

# RELIGI

## JURNAL STUDI AGAMA-AGAMA

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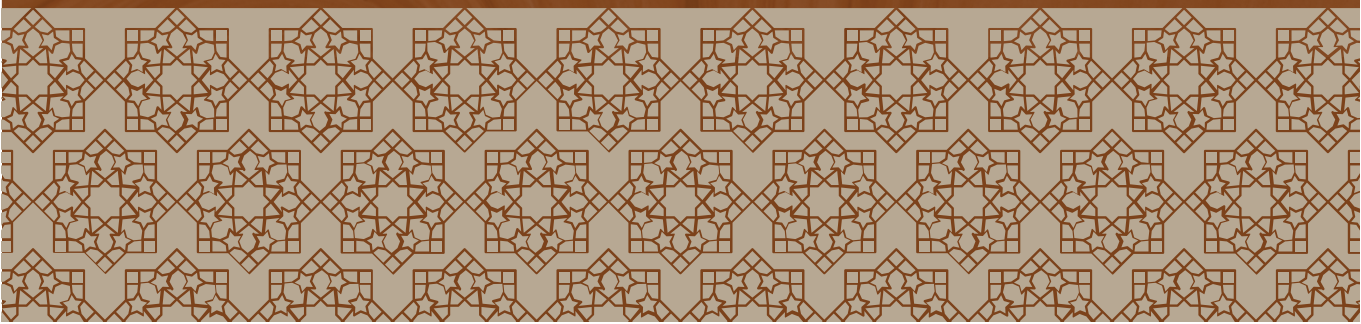
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## RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN THE DIGITAL SPACE: A STUDY OF HABIB JAFAR'S MESSAGES OF TOLERANCE

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### Abstract

This study seeks to examine the phenomenon of increasing religious intolerance in Indonesia's digital sphere, which has affected social interactions and poses a challenge to social harmony within a pluralistic society. This condition highlights the need for an academic investigation into how religious messages that support values of tolerance are articulated and disseminated through new media platforms. The objective of this research is to analyze the construction of religious narratives in the digital content of Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar and to examine audience responses to these narratives. The study employs a qualitative approach using content analysis and descriptive methods. Data were collected through observations of YouTube and Instagram content, a review of relevant literature, and an analysis of audience responses within digital spaces. The findings indicate that the religious narratives presented are dialogical, humanistic, and contextual, emphasizing humanitarian values, the diversity of religious experiences, and mutually respectful social relations. Social media and podcast platforms have proven to be effective channels for expanding the reach of these religious narratives, enabling interaction, participation, and rapid dissemination across demographic boundaries. Audience responses, as reflected in comments, expressions of appreciation, and content sharing, demonstrate positive reception and underscore the significant role of these narratives in enhancing awareness of religious diversity within the digital public sphere. These findings affirm that communicative and contextual religious narratives in the digital realm possess strategic potential for fostering a culture of tolerance within pluralistic societies.

**Keywords:** content analysis, digital dakwah, global ethics, moderation, audience response.

### INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has created new media that are used in the process of interaction and communication. These media are then utilized by humans in various fields of life. This technological development has



also caused major changes in the way people interact, communicate, and disseminate information. In the context of modern religious diversity in Indonesia, the digital world has become a new backdrop for the expression of identity, religious expression, and interfaith interaction. The evolution of social media platforms over the past ten years has not only increased public access to religious discussions, but has also created new complexities in interfaith relations. On the one hand, digital technology provides opportunities to strengthen interfaith dialogue, but on the other hand, it also serves as a fertile ground for the spread of hatred, religious exclusion, and identity separation. Recent studies show an increase in intolerance and competition in religious discourse in the digital public sphere, a phenomenon that is causing concern among academics in the field of religious studies today. This concern raises fundamental questions about how values of tolerance can be effectively built, communicated, and changed through digital platforms.

Within this framework, religious figures who use social media creatively and wisely have become a significant area of study. Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar has emerged as one of the leading figures in the practice of digital religious diversity narratives in Indonesia. According to Gusdurian, Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar is a young Muslim scholar from the *habaib* community who actively preaches through digital and popular approaches<sup>1</sup>. Through YouTube, Instagram, and various podcasts, he communicates an open, dialogical narrative of Islam that emphasizes respect for diversity as an essential part of the teachings of Islam, which is *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. According to Nasrullah, social media has the power to shape public opinion and spread messages with a wide and rapid reach. The approach he takes to preaching reflects a shift in understanding from traditional methods of communication to more interactive, equal, and contextually appropriate digital methods of communication<sup>2</sup>. In the context of Religious Studies, this phenomenon raises academic questions about how messages of tolerance are developed and reproduced in the digital space, as well as how these practices play a role in strengthening religious ethics among diverse communities.

A number of previous studies have examined Habib Husein Ja'far's communication activities, but the majority still focus on general aspects of communication or only on one specific type of digital platform. These studies have not thoroughly examined how narratives of religious diversity are constructed through two different digital media, namely social media and podcasts, even though the two platforms have very different communication characteristics, audiences, and discourse structures. Therefore, there is a gap in the literature, namely the absence of studies that specifically explore the

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<sup>1</sup> Gusdurian, "Dakwah Ramah di Era Digital", <https://gusdurian.net>, 2021, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Nasrullah R, *Media Sosial Perspektif Komunikasi Budaya Dan Sioteknologi*, (Bandung: Simbiosis Rekatama Media, 2015), 32.

relationship between the form of religious narratives, moderate communication strategies, and audience acceptance processes through both digital media simultaneously. This absence is the main academic reason for conducting this study.

