

## Pious yet Trendy Young Muslim: 'The Bros Team' and Public Qur'an in Indonesia

*Pemuda Muslim yang Saleh tapi Gaul: 'The Bros Team' dan Al-Qur'an di Ruang Publik Indonesia*

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### Abstract

This article discusses the intersection of Quranic reciting practices and pop culture through the emergence of The Bros team, which is popular among modern Indonesian young Muslims. Since the fall of the New Order dictatorship, the Qur'an's recitation has become more public, shaping the Islamic soundscape in Indonesia's online-offline public spaces. As a group of Qur'an reciters representing pious Muslim youth in Indonesia, The Bros team's popularity among Indonesian youth demonstrates how young people manage their identity as part of global pop culture while being rooted to Islamic orthodoxy. This group uploads murattal content of Quranic recitations on social media such as YouTube and Instagram. Those contents highlights how they appear to recite the Qur'an by incorporating parts of pop culture trend that are familiar to young people. Pertaining to this facts, this research contends that mediated Quranic practice via social media platforms shapes particular implications and treatments of the Qur'an and performers. Through online and offline field research, this study investigates how the popularity of The Bros team articulates the religious development of young Muslims in relation to the practice of public Qur'an recitation as a form of negotiating identity for devout Muslim Youths in Indonesia.

Keywords: Muslim Youth; Quranic recitation; Public Qur'an; Social Media

### Abstrak:

Artikel ini membahas persinggungan antara praktik resitasi Alquran dan budaya pop melalui kemunculan The Bros team yang populer di kalangan pemuda muslim Indonesia modern. Sejak runtuhnya Orde Baru, bacaan Al-Qur'an menjadi lebih bergema dan membentuk soundscape Islami di ruang publik online-offline Indonesia. Sebagai sekelompok qari sekaligus penghafal Al-Qur'an yang mewakili pemuda Muslim saleh di Indonesia, popularitas The Bros team di kalangan anak muda Indonesia menunjukkan bagaimana anak muda menegosiasikan identitas mereka sebagai bagian dari budaya pop global sambil mengakar pada ortodoksi Islam. Grup ini mengunggah konten-konten murattal bacaan Alquran di media sosial seperti YouTube dan Instagram. Konten-konten tersebut menyoroti bagaimana mereka tampil mengaji dengan mengakomodasi gaya tren budaya pop yang akrab di kalangan anak muda. Berkaitan dengan fakta tersebut, penelitian ini berpendapat bahwa praktik Alquran yang dimediasi melalui platform media sosial membentuk implikasi dan perlakuan khusus terhadap Alquran beserta qari'-nya. Melalui riset lapangan online dan offline, studi ini menyelidiki bagaimana popularitas The Bros Team mengartikulasikan realitas perkembangan religiusitas anak muda Muslim terkait dengan praktik resitasi Al-Qur'an di ruang public sebagai bentuk negosiasi identitas Pemuda Muslim Saleh di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Pemuda Muslim; Resitasi Al-Qur'an; Qur'an Publik; Media Sosial



## Introduction

This article addresses particular segment of Muslim community in Indonesia called the Bros Team. It is a group of Indonesian young Muslims specialized in reciting and memorizing the whole text of Qur'an. This group are very popular among current young Muslim in Indonesia by popularizing their reciting the Qur'an videos via YouTube. Their popularity has brought their religious authority being officially young Imam *shalah* (Islamic prayer) of several grand mosques in Jakarta and West Java as well as new young preacher among Indonesian Islamic religious landscape particularly for Islamic youngsters. Moreover, there are many invitation coming from several great public mosques and Islamic organizations across the country to the group members either for being Imam prayer or giving Islamic preaching.

However, as the religious figures who are promoting traditional practice of Islam, i.e. reciting Qur'an, the Bros Team emergence seems to articulate a new type of popular religious preacher in Indonesia. In contrast to the existing popular preachers from the older generation such as AA Gym, Yusuf Mansur or Arifin Ilham who regularly appear in Islamic clothing, the Bros Team's performance demonstrates a trendy appearances referred to western pop culture. They wear casual attires including T-shirt, jeans, cap, jacket, and even sunglasses instead of *busana muslim* (the Muslim clothes) either when reciting the Qur'an in public places or leading a prayer in mosque. In other words, the group substantially propose traditional Islamic piety but package the message in a modern way.

