Religious Sermons by Nursalim, Hidayat, and Basalamah on YouTube/TikTok: Impacts on Bogor Residents' Tolerance Knowledge and Attitudes

Fakhrudin,[1*] M. Yusuf Wibisono,[2] Nase[3]

[1] Universitas Tazkia, Bogor, Indonesia

[2,3] UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Bandung, Indonesia;

* Corresponding Ruthor, Email: fakhrudin@tazkia.ac.id

Abstract: This study examines the impact of Islamic preaching content delivered by K.H. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Gus Baha), Ustadz Adi Hidayat, and Ustadz Khalid Basalamah via YouTube and TikTok on the religious knowledge and tolerance attitudes of the urban Muslim community in Bogor, Indonesia. Employing a sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach, the research integrates quantitative survey data analyzed via multiple regression with qualitative insights gathered from in-depth interviews with local religious figures and community members. The findings reveal that 88.2% of the variance in religious tolerance behavior is attributable to the consumption of digital religious content on these platforms. While TikTok contributes to the rapid dissemination of visualized religious messages, YouTube offers more structured, in-depth religious discourse, both of which reinforce spiritual awareness and interfaith empathy. The study concludes that social media platforms play a transformative role in shaping urban religiosity, functioning as digital spaces for ethical formation, theological education, and inclusive civic identity. Theoretically, this research contributes to the growing discourse on digital religious literacy, demonstrating how algorithm-driven environments mediate new modes of religious engagement. Practically, it provides actionable insights for religious institutions and policymakers to design adaptive and pluralist religious communication strategies in an increasingly mediated society.

Keywords: Adi Hidayat; digital preaching; Gus Baha; TikTok; urban religiosity; YouTube.

1. Introduction

Technological advancements and the development of social media have transformed the way people access and interact with information, including in the field of religion (Zhang, 2025). Social media platforms like TikTok and YouTube have become effective channels for conveying religious messages. These messages can significantly influence people's religious views and attitudes, especially among the younger generation in Indonesia.

Bogor is a city with high religious diversity. In fact, Bogor has been named a tolerant city several times, receiving the Best Tolerance Leadership award at the city level from the Setara Institute. This award was presented at the 2023 Tolerant City Index Launch and Awards event at the Grand Sahid Jaya Hotel, Jakarta, on Tuesday, January 30, 2024. This award is one of three special awards given by the Setara Institute in the Tolerant City Index based on the results of a study conducted in 94 cities in Indonesia over a one-year period in 2023. This makes Bogor's position as a city of religious tolerance an important issue to study and understand more deeply (Bogor, 2024).

This is what became the basis for researchers to conduct research on the attitude of religious tolerance among the people of Bogor City, in relation to social media YouTube and TikTok. Rais Syuriah Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (PBNU) KH Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim, better known as Gus Baha, said the key to tolerance is having sufficient scientific references. Gus Baha conveyed this while

speaking at the Halal bi Halal event of the Indonesian Consulate General in Frankfurt, which was held virtually and attended by all Islamic community organizations in his work area, including the Special Branch of Nahdlatul Ulama (PCINU) Germany, "My thinking is simple: knowledge gives birth to attitudes. If we have sufficient references about tolerance, we will live wherever we live, we will remain tolerant," said Gus Baha as quoted on the official Nahdlatul Ulama website. In the event, which carried the theme Understanding Halal bi Halal in Increasing International and Interfaith Unity, Gus Baha said that having tolerance enables a person to live across countries, religions, and communities (Admin, 2021). What Gus Baha said became the basis for taking him as a study to discuss tolerance, especially since he is a representative of the Nahdlatul Ulama religious organization.

Dr. (HC) Adi Hidayat, Lc., M.A. or commonly called Ustad Adi Hidayat is an Indonesian cleric who served as Deputy Chairman I of the Tabligh Council of the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership for the 2022-2027 period who founded the Quantum Akhyar Institute, a foundation engaged in Islamic studies and da'wah development. Reported from the official Instagram post of Adi Hidayat which is based on a video that went viral on TikTok, a young, broad-minded Da'i, suddenly stopped his sermon when there was a call to prayer from a Tabligh Akbar (Grand Tabligh) event at the Baitul Makmur Mosque in Denpasar, Bali, Ustad Adi Hidayat is seen stopping his sermon after hearing the Puja.Trisandya, a call to worship for Hindus. "Be patient, be patient, take turns. Earlier they listened to us, now it's our turn to listen to them," said the cleric to the congregation attending the Tabligh Akbar event (Deddy, 2023).

Ustad Khalid Basalamah teaches the meaning of Surah Al Kafirun, is the 109th surah in the Quran. This letter, which consists of 7 verses, is included in the Makkiyah letter group. This letter, which contains tolerance of faith and worship, was revealed when the Prophet Muhammad SAW was being lured by the infidels with abundant wealth. The wealth was given with the aim of making the Prophet SAW want to worship idols. The Prophet Muhammad SAW then rejected it subtly. Well, as Muslims, of course it is important to know the meaning contained in the letter Al Kafirun (Uneputty, 2021).

So, what is the meaning of the letter Al Kafirun? Check out the following explanation. The following is the meaning of the letter Al Kafirun delivered by Ustad Dr Khalid Basalamah, Lc MA. "A Quraysh infidel negotiated with the Prophet Muhammad, 'O Muhammad, we want to negotiate.' The Prophet replied: 'Like what?'," said Ustad Khalid Basalamah. Ustad Khalid Basalamah again said, "We divide Mecca into 2. One day for you, one day for us." "The Prophet asked again, 'What do you mean?'", The Quraysh replied, "One day we follow your religion, we congratulate you, everything you teach we follow. But the condition is, tomorrow you follow our teachings," said Ustad Khalid Basalamah again. But in the end, the Prophet still did not want to follow the Quraysh. Ustad Khalid Basalamah also said that the Quraysh continued to try to make negotiations with the Prophet Muhammad. However, with his steadfastness, the Prophet SAW continued to politely reject the offer (Uneputty, 2021).

 Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat, and Khalid Basalamah are among the preachers who actively utilise social media platforms to convey messages of religious tolerance. Their sermons, uploaded to TikTok and YouTube, not only attract widespread public attention but also have the potential to influence public understanding and attitudes toward religious tolerance. However, little research has explored the extent to which the content or messages of religious sermons influence knowledge and attitudes toward religious tolerance conveyed through TikTok and YouTube, particularly among the people of Bogor City.