From a theoretical perspective, the study of messages of interfaith tolerance in the digital realm is closely related to the development of religious studies, especially in the context of Hans Küng's global ethical thinking, which asserts that world peace cannot be achieved without peace among religions, and that interfaith peace requires sincere and constructive dialogue. The current digital era provides new opportunities for interfaith dialogue in a more flexible, inclusive, and boundary-transcending format. The examination of the message of tolerance<sup>3</sup> brought by Habib Husein Ja'far provides a valuable contribution to the understanding of how global ethical values can be expressed in contemporary media, as well as how the construction of moderate religious discourse can counter narratives of intolerance that often dominate the digital space.

Based on this explanation, this study aims to: First, to analyze the narrative of diversity conveyed by Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar through various social media content that he owns. This study will examine the extent to which the content of these messages contains values of tolerance, pluralism, and respect for religious diversity. Second, to examine the public's response and acceptance of the messages of religious tolerance conveyed by Habib Husein Ja'far through social media, as well as his contribution to strengthening the values of diversity in the digital public sphere.

The objective is not only to describe the phenomenon of digital religious narratives, but also to understand how message construction can influence the way audiences interpret and respond to issues of religious diversity. To achieve this objective, this study uses a qualitative approach with content analysis and descriptive analysis methods. This method was chosen because it provides the ability to deconstruct the structure of meaning, rhetorical strategies, and symbolic constructions in messages conveyed through various digital platforms. In addition, this analysis allows researchers to assess the consistency, depth, and context of tolerance messages produced in various communication formats. The qualitative approach is also in line with the character of Religious Studies research, which emphasizes a deep understanding of religious phenomena in social, cultural, and media contexts.

Overall, this study aims to contribute academically in three dimensions. First, from a theoretical perspective, this research enriches the discussion on changes in digital da'wah and the formation of messages of interfaith tolerance within the framework of a

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<sup>3</sup> The discourse of religious tolerance in the field of psychology done by Ismail in his article on the title of "Konsep Toleransi dalam Psikologi Agama (Tinjauan Kematangan Beragama)", *Religi: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2012, 1-12.

culturally diverse society. Second, from a methodological perspective, this study presents an analytical model for messages of tolerance integrated into various digital platforms that has rarely been applied in other studies. Third, from a practical perspective, this study explains how digital media can be used as an effective tool to strengthen a culture of diversity and interfaith communication in Indonesia. Thus, this research has strong scientific and social relevance for further analysis in the context of the development of religious studies.

### ***Explanation of The Subject of Study***

This research focuses on Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar, a young intellectual known as a leader of moderate, inclusive, and context-oriented religious preaching. His presence in the digital public sphere has made him an important symbol in the development of a more friendly, communicative, and responsive religious discourse on diversity in Indonesian society. In each of his messages, Habib Husein emphasizes universal human values as the basis for narratives of diversity, such as respecting differences in beliefs, rejecting extremism, and encouraging mutual understanding between religions. The position and nature of his religious narratives make him a relevant subject of research related to the development of messages of religious tolerance in the digital media era.

Social media and podcasts used by Habib Husein are important elements in this study, because these digital platforms serve as the main channels for spreading messages of religious tolerance, which were researched through Deddy Corbuzier's Channel in the LOGIN program<sup>4</sup>. According to Chris Brogan, social media is a new set of communication and collaboration tools that enable various types of interactions that were previously unavailable to the general public<sup>5</sup>. Meanwhile, according to Silaban et al., podcasts are defined as technology used to distribute, receive, and listen to on-demand content produced by professionals and amateur radio stations<sup>6</sup>. Sites such as YouTube and Instagram offer interactive and participatory dialogue platforms, enabling religious messages to reach a wide and diverse audience that transcends geographical boundaries. On the other hand, podcasts provide a more in-depth and reflective discussion format, allowing for more detailed and conceptual elaboration of ideas. The characteristics of both platforms—visual, audio, and interactive—create a digital ecosystem that supports the delivery of messages of tolerance in an effective manner that is in line with the information consumption patterns of the current generation. Thus, social media and

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ACmPpEPWks&t=911s>

<sup>5</sup> Chris Brogan, *Sosial Media 101: Tactics and Tips to Develop your Business Online*, (t.k.: Jhon Wiley & Sons, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Alvin Daniel Silaban, Muhammad Amirollah dan Laina Rafianti, "Podcast: Penyiaran atau Layanan Konten Audio Melalui Internet (Over the Top) Berdasarkan Hukum Positif di Indonesia", *Jurnal Legalitas*, 13 (2), 2020, 129-143.

podcasts in this study are not merely tools for delivering messages, but also serve as new social spaces that influence the methods of production, reception, and dialogue of messages by the community.