As the largest Muslim-majority country in the world, Indonesia experience modernization without having secularization. Intersection between globalization and Islam in Indonesia has produced Islamization in popular culture whereby Islamic symbol becoming more visible in Indonesian public spheres.<sup>1</sup> Particularly after the fall of New Order regime, public Islam seems to be main characterize of Indonesian Muslim culture and political landscapes.<sup>2</sup> For instance, most of Indonesian Muslim community are recently eager to perform Islamic devotional acts in public everyday life such as donning hijab in public spaces, consuming *halal* (Arabic term means permissible by Islamic law) commodities, conducting *da'wa* via social media and even fashion industry have simultaneously created modern, trendy and fashionable Muslim attires. In bringing modernity and religiosity together, Indonesian Muslim apparently aspire to redefine their identity as Muslim as well as modern societies. Tending to be young, urban and middle-class apparently sign the formation of new

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1 Ariel Heryanto, *Identity and Pleasure: The Politics of Indonesian Screen Culture* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2014).

2 Robert W. Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

cluster of modern Islam in Indonesia. As the result, this situation has changed the face of Islam in Indonesian public spheres (Hasan 2013).<sup>3</sup>

The popularity of the Bros Team has been regarded as emerging phenomena of Islamic popular culture in particular among current Indonesian Muslim youth. This article considers that the existence of this group is in line with popular celebrities that have strong influence and become codes of youth sociability. In addition, their engagement with Quranic tradition which is a fundamental symbol of Islam implies struggle of urban middle-class young Muslim redefining their identity as devout Muslim.

To date, however, the attention of scholars toward intersection of pop culture with the public Qur'an recitation is still very little, especially involving young people as a key actors. Previous studies has interpreted public Islam only from the side of middle class society in general, while the specific study on Muslim youth mostly has been analyzed in the discussions of religious radicalism and Islamic revivalism. Hence, this study is expected to fill the gap of academic discussion regarding cultural identity and religious experience of Indonesian Muslim youth. By gathering data of audience response toward the Bros Team's You Tube video and their sociability among Indonesian young Muslims, this article focuses on finding the social reasons that bringing the Bros Team popularity among their peer Muslim community in Indonesia. This article argues that the Bros Team emergence represent the modern feature which is contemporary Indonesian Muslim youth want to adopt while maintain traditional religious practices particularly reciting the Qur'an.

The article begins with a discussion of public Qur'an phenomena among Indonesian Muslims as an overview to draw the development of Quranic performance in Indonesian public spheres. It follows with analysis of what the Bros team has been done and what message that they intend to deliver to young Muslim. The last section focuses on audience interpretation upon their Quranic performance and agency impact on the Muslim youth imagination of Islamic devotion framing how they should be as young modern Muslim.

## Popular Public Quran in Indonesia

Globalization has contributed to popularizing Islam among Muslim community

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3 Noorhaidi Hasan, *The Making of Public Islam Piety, Democracy and Youth in Indonesian Politics* (Yogyakarta: Sukapress, 2013).

in Indonesia. Sermon-filled soap operas, Islamic pop songs,<sup>4</sup> fashion hijab industries,<sup>5</sup> Muslim-teen magazines, consuming halal commodities<sup>6</sup> and disseminating Islamic *da'wah* on social media<sup>7</sup> saturated the mediascape of current Indonesian Muslim world. Ideas, images and meanings about Islam abound in contemporary popular culture forms including movies, music, television, radio, magazine, fashion, and cyber-culture. This is mass-produced, mass-mediated, globalized and cosmopolitan, and more consumed by social urban community than rural. Thus, Islam and popular culture are interwoven into the fabric of everyday life of Muslims in Indonesia. Islam has been no longer understood as theological doctrine or traditional ritual. It has become social lifestyle which serves an important identity marker as much as a sign of social status and refer to the middle classes Muslims in urban and industrialized setting as majority consumer as well as producer of popular Islamic culture.<sup>8</sup>

Since 1990 many observers have examined the multidimensional confluence of Islamic religiosity and the pop culture industry as part of an integral process of Islamization Indonesian public spheres.<sup>9</sup> Mass-mediated forms of communication deeply situated in people's everyday lives shapes the way that Muslim think about what constitutes a Muslim life in modern age. Particularly for young Muslim who are in the period to adulthood, they may be challenged by the Global modern culture which is identical with non-religious Western culture and contrary to some aspects

4 See Bart Barendregt, "Pop, Politics and Piety: Nasyid Boy Band Music in Muslim Southeast Asia," in *Islam and Popular Culture in Indonesia and Malaysia*, ed. Andrew N. Weintraub (New York: Routledge, 2011).