Social media has undergone significant metamorphosis in the landscape of contemporary Indonesian society. The high rate of internet penetration and social media usage in Indonesia underscores its central role. The latest data from early 2025 indicate that there are 143 million social media users in Indonesia, accounting for 50.2% of the total population. This figure represents an increase of 4.0 million users, or 2.9%, compared to the beginning of 2024 (Admin, 2024a). This phenomenon is not limited to interpersonal interactions but has also fundamentally changed the way businesses operate, the mechanisms for disseminating information, the process of shaping public opinion, and even the methods of organizing social movements.

The exponential increase in social media use in Indonesia is not merely a reflection of technology

adoption, but rather signals a fundamental shift in the structure of communication and patterns of social interaction (Palanisamy, 2025). This phenomenon, on the one hand, leads to the democratization of access to information, with individuals having greater freedom to seek and disseminate information. However, on the other hand, it also has the potential to create a fragmentation of the public sphere, with individuals tending to concentrate in groups with similar views, which can amplify polarization. Data shows a massive increase in social media users, both quantitatively and qualitatively; social media has become the primary medium for various activities. This reliance on digital platforms is changing the way individuals interact (becoming more mediated), access news (with the potential for algorithmic bias and filter bubbles), and participate in public discourse (opening new spaces for marginalized voices, but also increasing the risk of polarization). The broader implication is a reconfiguration in the dynamics of information power, where non-traditional individuals and groups can gain significant influence, while at the same time being vulnerable to manipulation and the spread of disinformation (Jungherr & Schroeder, 2021).

Empirical data shows significant social media penetration and usage in Indonesia, making it one of the largest digital markets in the world. Number of Users and Penetration: As of January 2025, Indonesia had 143 million social media users. This figure is equivalent to 50.2% of the total population of Indonesia. This number shows an increase of 4.0 million users, or around 2.9%, compared to data at the beginning of 2024. At the beginning of 2024, the number of social media users was reported to be 139 million, accounting for 49.9% of the total population. There are also other data from 2024 that indicate a higher number of active users, namely 167 million 19 or even 191 million total users. In line with the high use of social media, internet penetration in Indonesia also continues to increase. By early 2025, there will be 212 million internet users, meaning the internet penetration rate will reach 74.6%.1 This figure is up from 185.3 million users in early 2024 with a penetration rate of 66.5%. The Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) recorded a slightly higher figure, namely 221 million internet users in 2024, with a penetration rate reaching 79.5% (Admin, 2024b).

Demographic data on social media users in Indonesia in early 2025 showed that approximately 46% of users were female, while 54% were male, a slight change compared to the previous year. Social media users are dominated by young adults, particularly those aged 18-34, who account for more than half of the total number of users. Mobile connectivity in Indonesia is also very high, with the number of active connections reaching 356 million, or approximately 125% of the total population, indicating the phenomenon of multi-SIM or dual device ownership. The average time spent by Indonesians on social media is also quite significant, at approximately 3 hours per day, higher than the global average. Platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram are the most widely used, with TikTok and YouTube topping the list in terms of monthly usage duration. In Bogor City, the estimated number of YouTube users is more than 660,000, or approximately 62% of the total population, while TikTok is also quite large, with approximately 56.7% of users aged 18 and above. As an urban center, the city has a more intensive digital potential than the West Java average, given its better telecommunications infrastructure and higher concentration of young residents. With internet penetration reaching over 80%, this estimate is likely conservative, so the potential market reach through these digital platforms is enormous for local businesses and marketers (Admin, 2024b).

The current shift in attitudes toward increasingly tolerant religious sermons is heavily influenced by the rapid flow of information and easy access to social media platforms, such as YouTube and TikTok, which enable the rapid and widespread dissemination of Islamic preaching messages. Short audio-video-based social media not only facilitates interaction and information dissemination, but also presents challenges such as reduced face-to-face interaction and the potential for conflict due to diverse content (Kahfi & Mahmudi, 2024). This digital preaching phenomenon has also brought about an increasingly complex diversity of religious understandings, with various sects such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Persis, and Salafi spreading their teachings through these platforms. Amidst these developments, social media has significantly changed the social and religious landscape of Indonesian society, demanding an adaptive and responsible attitude from the government to regulate freedom of expression to maintain harmony. In this context, this study focuses on analyzing the influence of sermon

content from Ustad Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat, and Khalid Basalamah on YouTube and TikTok on the religious tolerance of the people of Bogor City.

2.   Research Method

The research methodology used in this study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods with a sequential explanatory approach, a mixed research method conducted sequentially. The first stage focuses on the collection and analysis of quantitative data that is measurable and objective, such as numerical data that can be analyzed statistically to describe phenomena descriptively, comparatively, or associatively (Toyon, 2021). This quantitative approach aims to test hypotheses, measure variables, and identify relationships between variables within a measurable context, thereby providing a clear and reliable picture of the research object. In implementing this, researchers formulate specific research questions, select appropriate data collection techniques, such as surveys or experiments, and then conduct relevant statistical analyses to interpret the data in depth. The quality and validity of quantitative data are highly prioritized, ensuring representative sample selection through appropriate sampling techniques and using valid and reliable instruments to ensure the consistency and accuracy of research results (Taherdoost, 2022).

After the quantitative phase is completed, the research continues with a qualitative approach, which serves to deepen, expand, and even retest the previously obtained quantitative data. Qualitative data analysis is inductive, where researchers explore data in depth through interviews, observations, or documentary studies, then develop hypotheses based on these findings. The process of collecting and analyzing qualitative data is carried out iteratively to verify and refine understanding of the phenomena being studied. This approach allows researchers to capture context, meaning, and sociocultural nuances that cannot be captured by quantitative data alone, thus providing a more comprehensive and holistic picture. Thus, this sequential explanatory method combines the strengths of measurable quantitative data with meaningful qualitative data, enabling research results to provide a more valid and in-depth contribution to understanding the phenomena being studied (Matović & Ovesni, 2023).

