become a new necessity for individuals to stay updated, as social media provides more up-to-date information compared to other forms of media.

Negative influences on social changes in society include frequent conflicts between certain groups based on ethnicity, race, or religion. Some groups, under the pretext of religion, gather a large number of followers on social media and tend to exploit specific moments to mobilize masses for certain activities. Social media directly influences the formation of these social groups by instilling specific principles, values, and beliefs to bring about systemic

changes. Moreover, with the ease of social media, these groups can easily influence the stability of a country.

There are also social disparities that often invite comments and lead to conflicts. Deviant behavior patterns within society are often amplified on social media, such as groups or communities of same-sex preferences, like the gay and lesbian community.

From a perspective of social interaction, the influence of social changes in society occurs because of the ease with which people can interact through social media, leading to a decrease in face-to-face social interactions in the real world. People no longer need to meet directly to communicate, resulting in the formation of a more closed-off societal pattern of living.

Conclusion

Based on the function of social media as a means of information dissemination to the public, it is indeed in line with the purpose of dakwah (Islamic propagation). Dakwah is an inseparable part of an individual's Islamic experience, and it can be carried out through various methods and media as long as they align with the principles of Islam. However, due to the unique nature of dakwah, it primarily involves inviting, calling, and conveying messages to individuals or groups with the aim of guiding others and society towards embracing Islam. This is considered dakwah in its broader sense.

Dakwah holds great importance in the survival of human beings, particularly in spreading teachings within society. Good teachings may disappear if not propagated, while misguided teachings can become prevalent if continuously disseminated. Through continuous dakwah activities, it promotes the well-being of individuals in both the worldly life and the hereafter.

Religion cannot be disseminated and established in society without dakwah. That is why Islam mandates dakwah for every Muslim. In fact, dakwah is one of the major obligations that Muslims must fulfill.

Dakwah is not merely for the sake of goodness or increasing the number of Muslims. Rather, it is a demand to fulfill the general mission entrusted to the Islamic community following the mission of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This responsibility is incumbent upon every individual Muslim and is mandated by Allah to convey the message to humanity after the passing of Prophet Muhammad. Neglecting this duty implies neglecting the obligation of conveying the message prescribed by Allah, and Allah prohibits the status of being the "best of nations" from those who neglect the mission of dakwah.

Fundamentally, every Muslim who identifies with Islam (in terms of faith and Shariah) knows that they are commanded to convey Islam to all of humanity so that people may find refuge under its shade. This is where the community can enjoy tranquility and security. However, peace and security can only be realized when every Muslim realizes that they bear a significant responsibility for universal dakwah, which is not restricted by time, place, country, organization, or group.

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