5 Carla Jones, "Fashion and Faith in Urban Indonesia," *Fashion Theory* 11, no. 2–3 (June 1, 2007): 211–231; Claudia Nef-Saluz, *Islamic Pop Culture in Indonesia: An Anthropological Field Study on Veiling Practices among Students of Gadjah Mada University of Yogyakarta* (Bern: Institute für Sozialanthropologie, Universität Bern, 2007), accessed April 7, 2023, <https://cir.nii.ac.jp/crid/1130000796431934720>; Nancy J. Smith-Hefner, "Javanese Women and the Veil in Post-Soeharto Indonesia," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 66, no. 2 (May 2007): 389–420. Universität Bern, 2007

6 Carla Jones, "Materializing Piety: Gendered Anxieties about Faithful Consumption in Contemporary Urban Indonesia," *American Ethnologist* 37, no. 4 (2010): 617–637; Ronald Lukens-Bull, "Commodification of Religion and the 'Religification' of Commodities: Youth Culture and Religious Identity," in *Religious Commodifications in Asia: Marketing Gods*, ed. Pattana Kitiarsa (London: Routledge, 2007), 220; Leonie Schmidt, "Urban Islamic Spectacles: Transforming the Space of the Shopping Mall during Ramadan in Indonesia," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 13, no. 3 (September 1, 2012): 384–407.

7 Eva F. Nisa, "Social Media and the Birth of an Islamic Social Movement: ODOJ (One Day One Juz) in Contemporary Indonesia," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 46, no. 134 (January 2, 2018): 24–43; Eva F. Nisa, "Creative and Lucrative *Da'wa*: The Visual Culture of Instagram amongst Female Muslim Youth in Indonesia," *Asiascape: Digital Asia* 5, no. 1–2 (February 14, 2018): 68–99.

8 Hasan, *The Making of Public Islam Piety, Democracy and Youth in Indonesian Politics*, 143; Heryanto, *Identity and Pleasure*, 24.

9 Greg Fealy and Sally White, "Introduction," in *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia*, ed. Greg Fealy and Sally White (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008), 1–12; Andrew N. Weintraub, ed., *Islam and Popular Culture in Indonesia and Malaysia* (New York: Routledge, 2011); Ariel Heryanto, ed., *Popular Culture in Indonesia: Fluid Identities in Post-Authoritarian Politics* (London: Routledge, 2008).

of their religious teachings. In this regard, observers have scrutinized increasing awareness of expressing Islamic symbols in daily life as mentioned above due to negotiate their Islamic identity as modern Muslim society.

One of emerging phenomena is popularizing reciting Qur'an tradition amid young Muslims. Over the last decades has been witnessed a sweeping trend of this traditional Islamic practice in Indonesia. Large number of *Rumah Tahfizh* (house of memorizing) is widespread throughout Indonesia. It is particular institution of an unformal education focused on memorizing the Qur'an. This institution was named by "*Rumah Tahfizh*" as the learning process of memorizing the Qur'an takes place in a particular house attached to public mosque. Initially, this program was founded by Yusuf Mansur, a popular Muslim preacher among Indonesian middleclass Muslims, in 2003 namely PPPA Darul Qur'an (*program pembibitan penghafal al-Qur'an Darul Qur'an* or the program of generating Qur'an memorizer of *Darul Qur'an*) but officially launched by 2007 in Jakarta. Nowadays PPPA *Darul Qur'an* has thousands branches of *Rumah Tahfizh* across the country. It is far different from *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school), the traditional institution of Islamic education that has long been existed in Indonesia for learning Islamic teaching including memorizing the Qur'an. *Rumah Tahfizh* is more structurally organized in which one branch mutually interconnected to the others. In addition, the implementation program at *Rumah Tahfizh* is funded by entrepreneurs and financial profit of business units managed by PPPA *Darul Qur'an*. This trend has been followed by learning Qur'an recitation program held by numbers of public school in Indonesia. It ranges from kindergarten, elementary school, secondary school to undergraduate school at universities. In fact, some schools promote the program of memorizing the Qur'an as their flagship program with ensuring the completion of memorization within a certain time. The public seems to see that modernity with all the sophistication of the communications and information technology has led to moral degradation in society. Even the complexity of social problems such as corruption, poverty and moral degradation that occurs in the community due to people already abandoned the religious teachings contained in the Qur'an. Therefore, it is necessary to bring them back to the Qur'an particularly the young Muslim as the next generation of nation.

The spirit of return to the Qur'an proposes Islam as an alternative solution for all problems faced by Muslims. this leads to their rejection of other ideologies, especially those they perceive as anti-Islam and threaten Muslims, such as liberalism, communism, and even westerns. According to Rifki Rosyad, frustration and dissatisfaction over the established social and political system which oppressed Islamic ideas constitute underlying points of the emergence of various Islamic revival



movements among young Indonesian Muslims.<sup>10</sup> Islamist activists often considerably position themselves as victims by corrupt leaders and poor social systems. In addition, they believed that Western Culture dominance which disseminated through mass media, including print media, electronic and internet, has become a toxin for Muslims, especially young Muslim generation. Common trend among young people who often refers to Western culture regard has created a permissive and valueless society results in moral decadence. Therefore, they consider that the only solution to overcome the youth moral degrade is to awaken Muslim consciousness to the Quranic tradition as basically source of Islamic teaching.