The essence of this study is the narrative of religious diversity developed and conveyed by Habib Husein Ja'far. These messages include calls to respect various beliefs, reject acts of violence or discrimination based on religion, strengthen a sense of human solidarity, and build awareness that differences between religions are not a threat, but part of social reality. These messages are conveyed through narratives that are communicative, argumentative, and relevant to current issues. Habib Husein often conveys important statements from verses of the Qur'an or hadith in a concise manner to reinforce these principles without making them appear normative or dogmatic. This method shows that messages about tolerance are not only explained theoretically, but also conveyed in clear terms so that they can be understood by digital audiences, thereby enabling the values of moderation in religion to be more widely accepted.

The audience's response to Habib Husein's narrative material on diversity is a crucial element in the focus of this study, because digital platforms offer a way to interact directly through comments, debates, and user engagement. According to Jenkins, digital platforms not only function as channels for disseminating messages, but also as spaces for public dialogue that allow audiences to respond directly through comments, discussions, and other forms of engagement<sup>7</sup>. These audience responses reflect how messages of tolerance are received, interpreted, and negotiated by digital communities with diverse backgrounds in terms of beliefs, ideologies, and interests. This is in line with the encoding–decoding theory proposed by Hall (1980), which states that the meaning of a message is not entirely determined by the sender, but is shaped through the audience's interpretation based on their respective social and cultural contexts<sup>8</sup>. The public discussion that emerged in the comments section shows the dynamics of public understanding of the issue of interfaith tolerance. This interaction not only displays acceptance, but also resistance, criticism, and negotiation of meaning, indicating that inclusive religious awareness is built through a complex social process. Thus, digital media acts as a discursive arena where values of tolerance are collectively debated and reconstructed.

The entire subject matter of this study, which includes preachers, digital platforms, message structures, and public reactions, describes the modern preaching ecosystem that has emerged in the digital age. This ecosystem not only shows changes in the way people

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<sup>7</sup> H. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, (New York: New York University Press, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> S. Hall, Encoding/decoding. In S. Hall, D. Hobson, A. Lowe, & P. Willis (Eds.), *Culture, Media, Language*, (London: Hutchinson, 1980), 128-138.

communicate, but also reflects the evolution of religious practices, communication, and the way society interprets diversity. Therefore, this study aims not only to understand the message of religious tolerance conveyed by Habib Husein Ja'far, but also to analyze how the interaction between messages, media, and audiences creates a model for delivering digital narratives of diversity that are appropriate to the needs of Indonesia's diverse society. Focusing on this aspect provides deep insight into the dynamics of religious communication today, which requires more academic and systematic analysis.

## **NARRATIVE OF DIVERSITY IN THE DIGITAL SPACE**

The narrative of diversity constructed by Habib Ja'far in the digital space shows a significant transformation in religious communication practices in the new media era, which has become not only an arena for the distribution of information, but also a space for the construction of values, identities, and discourses of diversity. According to Castells, social media platforms no longer function solely as a means of distributing religious messages, but have evolved into a space for the production of discourse where religious values, identities, and meanings are constructed, exchanged, and collectively negotiated by religious actors and audiences<sup>9</sup>. Messages of tolerance conveyed through video content, podcasts, and short posts reveal a pattern of da'wah communication that emphasizes inclusivity, respect for differences, and a reinterpretation of interfaith relations in the context of digital society. The dialogical approach used by Habib Ja'far also reflects the practice of religious moderation that integrates theological values with contemporary social experiences. Narratives of diversity are not conveyed through normative-doctrinal language, but through a friendly, straightforward, and contextual style of communication. Thus, the message of tolerance is presented as a communicative experience that is close to the daily lives of audiences across identities, whether in terms of religion, culture, or generation. This pattern is in line with the concept of lived religion, which emphasizes that religious practices are produced through concrete social experiences, not only through institutions and normative texts. According to Jenkins, this communication strategy represents a shift from conventional one-way preaching to dialogical communication that opens up space for interaction, reflection, and audience participation<sup>10</sup>. In this context, digital media becomes an important medium in shaping an understanding of religion that is adaptive to the realities of a multicultural society.

Substantively, this narrative of religiosity emphasizes aspects of humanity, social experience, and interpersonal relationships. Religious values are not conveyed in the form of normative commands, but rather through rational argumentation and contextual

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<sup>9</sup> Castells, M. (2010). *The power of identity* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

<sup>10</sup> Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press.

illustrations. This approach is in line with the view that religion in the modern public sphere functions as a source of meaning that continuously interacts with social reality<sup>11</sup>. In addition, this approach is in line with Habermas' view that religion in the modern public sphere functions as a source of meaning that continuously interacts with public rationality and evolving social dynamics<sup>12</sup>.

Thus, the narrative of religious diversity in the digital space as practiced by Habib Ja'far shows that preaching tolerance is not only related to the content of the message, but also to the way the message is communicated and discussed in the digital public sphere. Social media acts as a discursive arena that enables the formation of a more inclusive, dialogical, and peace-oriented religious awareness. These findings emphasize the importance of an adaptive, participatory, and sensitive approach to religious communication in building tolerance among religious communities in the complex digital society.