Sequential explanatory model research process
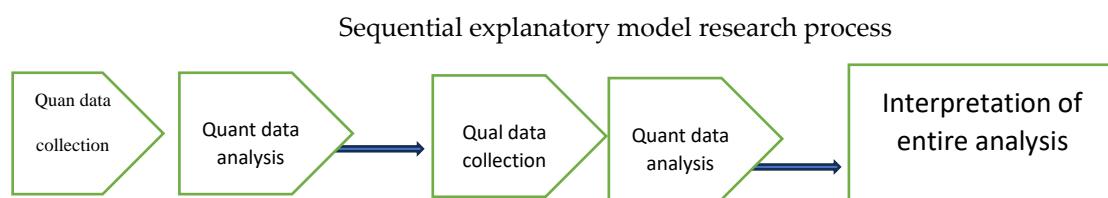
3.   Results and Discussion

3.1   Results of Determination Analysis (R Square)

Determination analysis is a crucial tool in linear regression that aims to assess the extent to which independent variables contribute to explaining the dependent variable (Wooton & Cui, 2022). In the context of this study, the variables TikTok (X1) and YouTube (X2) were tested to determine the extent to which they influence knowledge and attitudes toward religious tolerance (Y). Based on the results of statistical testing, a correlation coefficient (R) value of 0.939 was obtained, indicating a very strong and positive relationship between the two independent variables and the dependent variable. The R value approaching 1 indicates that an increase in the consumption of religious content through TikTok and YouTube is highly correlated with an increase in users' knowledge and attitudes toward religious tolerance.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R Square) of 0.882 indicates that 88.2% of the variation in religious knowledge and attitudes can be explained by the two independent variables simultaneously. This means that the influence of digital platforms like TikTok and YouTube in delivering religious sermons (for example, from figures such as Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat, and Khalid Basalamah) is significant in shaping public religious awareness, especially in the context of tolerance. The remaining 11.8% is contributed by other variables outside the model that were not included in this study.

The adjusted R-squared value of 0.881 strengthens the validity of the model used. This adjustment is necessary to avoid overestimation in models that use more than one independent variable. Because the difference between the R-squared and Adjusted R-squared is very small, this indicates that there are no redundant variables, and the model has been built efficiently without including irrelevant predictors. In terms of prediction accuracy, the Standard Error of the Estimate value of 1.711 indicates a relatively small deviation between the actual and predicted values, indicating that this model is capable of producing fairly accurate estimates. This increases confidence that the regression model has sufficient precision in explaining the phenomenon under study. Finally, the Durbin-Watson test, which yielded a value of 1.792, indicates that there is no autocorrelation in the model residuals. Since this value falls within the ideal range of 1.5 to 2.5, it is safe to assume that the regression model is free from autocorrelation, a common problem in time series analysis or other predictive models.

The results of this analysis confirm that the regression model, which includes TikTok and YouTube as predictors, has very high predictive power for knowledge and attitudes toward religious tolerance. With a contribution of 88.2%, these two social media platforms have proven to be significant channels for shaping a more inclusive and tolerant understanding of religion. These findings are important not only for academics but also for policymakers and education practitioners, particularly in designing digital da'wah and religious education strategies that adapt to the evolving social media landscape.

More specifically, TikTok, despite being widely known as an entertainment platform with short, entertaining content, has been shown to contribute significantly to religious behavior. This can be explained by the proliferation of religious content presented in short videos, such as sermon excerpts, moral messages, and creatively packaged Islamic motivations. Although the duration of content on TikTok is limited, its broad reach and visual appeal allow users to more quickly and easily absorb religious messages (El Sayed & Hotait, 2024). In other words, TikTok has become a means of cultivating non-conventional religious values that can influence religious knowledge and attitudes, particularly in terms of religious tolerance.

Meanwhile, YouTube offers different yet complementary characteristics. This platform provides space for longer-form, more in-depth content, such as regular religious studies, lectures by religious figures, interfaith discussions, and podcasts addressing contemporary religious issues (Budzinski et al., 2021). YouTube provides users with the opportunity to explore religious material more systematically, whether through the personal channels of preachers, Islamic outreach organizations, or formal religious institutions. The depth of material offered makes YouTube a valuable resource for religious learning that not only expands knowledge but also fosters religious tolerance and inclusivity through a more comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings.

In general, these two platforms demonstrate that social media has a significant influence on the development of religious behavior in the digital era. However, the effectiveness of this influence depends heavily on the type of content consumed. Content that is educational, inspirational, and carries high religious value will have a substantial positive impact. Conversely, if users predominantly access content that is sensational, provocative, or morally and spiritually irrelevant, the impact can be neutral or even negative. Therefore, user awareness in selecting and filtering content is key to optimizing the role of social media as a means of da'wah and religious education (Arif et al., 2024).

These findings are further supported by qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews with several religious and community leaders from Bogor City. The interviews were unstructured but focused on ten key categories related to perceptions of interfaith harmony, the dynamics of tolerance, and the role of digital media in disseminating religious values. The results of this qualitative approach complement the previously presented quantitative data and emphasize that social media's role extends beyond information dissemination to a transformative role in shaping religious awareness and attitudes.

Thus, the use of TikTok and YouTube has significantly contributed to strengthening religious preaching practices, particularly in terms of knowledge and tolerance among religious communities. Moving forward, synergy between users, content creators, and religious institutions is essential to ensure these digital platforms continue to be optimally utilized as educational and transformative media in building a religious and tolerant society (Safaqa, 2024).

Table 1. Social media variables tiktok and youtube content tolerance
Ust Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat and Khalid Basalamah

No	Category	Qualitative data
1	How to access social media accounts TikTok and YouTube, tolerance content of Ustaz Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat and Khalid Basalamah	Respondents explained that they accessed content from Ustaz Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat, and Khalid Basalamah by searching for religious sermons on their respective official accounts in the search menu.
2	Interesting things in tolerance content from social media TikTok and YouTube for religious lectures in Bogor City	Respondents said that the three preachers or preachers delivered religious lectures and lectures about tolerance without belittling other religions and without being patronizing, sometimes even interspersed with jokes.
3	The tolerance content of Ustaz Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat and Khalid Basalamah is related to religious lectures in Bogor City.	Respondents who explained that tolerance content on TikTok and YouTube was not directly related to religious diversity in Bogor City, but rather to tolerance in general.
4	Religious lectures and tolerance in the city of Bogor are being carried out well by the Bogor city government.	Religious lectures in the city of Bogor have been carried out well by the Bogor city government with the existence of the CROSS-RELIGIOUS SOCIAL AGENCY (BASOLIA) as a form of interfaith dialogue in the city of Bogor.
5	the form of social media relationships between TikTok and YouTube regarding tolerance content in religion	The relationship between social media TikTok and YouTube tolerance content and religiosity, respondents said that the more often they listened to tolerance content, the better their religious sermon life would be.
6	Social media TikTok and YouTube content of tolerance lectures by Ustadz Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat and Khalid Basalamah encourage tolerance in religious lectures in the city of Bogor.	From the respondents who filled out the questionnaire data and we conducted in-depth interviews, it was stated that the existence of social media, both TikTok and YouTube, which can be easily accessed, greatly influences the behavior of religious sermons in the city of Bogor.
7	Religious lectures in Bogor city were also helped by the content of lectures on tolerance by Ustaz Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat and Khalid Basalamah.	Bogor, which was once ranked second as an intolerant city, was said to need to have a diversity ambassador and religious figures such as Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat and Khalid Basalamah should have a good name as an intolerant city.
8	Harmony and tolerance in religious lectures in Bogor City are related to the content of religious tolerance lectures on TikTok and YouTube by Ustaz Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat, and Khalid Basalamah.	Tolerance between religious communities with the existence of social media, tolerance content carried out by figures such as Ustaz Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat, Khalid Basalamah is very helpful in creating religious lectures in the city of Bogor.
9	Religious lectures and religious tolerance in Bogor city have been going well	After the completion of the case of the establishment of the church which was finally moved, the location of its establishment, harmony and tolerance for religious lectures in the city of Bogor has improved.