In the 1990s, last decades of New Order administration, Indonesian Muslims experienced cultural Islamization, or also known as period of *santrinisasi* ('Santrinization' that is being more pious)<sup>11</sup> through religious festival of reciting the Qur'an. Government held annually program of MTQ (abbreviation of *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an* or Competition of reciting the Qur'an) starting from district level, provincial level, national level even delegating national winner to participate in MTQ at international level. This glorification of the Qur'an resulted in the growing enthusiasm of Indonesian Muslim community pursued the improvement of vocal reading of the Qur'an. As basically MTQ applied *Mujawwad* style<sup>12</sup> for reciting the Qur'an, the perfection of MTQ champion in reciting the Qur'an became the main standard for learning process even more as standard of Islamic piety. The process of enhanced Qur'an reciting skills was not limited to young people in Indonesian 1990s but also included mature Muslims. They were trained on the development of chanting skills face-to-face in mosques, neighbourhood, *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) even through listening cassette media taped record containing Quranic cantillation

10 Rifki Rosyad, *A Quest for True Islam: A Study of the Islamic Resurgence Movement among the Youth in Bandung, Indonesia* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2007), 17

11 Further discussion on 'santrinization' in Indonesia could be seen in Hefner, *Civil Islam*; Merle Calvin Ricklefs, *Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java: A Political, Social, Cultural and Religious History, C. 1930 to Present* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012).

12 In general, there are two normative artistic styles of reciting the Qur'an namely *mujawwad* and *murattal*. Each of them has different characters and vocal qualities as well as proposes different goals and contexts. The typically sound of *Murattal* is relaxing, moderated and calm. It constitutes an effective voice medium for communicating messages of text to its listeners. Indeed, the main intention of *murattal* is presenting the text accurately and clearly. Therefore, this kind of reciting style is generally used in the context of pedagogy and devotional practice such as prayer, reciting the Qur'an for self and calling the recited text from memory. On the contrary, *mujawwad* produces a more melodic and dramatic sound. Besides, it highly emphasizes the artistic orientation of recited Quranic texts. The main purpose of presenting this reciting model is to create an emotional and religious effect on the audience. The listeners will spontaneously experience feelings of emotion, crying, admiration and other emotional expressions. *Mujawwad* is a musical presentation of the Qur'an that involves the emotion and artistic value of the beauty of the melody. In contrast to the *murattal* which is identical to the private domain, *mujawwad* is more affiliated with public performances which involves the main role of forum and crowd. Kristina Nelson, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 105–116.

of prominent reciter. Gade suggested that the widespread phenomena of Quranic learning and engagement constituting the escalating aspect of Indonesian Quranic piety in which religious piety could be identified from personal capabilities in chanting the Qur'an.<sup>13</sup> In addition to this inevitably Quranic movement phenomena, New Order government also incorporated BKPRMI (abbreviation of *Badan Komunikasi Pemuda Remaja Masjid Indonesia* or Communication Board of Indonesian Mosque Youth) with the establishment of Quranic kindergarten in various villages throughout Indonesia. In Porter's point of view, those phenomenon constituting as political strategy of Soeharto government corporation to maintain his power.<sup>14</sup> Although facilitating the cultural Islam, he strongly restrict any Islamic political activism as considered could be threaten political stability of the New Order government. This is also confirmed by Anna Gade as a religious community development strategy.<sup>15</sup>

However, the author argues that current emerging movement of Quranic revitalization constitutes different agenda from the previous. It is more popularizing and engaging with modern pop culture and Muslim youth among middle-class urban society. Moreover, recent studies indicate that regardless the intersection between traditional practice of reciting the Qur'an and modern popular culture, popular practice of reciting Qur'an among contemporary Indonesian Muslims has associated with the growing influence of Islamic revival in terms of transnational broader context.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the advancement of information and communication technology constituting a new medium for Islamic political constellation and negotiation religious identities.<sup>17</sup> Thus, underlying on this ground phenomena, the author proposes the emerging popularity of the Bros Team among Muslim youth in contemporary Indonesia. It is a particular segmented Indonesian young Muslim who are mastering in both of reciting and memorizing the whole text of Qur'an. Taking consideration of the group popularity as young reciter as well claimed as

13 Anna M. Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice: Learning, Emotion, and the Recited Quran in Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 3.