### ***Habib Ja'far's Tolerance Communication Strategy in Digital Media***

Analysis of the content shows that the communication strategy used is not only informative, but also performative and persuasive. The narrative of diversity constructed by Habib Ja'far integrates various elements of communication, such as humor, open dialogue, personal narratives, and contextual references to religious texts. The integration of these elements shows a communication strategy that is adaptive to the logic of new media, where religious messages need to be packaged in a concise, relevant, and emotional manner in order to reach audiences across identities. This pattern is in line with the findings of Haryanto (2021) and Zulkarnain (2020), which show that moderate digital da'wah tends to use a persuasive and non-dogmatic approach to build audience acceptance of messages of tolerance.

One of the main features of this communication strategy is the integration of humor, open dialogue, personal narratives, and contextual references to religious texts. Humor is used as a rhetorical device to ease tension and reduce the psychological distance between sensitive religious issues and audiences from diverse backgrounds. In communication studies, humor is understood as an effective strategy for increasing audience openness and reducing resistance to messages that have the potential to trigger conflict<sup>13</sup>. According to Zulkarnain, humor is understood as an effective strategy for opening up dialogue and increasing audience openness to messages that have the potential to trigger differences in opinion<sup>14</sup>. With this approach, messages of tolerance are not

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<sup>11</sup> Casanova, José. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> Habermas, J. (2006). Religion in the public sphere. *European Journal of Philosophy*, 14(1), 1–25.

<sup>13</sup> Shifman, Limor. *Memes in Digital Culture*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014.

<sup>14</sup> Zulkarnain. (2020). Humor sebagai strategi komunikasi dakwah di media sosial. *Jurnal Komunika*, 14(2), 201–214.

perceived as a threat to the religious identity of the audience, but rather as an egalitarian invitation to reflection. In addition, the use of dialogue and personal narratives reinforces the participatory nature of communication. Habib Ja'far's content is often arranged in a question-and-answer format, discussion, or reflection on social experiences, so that the audience is not positioned as passive recipients, but as subjects who are invited to think together. Thus, Habib Ja'far's tolerance communication strategy in digital media can be understood as a religious communication practice that is adaptive to the logic of new media. This strategy not only plays a role in conveying values of tolerance, but also shapes a more open and reflective space for dialogue on diversity in the midst of a pluralistic digital society.

### *The Use of Humor as a Medium for Tolerance*

According to Martin, humor is defined as any form of verbal or nonverbal communication intended to elicit amusement, laughter, or pleasure, and functions as a psychological mechanism in responding to social and emotional realities<sup>15</sup>. Humor is not only entertaining, but also has an adaptive function in social interactions. Humor acts as a psychological bridge that makes messages of tolerance easier to accept. In some content, Habib Ja'far uses humor to defuse tension, turning serious issues into something more lighthearted, while subtly criticizing extremism and exclusivism. Humor is used as a non-confrontational communication strategy, so that criticism of religious extremism and exclusivism can be conveyed implicitly and does not trigger a defensive reaction from the audience. This approach allows messages of tolerance to be presented as a shared reflection, rather than as accusations or judgments. Religious humor in Habib Ja'far's digital content also exhibits the characteristics of inclusive humor, which does not demean other groups or reinforce negative stereotypes. Instead, the humor is directed at criticizing rigid and exclusive religious attitudes, as well as opening up space for a more flexible and humanistic interpretation of religion. Watson (2015) asserts that reflective religious humor can function as an effective tool for social criticism without having to use aggressive language<sup>16</sup>. Furthermore, Shifman (2014) shows that digital humor plays an important role in the construction of social values and the formation of collective identity in online spaces<sup>17</sup>. By utilizing humor, Habib Ja'far's message of tolerance not only reaches a wider audience, but also has the potential to be reproduced by social media users through content sharing and further discussion.

<sup>15</sup> Martin, R. A. (2007). *The psychology of humor: An integrative approach*. Burlington: Elsevier Academic Press.

<sup>16</sup> Watson, Eric. "Humor and Religion: Challenges and Opportunities." *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 27, no. 1 (2015): 1–14.

<sup>17</sup> Shifman, Limor. *Memes in Digital Culture*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014.

The use of humor as a medium for tolerance in Habib Ja'far's content can be understood as an adaptive communication strategy in the logic of digital media. Humor not only functions as an element of entertainment, but also as a pedagogical and reflective tool that helps build an inclusive understanding of diversity. This strategy shows that messages of tolerance can be conveyed effectively without losing their depth of meaning, while strengthening a culture of dialogue and mutual understanding in a pluralistic society.