10	Use of social media TikTok, YouTube, lecture content on tolerance towards religious lectures in Bogor City	The number of social media users who are mostly dominated by the millennial and gen z generations is increasing and tolerance content is also increasingly being delivered by other figures who strengthen religious sermons in the city of Bogor.

As for the variables related to religious lectures with unstructured questions, we categorized them into five categories:

Table 2. Variable knowledge and attitudes of religious tolerance in the city of Bogor

No	Category	Qualitative data
1	What religion or belief do you follow?	From the in-depth interview data conducted with respondents, all respondents were Muslims.
2	How often do you practice your religion according to your religious teachings?	The results of the level of obedience to worship which includes mahdah worship and other worship, respondents more often carry out worship that changes mahdah in the form of prayer, fasting, but other amaliah worship has not been fully carried out.
3	What are the main religious practices that you practice in your daily life?	The majority of respondents, amounting to 10 people for qualitative data, only carry out the main acts of worship, which include prayer, fasting, zakat, and acts of worship in the form of muammalah which have not been fully carried out.
4	How much influence does religion have on your life decisions and values?	Respondent data shows that out of 10 respondents, even though they have not yet fully practiced their religious duties perfectly, in making daily decisions they still use religion as the basis for their decisions, for example in the case of selecting social media content that is categorized as good or bad.

Table 3. Quantitative and qualitative data on the relationship between variables

Relationship between variables	Quantitative data	Qualitative data (relationship)	Information
The relationship between social media TikTok tolerance content and religious sermons in Bogor City	0.340	TikTok tolerance content, starting from image, audio and video elements watched by respondents, has an influence on diversity behavior.	The existence of mutual respect between religious groups has an impact on social and ritual piety, with respondents becoming more devout to their religion and caring about their environment.
The relationship between social media content on YouTube and religious lectures in Bogor City	0,643	YouTube content tolerance of image, audio and video elements influences religious sermon behavior	Influences social piety (tolerance towards adherents of other religious groups, social concern, interpersonal relations, ethics and good character, preserving the environment, obeying state regulations) Ritual piety (respecting the worship of other religions,

			not forcing it, allowing oneself not to disagree with other religious beliefs,
The relationship between social media YouTube and TikTok tolerance content simultaneously and religious sermon behavior in Bogor City	1456,618	YouTube and TikTok content tolerance of image, audio and video elements has a joint or simultaneous influence on religious behavior	Respondents stated that there was an influence on religious sermon behavior in Bogor City due to the presence of tolerance content on TikTok and YouTube media.

Gus Baha's lectures on tolerance are widely disseminated on YouTube through various channels, including Santri Gayeng, the NU Channel of Sekolah Akhirat, and others. A digital ethnographic approach, which utilizes YouTube videos and netizen comments as data sources, is a valid method for examining contemporary religious discourse. The high penetration of the internet and social media in Indonesia makes YouTube a highly effective dissemination strategy (Pembayun et al., 2021).

3.2   Tolerance in the Teachings of Gus Baha

Tolerance is a very significant theme in Gus Baha's sermons. His teachings aim to address issues of intolerance in Indonesia, a pluralistic society. He frames tolerance not merely as a social necessity but as an integral part of Islamic teachings, rooted in science and historical precedent. His discourse on moderation and tolerance is seen as a solution to the fanatical tendencies observed among netizens (D. P. Pratama, 2021).

Gus Baha's science-based and nuanced discourse on tolerance serves as a crucial counter-narrative to the often polarizing, emotionally charged, and sometimes extremist content found on social media. While beneficial, social media is often misused to spread negative content such as hoaxes, hate speech, and provocations that can trigger national disintegration. Indonesian netizens have even been criticized for their lack of civility (Kumar & Maurya, 2024). In this complex digital landscape, Gus Baha's approach, emphasizing knowledge, deep understanding, and historical context for tolerance, implicitly critiques superficial religious engagement. His teachings, disseminated through the same platform, offer a constructive alternative that promotes thoughtful engagement rather than reactive responses, thus being not only additive but also corrective in the digital religious space (Vargas & Saetermoe, 2024).

The principle that "knowledge/understanding gives birth to attitudes" is the main foundation of Gus Baha's argument regarding tolerance. He emphasized that adequate religious knowledge naturally fosters a tolerant disposition. Conversely, a lack of comprehensive understanding can lead to rigid and intolerant attitudes. This intellectual approach emphasizes the importance of understanding the "why" behind tolerance, not just the "what" of it. Thus, knowledge is an essential prerequisite for developing individuals capable of appreciating differences and living together harmoniously (Abdurrahman, 2021).

Gus Baha's emphasis on "knowledge" also implicitly promoted epistemological humility. By highlighting the diversity of interpretations (*khilafiah*, which will be discussed further) and the complexity of religious texts, he prevented the emergence of absolute confidence in one's own understanding, which is often the root of intolerance (Jusubaidi et al., 2024). True knowledge, in his view, leads one to acknowledge the limits of one's own understanding and respect the understanding of others. It is not simply an accumulation of facts, but rather a profound understanding that fosters openness to different perspectives.

Gus Baha consistently bases his arguments on the Quran and Sunnah. His expertise in interpreting the Quran is evident in each of his lectures. He often quotes verses from the Quran, such as Surah Al-Mumtahanah verse 7, which reads, "Perhaps Allah will create affection between you and those among you whom you hate. And Allah is All-Powerful. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful," to support the idea of reconciliation and positive relations between human beings. The

actions and words of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are also held up as prime examples of tolerant behavior. This reliance on primary Islamic sources lends strong theological weight to his teachings of tolerance (Khodr, 2023).

Gus Baha often uses historical narratives and anecdotes involving the prophets (especially the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the Prophet Ibrahim AS) and the Prophet's companions (Sahabah) to illustrate the practice of tolerance in real life. These stories serve as "high levels of tolerance exemplified by the best models for the Muslim community".

Gus Baha's reliance on storytelling and historical precedents represents a traditional Islamic pedagogical method. Its application to contemporary issues of intolerance through modern platforms like YouTube demonstrates a powerful way to bridge tradition and modernity (Salendra, 2024). This makes timeless wisdom relevant to current challenges, demonstrating that classical pedagogical techniques remain powerful when effectively adapted to reach modern audiences and address contemporary issues (Uyuni & Adnan, 2024).