14 Donald J. Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), 83.

15 Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice*, 38.

16 see Puji Hariyanti, "Generasi Muda Muslim Dan Gerakan Sosial Spiritual Berbasis Media Online," *Jurnal ILMU KOMUNIKASI* 13, no. 2 (2016): 165–178; Acep Muslim, "Digital Religion and Religious Life in Southeast Asia: The One Day One Juz (Odoj) Community in Indonesia," *Asiascape: Digital Asia* 4, no. 1–2 (February 23, 2017): 33–51; Nisa, "Social Media and the Birth of an Islamic Social Movement"; Fatimah Husein and Martin Slama, "Online Piety and Its Discontent: Revisiting Islamic Anxieties on Indonesian Social Media," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 46, no. 134 (January 2, 2018): 80–93; Kholila Mukaromah and Ulfah Rahmawati, "THE INFLUENCE OF THE ONE DAY ONE JUZ (ODOJ) MOVEMENT ON THE TRADITION OF RECITING QUR'AN," *QJIS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)* 3, no. 2 (August 1, 2015): 148–167.

17 Mia Lovheim, "Identity," in *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*, ed. Heidi A. Campbell (London-New York: Routledge, 2013), 41–56.

young Imam prayer in particular grand Mosques, the author observes the emerging phenomena as part of Qur'an movement fronted by young Muslims as the key actor. Particularly, this study emphasizes how their popularity contributes to shaping the Islamic religious landscape of young Muslims in terms of negotiating their identity and adopting global cultural trends of youths.

### **The Bros Team: Popularizing the Qur'an and Rising New Religious Authority**

The Bros Team recently is being the rising stars among Indonesian young Muslims. It is a group of Indonesian young Muslims specializing in reciting the Qur'an and indeed memorizing the whole Qur'an. The group comprise of three young men who memorize the whole text of the Qur'an and recite it melodiously in *Murattal* (moderate version of recitation) style. They are Muzammil Hasballah, Ibrahim el-Haq and Taqy Malik. They seems to be introduced and popularized to solve the decreasing moral behaviour of modern Muslim youth in current Indonesia, particularly lack of they attention to recite the holy Qur'an. Presumably, in this modern era, Al-Qur'an is being bizarre in the tongue and ear of Indonesian young modern thus most of them are challenged by moral decadency. Therefore, by popularizing Quranic recitation through social media, this group is assumed intend to promote particular type of Muslim youth culture as solution of cultural and social problem faced by current Indonesian young Muslim.

The Bros Team substantially convey Islamic fundamental values. However, they creatively managed to attract the attention of young Indonesian Muslims by disseminating traditional religious messages within popular modern culture forms which are non-religious cultures. This includes the visual appearance in their video recording when reading the Qur'an, lifestyle, hobbies, and daily social activities that they show through social media. Instead of showing the appearance of pious Muslim youths wearing religious Muslim clothes, they shape their identity through the trendy clothing style typical of a metropolis youth. They wear funky and trendy fashion like jeans, tumbler tee, scarf, headband, sunglasses, jacket and other type of latest popular styles when recite the Qur'an and as their daily fashion style. Similarly, their leisure activities are more identical with street punk teenagers who apparently portray non-Islamic images. for instance, they do modern sport like skating, parkour, mountain climbing, traveling abroad, and even also conducting luxury motorbike club community. In contrast to Muslims who commonly recite the Qur'an in quite worship places, such as mosques or private rooms, they chant the Qur'an in the midst of crowded public places. They are reciting the Qur'an while driving a car, walking



on streets, relaxing in a park and other public situation. In addition, most of all their reciting videos which shared on YouTube are taken place in public attraction. They recite the Qur'an in a public park, on a crowded street, at the edge of a beach, at a bridge, on a yard, even popular tourist attraction in overseas such as Marina Bay of Singapore, Twin tower of Malaysia, Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia in Turkey and soon. Those videos display the Bros team members reciting the Qur'an within the leisure and funky-casual appearance. It is apparently that the group are deliberately articulating how people should engage with the Qur'an in daily life. Indeed, reciting the Qur'an can be done under any circumstances. Therefore, Muslim should not excuse from reciting the Qur'an.