### *Textual References as Legitimization of Messages of Tolerance*

The use of textual references is an important element in Habib Ja'far's strategy of communicating religious diversity in the digital space. In his various content, messages of tolerance and diversity are consistently linked to verses from the Qur'an, the hadiths of the Prophet, and classical Islamic intellectual traditions. References to these primary sources serve as epistemic legitimacy, that is, an effort to position the value of tolerance not as a personal opinion or individual attitude, but as an integral part of the normative framework of Islamic teachings themselves. Habib Ja'far consistently links messages of tolerance to verses from the Qur'an, hadith, and classical Islamic intellectual traditions. The use of these primary references aims to provide epistemic legitimacy for the message being conveyed, so that the value of diversity does not only appear as a personal opinion, but as an integral part of Islamic teachings. This approach is in line with An-Na'im's (2008) view, which emphasizes the importance of reinterpreting religious texts to be in harmony with the principles of justice, human rights, and coexistence in modern society<sup>18</sup>. In addition, the utilization of classical Islamic intellectual traditions—such as the views of scholars on maqāsid al-sharī'ah, public interest, and social ethics—shows that the message of tolerance has long historical and theological roots. In this way, Habib Ja'far not only quotes texts, but also presents a continuity between Islamic scholarly tradition and the challenges of contemporary diversity. In contemporary Islamic studies, Esposito (2011) asserts that tolerance in Islam has a strong normative foundation, especially in the principles of justice, respect for human dignity, and recognition of social plurality<sup>19</sup>. Thus, textual references as legitimization of the message of tolerance in Habib Ja'far's content demonstrate a model of religious communication that balances normative authority and contextual sensitivity. This strategy not only strengthens the validity of the message in the eyes of the audience, but also contributes to the formation of a reflective, inclusive, and relevant understanding of religion in the pluralistic social life of the digital age.

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<sup>18</sup> An-Na'im, A. A. (2008). *Islam and the secular state: Negotiating the future of Shari'a*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>19</sup> Esposito, J. L. (2011). *Islam: The straight path* (4th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

In Indonesia, a similar approach has also been identified in studies on religious moderation that emphasize the importance of using textual arguments to reinforce messages of inclusivity and prevent religious polarization. Thus, textual references as a legitimization of messages of tolerance in Habib Ja'far's digital content demonstrate a model of religious communication that balances normative authority and contextual sensitivity. 's strategy not only strengthens the validity of the message in the eyes of the audience, but also contributes to the formation of a reflective, inclusive, and relevant understanding of diversity in the social reality of a pluralistic society in the digital age. Through this approach, religious texts are not merely presented as doctrine, but as a source of social ethics that is alive and in constant dialogue with the dynamics of the times.

### *Audience Representation and Acceptance of Messages of Tolerance*

According to Van Dijk, digital space is a communication arena mediated by digital technology, where social interactions take place simultaneously, interactively, and participatively<sup>20</sup>. This space allows audiences not only to receive information, but also to actively engage in the production and distribution of discourse. Digital space enables two-way interactions between communicators and audiences. The findings show that audiences perceive Habib Ja'far's content as representing a "friendly Islam," one that is "soothing" and "emphasizes the importance of coexistence." This positive response indicates that messages of tolerance have strong resonance amid increasing social polarization and religious sentiment in Indonesian digital media. The findings show that the audience represents Habib Ja'far's content as religious discourse that is "friendly," "soothing," and relevant to the needs of living together in a pluralistic society. This representation is formed through a process of repeated interaction between the messages conveyed and the audience's social experiences. The comments that emerged show that the audience not only affirms the message of tolerance, but also relates it to their personal experiences, social relationships, and the reality of diversity they face in their daily lives. In this case, the message of tolerance is not understood as abstract discourse, but as an ethical reference that is relevant to the context of concrete social life. This pattern is in line with the findings of Mubarok and Rustandi (2020), who emphasize that effective digital da'wah is da'wah that is able to resonate with the social experiences of the audience and respond to contemporary religious problems<sup>21</sup>.

Audience interaction in the comments section shows that digital space functions as an arena for negotiating the meaning of diversity. Audiences respond to each other, discuss, and even reinterpret messages of tolerance according to their respective points

<sup>20</sup> van Dijk, J. (2012). *The network society*. London: Sage Publications.

<sup>21</sup> Mubarok, A., & Rustandi, R. (2020). Dakwah digital dan moderasi beragama di era disrupsi. *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, 40(1), 1–16.

of view. This process shows that the acceptance of religious messages is not a passive process, but rather a social construction that involves dialogue, differences of opinion, and collective reflection. Within the framework of public sphere theory, this phenomenon can be understood as a form of citizen participation in a more democratic religious discourse. The audience's acceptance of Habib Ja'far's message of tolerance also reflects a social need for religious narratives that can bridge differences and reduce symbolic conflicts in the digital space. The positive response shown by the audience—whether through support, personal reflection, or further discussion—indicates that messages of tolerance are seen as an alternative to religious discourse that is exclusive and confrontational.

Thus, the audience's representation and acceptance of Habib Ja'far's message of tolerance confirms the strategic role of digital media in shaping contemporary religious discourse. The audience's positive response not only demonstrates the effectiveness of communicating messages of tolerance, but also indicates a social need for religious narratives that can bridge differences and strengthen communal life in a pluralistic society. These findings reinforce the argument that digital spaces, despite their vulnerability to polarization, still have the potential to be constructive spaces for the development of inclusive and reflective religious discourse.

### ***Changes in Perceptions of Diversity in the Digital Age***

Audiences exposed to Habib Ja'far's content show a tendency to be more open to diversity in social and religious identities. The findings of the study show that audiences who regularly consume Habib Ja'far's content tend to display a more open attitude towards differences in social and religious identities. Diversity is no longer perceived as a threat to collective identity, but is understood as a social reality that is inherent and inseparable from national and community life. This change in perception cannot be separated from the characteristics of the digital space, which allows for the massive, interactive, and repeated distribution of discourse. In this case, digital space also changes the way people understand differences, from something threatening to a natural part of national life. Through digital media, messages of tolerance are not only conveyed unilaterally, but also negotiated through comments, discussions, and collective reflection by the audience. This process strengthens the internalization of diversity values because the audience is actively involved in interpreting the message. In this context, digital space functions as a pedagogical medium that gradually and continuously shapes attitudes towards diversity.