Table 4. Some examples of narratives that Gus Baha often uses

Example of Narrative	Sources/Figures Involved	Core Lessons on Tolerance according to Gus Baha	Supporting References
Forgiveness for Da'sur	Nabi Muhammad SAW, Da'sur	Showing extreme forgiveness and tolerance even towards someone who intends to kill.	Gus Baha's official YouTube and TikTok videos
Respect for the Fast of Ashura	Prophet Muhammad SAW, Jewish community	Showing respect and even adopting positive practices from other religions.	
Feeding the Magian Guests	Prophet Ibrahim AS, guest of the Magians (Zoroastrians)	Teaching compassion and unconditional giving, reflecting God's grace, regardless of belief; tolerance as divine hope.	
Respect for Jewish Elders	Sayyidina Ali RA, an old Jew	Highlighting respect for individuals regardless of religion as a form of worship (ibadah).	
Sharing Food with Jewish Neighbors	Abdullah bin Umar RA, Jewish neighbor	Emphasizing the glorification of neighbors as a teaching of the Prophet, extending goodness across religious boundaries.	
Darroh's Protection from Ridicule	Prophet Muhammad SAW, Darroh, Ansar woman	Illustrates individual protection from religious/ancestral insults and sensitivity to feelings, even if related to an antagonist.	

3.3 Gus Baha's Articulation of Tolerance

A central theme in Gus Baha's teachings is the importance of respecting individuals of all faiths. This includes respecting their right to hold their own beliefs. He advocated compassion (affection), which includes forgiveness and self-reflection (muhasabah). Empathy involves understanding another person's situation and refraining from being quick to judge. His teachings emphasize doing good to everyone (wa qulu linnasi husna) based on divine commands, not solely because of secular ideology (Hamid, 2023).

Gus Baha's teachings, such as the principle "if you do not want your religion insulted, do not insult the religion of others" (a general principle in Islam often attributed to the Prophet's guidance or its derivatives, although here attributed to Gus Miftah but reflecting a common theme in the discourse of tolerance), imply that tolerance is not simply about restraint towards others, but about reciprocal relationships built on shared dignity (Taiba et al., 2023). This is further evident in his emphasis on

muhasabah—understanding oneself and one's potential biases as a step toward understanding and respecting others. This suggests that true tolerance begins with self-awareness and a commitment to treating others as one would wish to be treated, moving beyond passive acceptance to active and reciprocal respect (Simon, 2023).

Gus Baha viewed khilafiah (differences of opinion among Islamic scholars) not as a problem, but as something to be preserved and respected, even as a form of divine grace (rahmat). He cited the example of differences of opinion among prominent imams (Shafi'i, Malik, Abu Hanifah) to demonstrate that such diversity is historical and provides convenience for the community. This internal pluralism fosters an intellectual environment conducive to greater tolerance (Mala et al., 2024). He distinguished his approach from certain modern interpretations of pluralism with which he may disagree, by grounding his views firmly in classical Islamic scholarship.

By championing the validity of the khilafiah (caliphate), Gus Baha implicitly criticized monolithic interpretations of Islam that are often co-opted for political or exclusivist agendas. His stance advocates a more democratic and pluralistic understanding of religious authority and interpretation within the Muslim community itself. This is crucial for a healthy civil society in a diverse country like Indonesia, as it fosters internal debate and reduces the appeal of rigid ideologies, which in turn positively impacts how religious communities engage in pluralistic democracy (Hossain, 2024).

Gus Baha taught that people of different religions must work together to advance society, and that religious differences should not hinder shared prosperity (Akhtar & Abdullah, 2023). He called for unity in opposing violence and discrimination arising from religious differences. Building good communication and avoiding prejudice are key. Harmony in life (harmony in life) includes maintaining good relationships even with those who treat us badly. These messages underscore the importance of dialogue, mutual understanding, and interfaith collaboration for the common good.

Gus Baha compared the relatively peaceful methods of conflict resolution in Indonesia (debates, media statements) with more violent approaches elsewhere. He appreciated this "tradition of good conflict," in which disputes, even sharp ones (for example, between Gus Dur and the FPI), rarely escalated into physical violence. This perspective respects the existing social order and diversity management mechanisms in Indonesia (Mojau, 2024).

Gus Baha's appreciation of what he calls Indonesia's "tradition of good conflict" reflects a pragmatic and contextual approach to understanding and practicing tolerance. For him, lived experience and local wisdom are as important as textual references in fostering social harmony. This demonstrates that peaceful coexistence is not simply born of normative idealism or imported models, but can grow from the cultural and historical roots of a society itself. Thus, Gus Baha proposes that the theology of tolerance should not stand alone but rather coexist with social realities and local wisdom traditions. This is not mere discourse, but a practical proposition: other multicultural societies can emulate this approach by seeking the internal strengths embedded in their own histories and traditions (Ferguson et al., 2024).

In his lecture, "The Importance of Knowledge in Tolerance," Gus Baha emphasized that tolerance must be born from a sound foundation of knowledge. He argued that in-depth knowledge will foster sensitivity in behavior, both within local communities and across borders. One key principle highlighted was the strict prohibition in Islam against insulting other religions, as enshrined in the Quran. Respecting others' beliefs is not merely a matter of social etiquette but also a way of upholding the dignity of Islam itself (Saumantri & Bisri, 2023).

Gus Baha also enjoyed grounding examples of tolerance in the lives of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions. He often recounted how the Prophet consistently entertained Zoroastrian guests without prejudice, following in the footsteps of the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), who showed respect for all people regardless of religion (Vanderploeg, 2025). For Gus Baha, tolerance was not a compromise of faith, but rather an expression of the depth of that faith itself.

Furthermore, he views tolerance as the most effective means of preaching. Respect for other religions is not only a reflection of noble character but also a subtle and touching way to showcase the beauty of Islam to the world (Yaqoob & Rehman, 2025). With this approach, Gus Baha not only offers

an understanding of tolerance but also demonstrates a path to peace deeply rooted in Islamic tradition and Indonesian culture.

3.4 Tolerance in Ustad Adi Hidayat's Religious Lectures

Ustad Adi Hidayat, Lc., M.A. is one of Indonesia's leading Islamic preachers who extensively utilizes digital platforms, particularly YouTube, to spread Islamic teachings. His official channel, "Adi Hidayat Official," has become a primary resource for many Indonesian Muslims exploring various aspects of Islam. The significance of Ustad Adi Hidayat in the Indonesian digital preaching landscape is reflected in the number of studies analyzing the content of his YouTube sermons demonstrate his influence in shaping contemporary religious understanding. As of May 2023, Ustad Adi Hidayat's YouTube channel reportedly had 3.9 million subscribers, with over 1,700 videos viewed over 300 million times, a figure that underscores his massive digital reach. As of May 2025, he had 5.75 million subscribers, approximately 3,500 videos viewed 500 million times (Adi, 2019).