By taking consideration of the medium used to share the recited Qur'an by Bros Team members, cutting-edge internet social media has contributed to the rise of their popularity among Indonesian Muslim youth. YouTube and Instagram are the most popular internet platform used by current Indonesian young people. A survey in 2017 showed that YouTube is a social media platform with the largest users in Indonesia, reaching 43% and then followed by Instagram which reached 38% of about 143 million internet users in Indonesia.<sup>18</sup> In addition, the group also have support and promote by Ammar TV channel. It is a digital company that actively proselytizing Islam through the medium of the Internet consisting of a website, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Soundcloud. This organization manages the video production of the Bros Team reciting Qur'an as company project of Ammar TV itself. Ammar TV plays a significant role in propagating the Bros Team recited Qur'an videotaped through Ammar TV YouTube channel. This technological advancement was a supporting aspect in order to earn a lot of audience from young Indonesian Muslims who are inevitably digital society.

The advancement of the internet media not only fosters creative economy of middle class society but also to be effective medium to do *da'wa* Islam. This cutting age new media technology provides a new form of religious experience and mediating Islamic movements<sup>19</sup>. It is similarly done by the Bros Team. They do Islamic *da'wa* by popularizing the recited Qur'an toward Indonesian Muslim community in particular among Muslim youngsters through modern approach which is close to the youth

18 "Ini Media Sosial Paling Populer Di Indonesia | Databoks," accessed April 8, 2023, <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2018/02/01/media-sosial-apa-yang-paling-sering-digunakan-masyarakat-indonesia>.

19 Heidi Campbell, *When Religion Meets New Media* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Heidi A. Campbell, "Introduction: The Rise of the Study of Digital Religion," in *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*, ed. Heidi A. Campbell (London-New York: Routledge, 2013); Lorne L. Dawson and Douglas E. Cowan, eds., *Religion Online: Finding Faith on the Internet* (New York - London: Routledge, 2013).

nature. The Bros Team actively constitute as modern youth, but fundamentally different from western youth, because they observe traditional Islamic law in their everyday life. They are deliberately encourage young people to become pious modern young men. Their post on social media tend to give frequent reminders to recite the Qur'an regularly. For instance, every Friday the group members clearly remind their followers via Instagram to recite *al-Kahfi*, particular passage of the Qur'an. The aspect of religious piety is also built up by the popular Islamic languages such as the utterances of *Tasbih* "subhanallah" (holy God Almighty), *tabmid* "Alhamdulillah" (all praises be to God), *Takbir* "Allohu Akbar" (God Almighty) in everyday social conversation. Through live feature of Instagram, they frequently invite young people to recite the Qur'an with them. In fact, they provide a chance to their social media followers for asking them to recite certain verses. By adopting trendy appearance and slang sociability they attempt to demonstrate particular trendy lifestyle of pious young Muslim. However, beside committing Islamic *da'wa* through social media, they also gradually build market for their economic enterprises. Each member of Bros Team has business ranging from in the field of clothing, culinary, digital applications related to the Qur'an. They also endorse various commodities to their media social audience. Borrowing the technical term from Eva Nisa, in case of the Bros team phenomena, the social media's sophistication provides space for young Muslims to engage in creative and lucrative *da'wah*.<sup>20</sup>

The Bros Team popularity as young Muslim whose expertise in reciting and memorize the whole of Qur'an has brought several invitation into various events to deliver religious preaches, specifically the encouragement to return to the Qur'an by reciting the Qur'an regularly in everyday life. They convey Islamic teaching on how to be Quranic generation. This comprises devout young Muslim who closely engage with recited Qur'an tradition. they also encourage young female Muslim to don hijab completed with niqab and Islamic clothes in order to be devout Muslim woman. in an event that presented Muzammil Hasballah, one of the Bros team's member, and his wife as the keynote speakers on how to build a marriage life in accordance with the Qur'an, the author witnessed the majority of the female audiences covering their faces. Some of them wearing piece of solid plain clothes to cover their faces with both eyes left, while others use a mask.<sup>21</sup> That nuance is presumably meant to honour this young married couple as Muzammil's wife is a face-veiled Muslim woman. Those female Muslims looked very enthusiastic to listen to their lectures both while

20 Nisa, "Creative and Lucrative Da' wa."

21 Field observations at a seminar held by the MCAA at the Mujahidin mosque on January 20, 2018 in Yogyakarta. MCAA is abbreviation of Majelis Calon Ayah Amanah (Assembly of trusted father candidates). This organization concern on managing Islamic dating. See more about MCAA on "ayah\_amanah EO

occasionally cheering for seeing the intimacy of the young married couple who is lawful. Apparently, they assumed that the portrait of Muzammil's marriage and his wife is a reflection of the happiness of true love that is blessed by God. They called it as halal relationship. By taking thorough consideration regarding Islamic da'wah movement and marital experience of members of the Bros team, the group evidently against the courtship relationship before marriage by promoting marriage in a young age for avoiding the sin of sexual adultery. Observers indicate this phenomenon as a moral panic that has triggered the Islamist movement in contemporary Indonesia.<sup>22</sup> One of which is promoting young marriage as mentioned above.