From a sociological perspective on religion, this change in perception also shows that religious practices in the digital age are increasingly influenced by the dynamics of communication and media representation. According to Rohman, digital media has transformed religious practices from what was previously hierarchical and institutional to more open, dialogical, and participatory, so that digital space allows individuals

to interpret religious identity more reflectively through social interaction and public discourse, so that diversity is no longer understood as a threat, but as part of a jointly negotiated social reality<sup>22</sup>. Diversity, which was previously often understood through the lens of exclusivism, is now reconstructed through narratives that emphasize shared experiences, human values, and coexistence. Digital media, in this case, functions as a transformative space that allows for a more open reinterpretation of religious identity. The media not only reflects social reality but also shapes the way individuals understand and respond to differences.

In above context, Habib Ja'far's digital content contributes to the formation of a discourse on diversity that places tolerance as a relevant and necessary social value. Thus, changes in perceptions of diversity in the digital age cannot be separated from the strategic role of media as an agent of social construction. Habib Ja'far's digital content contributes to the formation of a more adaptive and contextual understanding of diversity, while also showing that digital space has great potential in building a more inclusive public awareness in a pluralistic society. Furthermore, Habib Ja'far's content shows that digital space has great potential in building a more adaptive, contextual, and humanistic understanding of diversity. Although digital space is prone to polarization and discourse conflicts, these findings show that digital media can also be an effective means of strengthening public awareness of the importance of tolerance and coexistence in Indonesia's pluralistic society.

### ***Forms of Religious Tolerance Messages in the Content of Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar***

The messages of religious tolerance conveyed by Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar through social media and podcasts demonstrate a moderate, humanistic, and socially oriented approach to religious communication. In various YouTube content from , particularly in the Log In program with Deddy Corbuzier, Habib Husein presents a narrative of diversity that emphasizes the principle of respect for differences in beliefs, critical understanding of religious plurality, and the orientation of Islamic teachings as a religion that brings peace to all of humanity. These messages show an inclusive representation of Islam, which does not position other religions as threats, but rather as part of a social reality that must be faced with an ethical and dialogical attitude. This shows that da'wah not only functions as a transmission of teachings, but also as a medium for social dialogue that is responsive to the dynamics of religious diversity.

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<sup>22</sup> Rohman, F. (2018). Media sosial dan transformasi ruang publik keagamaan di Indonesia. *Jurnal Sosiologi Reflektif*, 12(1), 89–104.

The message conveyed is not merely a normative call for mutual respect, but a theological and social argument supported by reasoning, history, and the religious experiences of humankind. Habib Husein positions tolerance as a form of obedience to the principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, which is at the core of Islamic teachings, rather than as a theological compromise or a weakening of religious identity. This idea is in line with the principle put forward by Hans Küng in his theory of global ethics that interfaith peace can only be achieved through openness, dialogue, and respect for diversity of beliefs <sup>23</sup>. Through the use of communicative language, Habib Husein is able to simplify complex religious concepts into simple yet profound messages. For example, when discussing sensitive issues such as conversion, interfaith relations, or theological debates, he always prioritizes a rational, empathetic approach, far from judgmental attitudes. This communication strategy creates an inclusive religious dialogue and minimizes the potential for conflict, while also opening up space for the audience to critically reflect on their religious understanding.

On the other hand, his message of tolerance also reflects progressive Islamic thinking that seeks to reduce social polarization caused by religious fanaticism. This content builds awareness that religious identity should not be a trigger for dehumanization or hatred, but rather a source of reconciliation and human solidarity. Through this awareness, the message of tolerance that he conveys serves as a public education tool that is relevant to the social situation of Indonesia's multicultural society.

Thus, the messages of religious tolerance in Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar's content not only serve as religious discourse, but also as strategic social communication practices in the digital space. These messages show how digital media can be used to build narratives of peaceful, reflective, and relevant religious diversity in the face of the challenges of contemporary multicultural society.

### ***Moderate and Humanistic Delivery Style as a Digital Da'wah Communication Strategy***

Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar's style of delivery has unique characteristics that distinguish him from traditional methods of delivering narratives on diversity. This uniqueness can be seen in his use of light humor, storytelling, philosophical concepts, and open interfaith dialogue. This approach distinguishes Habib Husein from the conventional narrative delivery pattern of , which tends to be monological and normative, thus creating a non-intimidating discursive space where audiences from various religious backgrounds can comfortably access religious messages. According to Haryanto (2021), a humanistic style of communication in preaching explains that religious messages are

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<sup>23</sup> Küng, H. (2012). *An ethic of global responsibility*. New York: Continuum.

more easily accepted when delivered through an empathetic, dialogical, and contextual approach <sup>24</sup>. This moderate style of delivery bridges the gap between the formality of religious teachings and the needs of the digital generation, who tend to prefer light, relevant, and communicative delivery. According to Nugroho (2018), the digital space demands a participatory and fluid communication pattern, because the audience no longer plays a passive role, but rather an active subject in the process of meaning production <sup>25</sup>. Through this approach, Habib Husein not only communicates religious messages but also builds the audience's critical awareness of the dangers of intolerance, extremism, and the misuse of religion in socio-political conflicts.