Phenomenon Digital preaching, particularly through platforms like YouTube, has fundamentally changed the way religious knowledge is disseminated and consumed in Indonesia. Ustad Adi Hidayatis a central figure in this transformation, successfully reaching a very broad audience. Ustad Adi Hidayat's extensive use of YouTube, coupled with academic attention to the platform, signals a shift in digital platforms, where digital platforms now function as modern "pulpits" for influential preachers. This allows for direct, unfiltered communication to a mass audience, potentially bypassing traditional religious institutions in shaping religious understanding (Hensley-Stevenson, 2021). For many, particularly millennials, YouTube has become a primary source of religious guidance. While this democratizes access to religious information, it also has the potential to centralize interpretive authority in the hands of figures skilled in using this medium, making their specific views, such as Ustad Adi Hidayat's views on tolerance, highly influential.

HerTolerance is a recurring and significant topic in Ustad Adi Hidayat's sermons. Indonesia's multicultural and multi-religious society makes discussions about tolerance particularly urgent. For users themselves, referring to content analysis of tolerance lectures, and various research sources, such as those analyzing Ustad Adi Hidayat's lecture entitled "Tauhid and Tolerance," demonstrates significant academic and public interest in his views on this topic (Masruroh et al., 2023). In the Indonesian context, marked by diversity and, in some cases, interfaith tensions, the discourse on tolerance delivered by influential figures such as Ustad Adi Hidayat is crucial for maintaining social harmony (Rosyad et al., 2021).

Teachings Ustad Adi Hidayat's teachings on tolerance, particularly his distinction between the domains of *aqidah* (belief) and *muamalah* (social interaction), can be understood as an attempt to provide a framework for Indonesian Muslims to manage their religious identity and social interactions within a pluralistic nation. This approach offers a way to maintain theological integrity while engaging socially with followers of other faiths (Adeoye, 2024). Indonesia, with its motto "*Bhineka Tunggal Ika*" (Unity in Diversity), faces the challenge of reconciling the strong religious identities of its citizens with the need for national unity (Utama & Mubarok, 2024). Ustad Adi Hidayat's detailed explanation of what is permissible in interfaith relationships (e.g., sharing food) versus what is not (e.g., recognizing another religious creed) provides clear and implementable guidance. Such guidance seems to be much needed, as evidenced by the popularity of his videos and academic studies on them, which indicate a need among his audience for a "manual" for living a devoutly religious life in diverse environments.

The Target Video entitled "Tolerance in Islam - Ustadz Adi Hidayat, Lc., MA" explicitly indicates the focus of the discussion. Based on this title and the general pattern of discourse on tolerance identified in various sources, this section will outline the anticipated content of the video. The video defines tolerance not as the acceptance that all religious beliefs are equally true (religious relativism), but rather as an attitude of respecting the rights of others to believe and practice their respective religious teachings without interference, while maintaining the uniqueness and purity of Islamic faith (Adi, 2023).

This definition aligns with his emphasis that "belief in faith should not become a barrier to human values." This statement indicates that tolerance is rooted in universal human values that are not negated

by religious beliefs (Shalahuddin et al., 2023). Furthermore, he consistently distinguishes between tolerance in the realm of social interaction (muamalah) and tolerance in the realm of faith or belief (aqidah), where the truth of Islam as a religion is specifically affirmed. The concept of "respect" (respect) is central to his understanding of tolerance (Adi, 2023).

Thus, the definition of tolerance he advocates, as can be inferred from his various statements, is a form of "principled coexistence," not relativism. His consistent rejection of the "all religions are equal" argument and careful setting of boundaries in interfaith interactions (for example, regarding Christmas greetings) demonstrate that, according to Ustad Adi Hidayat, tolerance is framed within a belief in the unique truth of Islam. Social harmony is pursued, but not by equating all religious paths. This is a model of tolerance that upholds the basic principles of faith while encouraging positive social interaction (B. Ali, 2024).

3.5   Articulation of Tolerance by Ust Adi Hidayat

Within Ustad Adi Hidayat's framework, aqidah appears to hold a higher or more fundamental position than muamalah. While good muamalah (social interaction) with non-Muslims is highly encouraged, such interactions must not violate or compromise the principles of aqidah (Khilmiyah & Wahyudi, 2021). The strict prohibition against actions perceived as acknowledging other religious creeds (for example, in the context of certain Christmas greetings) contrasts with the strong encouragement to do good in social contexts (Tunick, 2022). This demonstrates a hierarchy of values. Good social relationships are important, but the integrity of tawhid (the oneness of God) is paramount and determines the boundaries of those relationships. Understanding this hierarchy is key to understanding the "guarded tolerance" model he proposed.

Ustad Adi Hidayat directly refutes the notion that all religions are the same or that they all lead to the same truth. Research (Astika, 2024) indicates that he specifically addresses and rejects the "all religions are the same" argument. Ustad Adi Hidayat outlined his points of rebuttal: differences are inherent to life, true tolerance involves respecting these differences without equating them; Islam prohibits the destruction of places of worship of other religions; and the state guarantees freedom of religion.

Ustad Adi Hidayat's rejection of the claim that "all religions are equal" can be interpreted as more than just theological exclusivism. It can also be seen as an argument that genuine interfaith respect requires acknowledging the particularity or uniqueness of each religion, rather than through superficial homogenization (Ciocan, 2024). If all religions are considered equal, then the unique truth claims, rituals, and identities of each religion will be diminished (Mol, 2022). Ustad Adi Hidayat's argument for respecting differences as differences implies that authentic interfaith dialogue and respect can only occur when each tradition is recognized in its uniqueness. Forcing "sameness" could actually be a form of disrespect for the unique claims of each religion. Therefore, his stance can be seen as an attempt to advocate for a more robust and honest form of interfaith interaction, based on the recognition of real differences.

His sermons offer concrete examples of how to practice tolerance in everyday life, with an emphasis on morals (*akhlak*) in interactions. One concrete example of tolerant behavior demonstrated by Ustad Adi Hidayat himself was when he paused his sermon in Bali when a Hindu call to prayer was heard. The incident received a positive response from netizens, with comments such as "Ustad Adi Hidayat's morals are truly noble" and "The Beauty of Tolerance," highlighting the public's appreciation for such acts of respect. The prohibition on damaging other religions' houses of worship is also a crucial practical point in his teachings (Deddy, 2023).