In addition, the Bros Team apparently engage with Islamic student organization which regarded to Islamic revival or Islamic resurgence movement in Indonesia. The Bros Team's members frequently involve as invited speaker in various programs either initiated by ROHIS (abbreviation of *Rohani Islam* or Islamic study group addressed to senior high school) or LDK (abbreviation of *Lembaga Dakwah Kampus* or Campus based Islamic *da'wa* movement which is addressed to Muslim students at Universities).<sup>23</sup> Additionally, Muzammil Hasballah, one of the Bros Team's member, constitutes as organizational member of LDK based on Institute Technology Bandung (ITB) in which he pursued his bachelor degree. LDK and ROHIS played significant role in terms of Islamization Campus movement organized by young Islamist activists. This Muslim student movement originated its root from Islamization of campus environment by Imaddudin at ITB in 1970s. Initially he regularly held a special Islamic training called LKD (*Latihan kader Dakwah* or Preaching Cadre Training) for Muslim student universities. The program was based on Salman Mosque, campus based mosque at ITB. The training program was aimed to create a breakthrough in the development of Islam among campus student atmospheres. It formed cadres of Islamic preachers who became pioneers of the development of Islam. Since then, the training activity was becoming embryo of the development of Islamic resurgence movements that flourish throughout the

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(@ayah\_amanah) • Foto dan video Instagram," accessed April 8, 2023, [https://www.instagram.com/ayah\\_amanah/](https://www.instagram.com/ayah_amanah/).

22 Noorhaidi Hasan, "Education, Young Islamists and Integrated Islamic Schools in Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 19, no. 1 (2012): 77–111; Merlyna Lim, "The Internet and Everyday Life in Indonesia: A New Moral Panic?," *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia* 169, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 133–147; Suaidi Asyari and M. Husnul Abid, "Expanding the Indonesian Tarbiyah Movement through Ta'aruf and Marriage," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 54, no. 2 (December 14, 2016): 337–368.

23 Rosyad has conducted fairly comprehensive study on Islamic resurgence movement among young Muslim in Bandung which is an embryo of the proliferation of Islamic revival embedded with Muslim Student organizations. See Rosyad, *A Quest for True Islam*.

general campuses in the country.<sup>24</sup>

### **Modern Image of Piety a midst Indonesian Muslim Youth**

The attraction of Quranic *da'wa* activism by the Bros Team lies in its ability to offer an alternative path for young people to firm their identity in the initial phase of their transition to adulthood. As a particular subclass society who overshadowed by uncertainty future in global capitalism challenge and political Islam nuance, youth are struggling to fashion and negotiate their identity by voicing the interest of global youthfulness and finding alternative form for maintaining their Muslimness. Some of these young generation participate in *da'wa* activities following by committing *hijrah* (move on to better Islamic moral life). They belief that *hijrah* is the one way to save young generation from being swept away by waves of secularization and westernization. In terms of maintaining Muslim youth morality from negative aspect of western culture such as premarital sex, drug abuse, LGBT, and soon, many young people are encouraged to commit *hijrah*.<sup>25</sup> They eagerly participate in Islamic group teaching, donning latest fashion of hijab everywhere, producing and consuming halal commodities even joining Islamic youth movement. The Bros Team emergence stand among these developing social-religious setting of Indonesian young Muslims. The group movement articulates that as modern youth, holding firm to Islamic identity is not necessary meant renouncing identity and position in modern society. Being a good Muslim also could be meant being modern kids, cool, stylish, and in tune with global trends that fashion everyday lives. Young Muslims possibly experience Islam in a fresh and sophisticated way that packaged neatly into popular culture and lifestyle.

Pertaining to this section discussion, the author examines the kind of devotional discourse as a new type of Muslim piety images that is enacted online around these media artifacts. This is notably the online practices of appending written comments to specific content, offering responses to comments left by others, and creating linkage between one social media accounts to other online platform. In other words, this article explores more concerning how Indonesian young Muslim interpreting the emerging popularity of Bros team which is drawn by online activities toward the Bros Team performance on YouTube and their online engagement on social media Instagram. This online observation related to the Bros performances in reciting the Qur'an found the way some of the normative ethics and devotional comportment associated with listening and viewing recited Qur'an videos by the Bros Team members while also engendering novel forms of devotional expression. In this

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>25</sup> Nisa, "Social Media and the Birth of an Islamic Social Movement."

points, the author argues that these devotional repertoires reflect the way Islamic spiritual experience has been accommodated to the architecture of the internet environment, to its specific modes of navigation, linking and retrieval. Within this medium, young Muslim users surfer between one recited Qur'an video and others content performed by the Bros Team members seeking out new possibilities and sources of pious affect. In fact, young Muslim also find the alternative path to navigate their daily life as devout young Muslim through such heterogeneity of audio-visual materials of recited Qur'an by the Bros Team. These devotional online practice significantly shapes the devotional imagination, the sounds and images that mediate one's vertical relationship to the God.