In addition, the emphasis on human values as the basis for religious interaction shows a da'wah orientation centered on social ethics. According to Rofiq (2018), a religious approach that places human values as the starting point will be more relevant in a pluralistic society because it is able to accommodate differences without sacrificing the basic principles of faith <sup>26</sup>. Habib Husein's style of delivery thus functions as a medium of symbolic reconciliation, bringing together religious identity with universal values such as justice, empathy, and respect for human dignity. From the perspective of da'wah communication theory, this method of delivery demonstrates the application of a persuasive humanistic approach, which is a model of religious communication that encourages attitude change through understanding, not coercion. This is reflected in the way he responds to sensitive issues with reassuring explanations, avoids confrontational rhetoric, and places human values as the main foundation for interaction.

Thus, the moderate and humanistic style of communication employed by Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar can be understood as an effective and contextual digital da'wah communication strategy. This strategy not only strengthens the reach of messages of tolerance, but also shows that digital space has great potential as an inclusive, reflective medium for da'wah that is oriented towards the formation of peaceful social awareness in a pluralistic society.

### *Academic Development*

The discussion of the results of this study contributes significantly to the development of scholarship in the study of religions, particularly in the themes of religious moderation, digital da'wah communication, and discourse on diversity. Using a narrative hermeneutic approach and digital discourse analysis, this study shows that religious messages can

<sup>24</sup> Haryanto. (2021). Dakwah moderat di media sosial: Strategi komunikasi ulama dalam menyebarkan nilai toleransi. *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam*, 11(2), 145–162.

<sup>25</sup> Nugroho, Y. (2018). *Membaca ruang publik digital di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance (CIPG).

<sup>26</sup> Rofiq, A. (2018). *Hukum Islam di Indonesia*. Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada.

undergo transformations in form and meaning when practiced in the digital space. This reinforces the theory that religion in the digital age no longer exists statically, but is reproduced through social interaction, algorithms, and digital culture. The findings of this study reinforce the view in the sociology of religion and media studies that religion in the digital age is undergoing a process of transformation in form, medium, and authority. Religious messages are no longer monopolized by formal institutions or conventional religious authorities, but are reproduced through digital networks involving actors, audiences, platform algorithms, and online communication culture. Thus, religion exists as a social reality that continues to be shaped through communication practices, symbolic representations, and the collective experiences of audiences. This confirms the theory of digital religion, which views digital space as a new arena for the articulation of identity and religious practices. In the context of religious moderation, this research makes an important contribution by showing that the values of tolerance and diversity can be effectively constructed through dialogical, humanistic, and contextual communication strategies. Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar's style of delivery shows that religious moderation is not only present as a normative policy concept, but also as a communication practice that is alive and relevant to the reality of a pluralistic society. In other words, religious moderation in the digital space is not merely conveyed, but practiced through open, empathetic, and reflective interactions.

In addition, this study enriches the study of digital da'wah communication by emphasizing that social media functions as a two-way communication space that enables active audience participation. The audience is not only the recipient of messages, but also acts as interpreters, critics, and even co-producers of religious meaning. Interactions in comment sections, online discussions, and audience responses to da'wah content are an integral part of the process of shaping religious discourse. These findings reinforce the paradigm of democratic religious communication, in which religious meaning is constructed through dialogue rather than through one-way transmission.

This study contributes to the development of discourse studies on diversity by showing that narratives of tolerance in the digital space have the potential to shape a healthy ecosystem for religious dialogue. This ecosystem is characterized by the opening of spaces for discussion across identities, a reduction in confrontational rhetoric, and an increased awareness of the importance of coexistence in a pluralistic society. Thus, digital spaces are not merely understood as a source of polarization and conflict, but also as a strategic medium for building a culture of tolerance and social solidarity.

Thus, the scientific development resulting from this research confirms that religious studies in the digital age need to integrate an interdisciplinary approach that combines perspectives from theology, communication, sociology, and media studies. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of contemporary

religiosity, while also opening up space for the development of religious theories and practices that are more inclusive, adaptive, and relevant to the challenges of a pluralistic society in the digital age.

### ***Social Media and Podcasts as New Spaces for Producing Narratives of Tolerance***

Social media and podcasts are not only tools for conveying messages, but have also become new public spaces where contemporary religious discourse is born. Through YouTube and Instagram, Habib Husein utilizes digital algorithms to reach a wide audience across different ages and religions. According to Nasrullah (2017), social media algorithms play an important role in expanding the reach of messages and shaping patterns of public information consumption<sup>27</sup>. Thus, messages of tolerance are not only circulated within certain religious communities, but also reach groups of people who were previously less exposed to moderate religious discourse. Digital media also provides unlimited access flexibility in terms of space and time, allowing audiences to consume religious messages according to their personal needs and preferences. According to Campbell (2020), religious practices in the digital era are characterized by networked religion, which is a combination of individual experiences and social connections in online networks<sup>28</sup>. In this context, messages of tolerance are not only consumed personally, but also discussed and reproduced in virtual communities that shape collective awareness of the importance of coexisting in diversity.