Ustad Adi Hidayat's practical examples and concrete actions demonstrate that he views the manifestation of good morals towards non-Muslims as a form of da'wah (inviting people to Islam). By showcasing the beauty of Islamic teachings through concrete actions, the da'wah message becomes more persuasive (Alzaidi et al., 2025). Actions often speak louder than words. By showing respect and encouraging good behavior, such as not damaging places of worship, Ustad Adi Hidayat presents a positive image of Islam. This aligns with the da'wah principle of being a living example of Islamic

values, which can be more convincing than mere rhetoric (Belhaj, 2023).

Ustad Adi Hidayat largely adapts his message to the context of religious pluralism in Indonesia. His discussion of "human brotherhood" (*ukhuwwah insaniyyah*) is highly relevant for fostering national unity in this diverse country. One source also mentioned the importance of contextualizing tolerance in Indonesia and following established rules for the sake of peace and tranquility. By framing tolerance within the context of the Indonesian nation-state's needs (e.g., social harmony, respect for the state's guarantee of religious freedom), Ustad Adi Hidayat's discourse can be seen as contributing to a form of "religious nationalism." Within this framework, Islamic teachings are presented as compatible with and supportive of national cohesion in a pluralistic state. Ustad Adi Hidayat's emphasis on "human brotherhood" and respect for national laws such as Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution aligns Islamic principles with Indonesian national values (Yudianita et al., 2015). This serves to position Islam not as an antagonistic force, but as a constructive element within the Indonesian national framework, thereby promoting a form of religious identity that is also deeply rooted in nationalism.

3.6   Ustad Adi Hidayat's Rhetoric and Persuasive Strategy

The effectiveness of Ustad Adi Hidayat's preaching does not solely depend on the depth of his scientific substance, but also on the strength of the rhetoric and persuasive strategies he applies in a meticulous way. In his various sermons, including those depicted in the "Klik Adi" format, Ustad Adi Hidayat displays distinctive linguistic characteristics: clear, articulate, and accessible language. He does not simply convey religious teachings, but communicates them in a pedagogical manner—in a calm, gentle, and empathetic style. This choice of rhetorical style is not accidental, but rather a pedagogical strategy to clarify complex issues, such as religious tolerance, so that they can be understood with common sense and equanimity. For example, he frequently repeats words like "respect" and "share" as a subtle form of emotional emphasis, without losing intellectual clarity (Adi, 2022).

The lectures are loaded with references to the Quran and Hadith, which serve as a foundation for authoritative guidance. However, the power of his preaching lies in the way he bridges these normative texts with real life. He inserts down-to-earth analogies, such as the importance of sharing food with neighbours, which makes his teachings feel alive and relevant. Quotes like "That belief in faith should not become a barrier to human values..." reflect both spiritual depth and social sensitivity. Here, it is clear that Ustad Adi Hidayat does not rely solely on personal charisma but builds scholarly authority through mastery of primary texts and exceptional contextualization skills. His persuasive strategy is a combination of textual authority and an emotionally and intellectually inclusive approach (Rabab'ah et al., 2024).

His engagement with the audience also strengthens the effectiveness of his preaching message. In interactive formats like "Klik Adi," Ustad Adi Hidayat often responds directly to questions from the congregation. This participatory style creates a personal and inviting discourse space, making his preaching more than a monologue, but rather an educational conversation. The use of the pronoun "we" strengthens a sense of togetherness and bridges the gap between preacher and listener (Adi, 2022). In a digital context like YouTube, this is a highly effective communication strategy for building a community of shared understanding and fostering a sense of ownership of the values conveyed.

However, placing Ustad Adi Hidayat in the context of contemporary Indonesian da'wah is incomplete without comparing him with other figures such as K.H. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Gus Baha). Both uphold the value of tolerance derived from strong Islamic scholarship, but their approaches have different colors. While Ustad Adi tends to be formal, systematic, and uses standard Indonesian, Gus Baha presents himself with a humorous style, often employing Javanese, and relies on the power of historical narratives to convey his message. This difference reflects the diverse strategies in Indonesian Islamic da'wah oriented towards moderation: Gus Baha with a cultural-narrative approach and Ustad Adi with a textual-rational approach. Both confirm that in the treasure trove of Nusantara Islam, tolerance is not merely discourse, but a practice that can be formed through various rhetorical styles and communication strategies (M. A. Q. Pratama et al., 2023).

Through sermons such as "The Practice of Tolerance in National and State Life," Ustad Adi

Hidayat emphasized the importance of understanding differences as the key to social harmony. He encouraged Muslims to emulate the history of peaceful coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims in the past and apply these principles to the modern Indonesian context. This demonstrates that, in Ustad Adi's view, tolerance is not a compromise of values, but an expression of the depth of faith and the breadth of reason. Amid the challenges of modern pluralism, his approach offers a model of intelligent, calm, and compassionate da'wah—a vital contribution to a peaceful and inclusive Islamic civilization (Adi, 2023).

3.7 Tolerance in Ustad Khalid Basalamah's Religious Lectures

Ustad Khalid Basalamah's views on religious tolerance reflect a theological approach that very emphasises the purity of faith as the main foundation in every form of social and religious interactions. In his various sermons, he consistently stated that the principle of monotheism is not only the core of faith but also determines the validity of a Muslim's tolerant attitude towards others. In other words, tolerance should not be used as an excuse to blur the boundaries of belief (Hidayat et al., 2015). This is reflected in his rejection of forms of tolerance deemed "excessive," such as greetings on other religions' holidays, participation in non-Islamic rituals, or justifications for theological relativism.

For Ustad Khalid, tolerance is only acceptable in the realm of *muamalah*—that is, worldly social relationships that do not touch on aspects of faith. However, when it comes to matters of faith or worship, the dividing line is drawn. This approach is reinforced by the concept of *al-wala' wal bara'*, the principle of loyalty to fellow Muslims and the rejection of any form of closeness with non-Muslims in matters related to religious beliefs and rituals. This principle not only serves as the normative basis for his sermons but also forms a framework that sharply distinguishes between general human compassion and exclusive spiritual loyalty (S. Ali, 2023).

Furthermore, Ustad Khalid also specifically highlighted the procedures for interacting with non-Muslims in everyday life. He did not reject social cooperation and professional interaction, but he emphasized that such interactions should not lead to acknowledging the truth of other religions or participating in their religious practices. In this context, he even rejected the legitimacy of non-Muslim leadership in public the Muslim majority, while emphasizing that Muslims must maintain their moral and political authority based on sharia principles (Yilmaz & Shukri, 2024).