Forms of imagery and vocal performance by the Bros Team that accessed online by Indonesian young Muslims provide devotional experience impact upon them. The most comment types of response left in the comment section of the Bros Team YouTube videos illustrates various supplicatory prayer that indicates the modest pious imagery of young Muslim that they want to be. For example, many written comments left by young Muslim females state they pray could have a pious husband in their marital life typically likes the Bros team members; parents pray they could raise a pious children whose able to recite the Qur'an as beautiful as the Bros team did; and Muslim youngsters generally inspire to be pious like them. There are also various novel emotion expression on how they have religious experience by listening and viewing the recited Qur'an videos. Some written comments left behind the recited Qur'an videos by the Bros Team emotionally express the way they affected to their spirituality. These recitation videos awaken young Muslim awareness of the wrong path that they took as life navigation. The Bros team surprisingly inspire many young Muslim to recite even memorize the Qur'an appropriately as framed by their performance videos on YouTube.

The Bros team frame themselves as young Muslim priest whose embracing devotional religious practise as well as adopting global trend of youth culture. Through their social media Instagram accounts, they frequently encourage young Muslim to recite the Qur'an regularly and embracing devotional life as Muslim young generations while indiscriminately still consuming modern lifestyle. The way they communicate with their online followers and embrace recreational activities demonstrate the youth cultural nature which is most associated to global western youth. Their trendy lifestyle typically close to upper middle class young Muslim in Indonesia. For examples, taking vacation abroad and riding luxurious vehicles that is not affordable social life for majority young people from lower middle class Indonesia. Apparently, the Pam Nilan's theory on global youth hybridity embodies in the Indonesian young middle-



class Muslim realm.<sup>26</sup> Rising enthusiasm of current Indonesian young Muslim in embracing pious yet trendy lifestyle indicates the process of cultural hybridize as inevitable impact of globalization process. Young Muslim admiration toward the popularity of the Bros Team and considering their personalities as ideal type of modern young Muslim in contemporary Indonesia articulates the process of adopting and modifying some cultural aspect of global culture as fulfilling their youthfulness and devotional demand by their Islamic authority. Therefore, the emergence of The Bros Team popularity among young people has been viewed as an alternative solution to their dilemma in terms of what kind of Muslim they should be within the global modern age.

## Conclusion

As we have indicated throughout this article, globalization has many impacts on the culture and religiosity of Indonesian young Muslims. However, they do not indiscriminately embrace it. By selecting some cultural aspects of the global trend culture that can be adapted and accommodated by their Islamic culture. In other word, they attempt to modified the global pop culture in accordance with Islamic law. As a result, non-religious feature of popular cultures has become a significant part of religious activities, and reversely religious practice has embedded in popular lifestyle in everyday life. Pertaining to this identity negotiation process, the Bros Team possibly embodies the modern traits that young Muslims to day want to imitate. Therefore, the emerging popularity of the Bros Team among Indonesian Muslim youths demonstrates how youth experiencing cultural hybridity in the globalization era.

Although this research provides insights into the intersection of Quranic reciting practices and pop culture through The Bros team's emergence, there are still some things that have not been discussed. For instance, the study does not delve into the Bros team's impact on the Indonesian Muslim community's perception of public Quran recitation or the team's influence on the wider Indonesian society. Additionally, the study does not explore how The Bros team's use of social media affects the Quranic recitation's transmission, interpretation, and understanding among young Indonesian Muslims. There is also an opportunity for further research to examine how other Muslim youth groups in Indonesia incorporate pop culture into their Quranic recitation practices and how they negotiate their religious identity through these practices. Moreover, future research could also investigate how the Bros team and other similar groups navigate the tension between modernity and

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26 Pam Nilan and Carles Feixa, eds., *Global Youth?: Hybrid Identities, Plural Worlds* (London: Routledge, 2006).

orthodoxy within the Indonesian Muslim community.

### **Supplementary Materials**

The data presented in this study are available in [insert article or supplementary material here] (Usually the datasets were analyzed from library research can be found in the whole data references ).

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### **Authors' contributions**

Imas Lu'ul Jannah is the sole author of this research article

### **Data availability statement**

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

None of the authors of this study has a financial or personal relationship with other people that could inappropriately influence or bias the content of the study.

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