In podcasts, Habib Husein can speak more deeply, reflectively, and personally about complex religious issues. The audio format provides a stronger emotional connection between the communicator and the audience, because listeners feel as if they are being invited to engage in direct dialogue. In the podcast, Habib Husein can discuss religious issues in a more in-depth, reflective, and argumentative manner, without the time constraints of short social media content. This approach allows for a more comprehensive exploration of themes such as tolerance, religious moderation, and interfaith dialogue. Through this medium, messages of tolerance, religious moderation, and the importance of interfaith dialogue can be explored with an argumentative depth that is not limited to the short duration of Instagram.

The participatory nature of social media also allows messages of tolerance to be constructed collectively. Comment sections become spaces for public evaluation, social discussion, and a means for the public to express their views on religious diversity. According to Habermas (2018), a healthy public sphere is characterized by citizen

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<sup>27</sup> Nasrullah, R. (2017). *Media Sosial: Perspektif Komunikasi, Budaya, dan Sosioteknologi*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.

<sup>28</sup> Campbell, H. A. (2020). *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*. New York: Routledge.

participation in rational and open discourse<sup>29</sup>. In the context of digital space, audience interaction with Habib Husein's content shows that messages of tolerance are not received passively, but are constructed through dialogue and shared reflection. Habib Husein utilizes this space not only to spread messages, but also to monitor how the public interprets the messages of tolerance he communicates.

Thus, social media and podcasts serve as spaces for conveying narratives of digital diversity that demonstrate a new evolution in religious communication practices. Both have become arenas for the production of knowledge and dialogue that can shape public awareness of the importance of coexisting in diversity. These findings confirm that Habib Husein's use of social media and podcasts not only serves as a means of conveying messages, but also as an arena for the production of knowledge and the formation of public awareness regarding the importance of tolerance and coexistence in a pluralistic society.

### ***Audience Response and Its Impact on Religious Tolerance Awareness***

The audience's response to Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar's content on tolerance shows positive acceptance and indicates that the message conveyed successfully touched on the spiritual and social needs of the community. Many comments expressed appreciation for the gentle, argumentative, and hate speech-free style of delivery. Most of the audience acknowledged that Habib Husein's content provided a new perspective on tolerance and interfaith relations. This positive response shows that humanistic narratives of digital diversity are more easily accepted by young people living amid the global flow of information. They tend to reject narratives that are harsh, exclusive, or intimidating. Habib Husein's message of tolerance provides an alternative religious discourse that is more compatible with democratic values, humanity, and the need for harmonious living in a pluralistic society.

In addition, a number of comments indicate that the content was able to change the views of some audiences who previously had negative stereotypes about other religions. This shows that the presentation of narratives of diversity and tolerance has a significant educational function in reducing social prejudice. These responses also indicate that digital media can be an effective means of social transformation when used ethically and responsibly. According to Allport (1954), social prejudice can be reduced through positive symbolic interactions and the delivery of information that emphasizes common human values<sup>30</sup>. In the context of digital media, these interactions do not always occur directly, but are mediated through narratives, representations, and reflective online dialogues.

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<sup>29</sup> Habermas, J. (2018). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

<sup>30</sup> Allport, G. W. (1954). *The Nature of Prejudice*. Cambridge: Addison-Wesley.

Through audience response analysis, it can be concluded that Habib Husein's message of tolerance does not only stop at the level of discourse, but contributes directly to the formation of more inclusive social behavior. In other words, the delivery of digital diversity narratives has become an important part of public education on the values of peace and religious diversity.

## CONCLUSION

The development of digital space as a new arena for religious communication has opened up opportunities for the emergence of forms of religious authority that are more dialogical, open, and adaptive to the plurality of Indonesian society. The phenomenon of Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar's digital preaching shows that the production of humanistic and inclusive religious discourse can act as a counterbalance to the rampant narratives of intolerance that often develop on social media platforms. Without repeating previous discussions, the logical consequence that can be drawn from the findings of this study is that social media is now not just a medium for spreading messages, but an integral part of the construction of religious thought and behavior. Thus, efforts to strengthen tolerance can no longer rely solely on structural or institutional approaches, but require communicative strategies that are relevant to the character of digital culture.

Theoretically, this study emphasizes the need to develop a religious studies framework that is more responsive to the dynamics of new media. Studies on tolerance and interfaith relations must not only focus on normative discourse, but also on the practices of knowledge produced through digital interactions. Meanwhile, in practical terms, the results of this study imply that religious actors need to consider digital literacy competencies, humanistic approaches, and an understanding of interfaith audiences as important elements in the design of contemporary diversity narratives. With this approach, digital space can become a vehicle for public education that strengthens religious moderation and expands social peace networks.

Ultimately, this study leaves room for further research. There are still many aspects of digital da'wah that have not been discussed in depth, such as algorithm analysis in the dissemination of religious discourse, comparisons of communication styles between digital religious figures, and the long-term influence of consuming tolerant content on people's attitudes toward diversity. In addition, the emergence of new platforms and developments in digital interaction patterns open up the possibility of more complex forms of diversity narratives. These areas of analysis can be an important foundation for future researchers who wish to enrich the scientific knowledge of the relationship between religion and digital media in the Indonesian and global contexts.

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# RELIGI

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