Furthermore, Ustad Khalid often linked the issue of tolerance to the importance of comprehensively implementing Islamic law. According to him, only by implementing sharia law—including hudud and qisas—can true justice and security be realized in society. This view emphasizes that, from his perspective, tolerance does not stand as an autonomous value, but rather as part of a broader and more comprehensive Islamic value system. (Mahmudi, 2022). Thus, tolerance is not simply a matter of accepting differences, but rather a matter of how those differences are placed within a solid and secure framework of monotheism.

Ustad Khalid Basalamah's approach to tolerance represents a conservative school of thought that rejects theological pluralism in favor of preserving the purity of Islamic teachings (Alam & Pradhan, 2021). This attitude contrasts with the inclusive approach advocated by figures like Gus Baha or Ustad Adi Hidayat, who tend to emphasize compassion, wisdom, and dialogue in addressing differences. This difference also demonstrates how the discourse of tolerance in contemporary Indonesian Islam is not singular but exists across a broad spectrum, ranging from the highly exclusive to the more dialogical and open (Uneputty, 2021).

The definition of tolerance according to Ustad Khalid Basalamah is based on the principles of Islam as a religion that upholds universal justice and goodness, but with clear boundaries, especially in terms of faith (Adeoye, 2024). Tolerance, in his view, is not a form of active acceptance of plurality of beliefs as theologically equal, but rather a form of tolerance, meaning granting leniency to others as long as they do not violate basic Islamic principles. Thus, Muslims are permitted to be kind to non-Muslims—such as helping neighbors, making donations, or establishing harmonious social relationships—but this should not involve supporting or participating in their religious rituals. In this sense, tolerance is more of a horizontal social (*muamalah*) principle, rather than a vertical theological one involving recognition

of other religious beliefs (Muhtifah et al., 2021).

The limits of tolerance are the most emphasized aspect in Ustad Khalid's sermons. He emphasizes that there can be no compromise in matters of faith and worship. For example, the strict prohibition against saying "Merry Christmas" is explained as an effort to maintain the purity of monotheism, as such a greeting is considered a recognition of the concept of the divinity of Jesus, which contradicts Islamic beliefs (Bhuiyan & Zoethout, 2023). Within this framework, even seemingly trivial actions can be categorized as serious violations of the faith. He also rejected the concept of non-Muslim leadership in Islamic society, citing several Quranic verses that require Muslim leaders to be devout and committed to upholding sharia (Wakhid et al., 2021). Support for non-Muslim leaders, in his view, could even be an indicator of hypocrisy.

Furthermore, his views on housing are also closely linked to the limits of tolerance. He recommends that a Muslim choose an environment that supports the implementation of sharia and upholds the faith, whenever possible. Living in a non-Muslim country is not a primary option unless there is a compelling sharia-compliant reason. This stance reflects the view that an environment that demands high tolerance for non-Islamic norms has the potential to undermine a Muslim's religious integrity (Wakhid et al., 2021).

However, tolerance within the boundaries of *muamalah* is still recognized and encouraged. Ustad Khalid encourages Muslims to maintain healthy social relationships with non-Muslims, such as being kind to neighbors, cooperating in economic matters, and maintaining harmony in daily life. For example, in the context of Ramadan, he encourages Muslims not to force others to fast, while still demanding respect for the holy month. However, this tolerance remains limited by Sharia principles. In a cultural context, for example, traditions such as *wayang* performances are questioned as to whether they contain elements that contradict Islamic teachings (Sari et al., 2024). While criticism of *wayang* can be understood in the context of contemporary abuses, the underlying principle remains: culture and tradition are acceptable only if they do not conflict with Islamic values. Therefore, according to Ustad Khalid, tolerance is not unlimited openness, but rather an openness strictly guarded by a commitment to Islamic faith and Islamic law.

3.8 Basis of Argument and Evidence of Ustad Khalid Basalamah

In building his argument for tolerance, Ustad Khalid Basalamah consistently refers to the evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah as the primary foundation. His approach is highly textual and oriented towards the authenticity of the sources of sharia, where every attitude and viewpoint must have a clear basis in the text. Frequently cited Qur'anic verses include those relating to the prohibition of appointing non-Muslims as leaders or protectors of Muslims (*awliya'*), as well as verses that emphasize the fundamental differences between Islam and other religions. For example, Al-Baqarah verse 179, which discusses the law of qisas, is often used to emphasize that the application of sharia, including in criminal matters, is a form of justice that guarantees the safety and prosperity of society. (Rosyidin, 2022).

Apart from that, the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad SAW were also the main basis for forming his views, especially the hadiths which warned Muslims not to resemble the behavior and traditions of non-Muslims (*tashabbuh bil-kuffar*). These hadiths are interpreted as a call to strictly maintain Islamic identity in social and cultural life (F. Rahman, 2020). In this context, tolerance must not encourage Muslims to adopt symbols, celebrations, or religious practices of other religions that could violate theological boundaries.

The principle of monotheism is the pivot of his entire religious narrative. Any action deemed potentially detrimental to the purity of the oneness of God, including practices of tolerance deemed "excessive," will be firmly rejected. This reflects a commitment to upholding *aqidah salimah* (pure faith) as the primary foundation of social and religious relations. In addition to textual evidence, Ustad Khalid also extensively refers to the views and fatwas of the Salaf scholars, the early generations of Islam and the followers of their method. The authority of the Salaf is seen as an authentic reference uncontaminated by modern interpretations deemed more permissive of pluralism. Thus, his religious

arguments are based not only on texts but also on an interpretive framework established by classical Islamic scholarly authority (Khalid, 2025).

Although the reference material does not specifically detail Ustad Khalid Basalamah's views on tolerance towards internal differences of opinion among Muslims in the context of tolerance lectures, the dualistic nature of his preaching (either sin or reward, halal or haram) indicates a firm approach to what he considers to be deviations from pure Islamic teachings (from a Salafi perspective). The focus on the purification of worship and faith suggests that differences in these areas may not be easily tolerated if they are deemed to deviate from the Sunnah (Amer, 2018).

Ustad Khalid Basalamah's view of tolerance, as reflected in the reference material, is one conditioned and limited by the framework of Islamic faith and law, according to the Salafi interpretation. There is room for good social interaction with non-Muslims, but with very clear lines of demarcation, especially in matters that touch on theological and ritual realms (Havea et al., 2022). Ustad Khalid Basalamah's views on tolerance cannot be separated from the general framework of the discourse of da'wah that he carries, which is rooted in Salafi methodology (Syamsir et al., 2021). This understanding is crucial for understanding how the concept of tolerance is shaped and implemented within the overall system of religious thought.

The Salafi methodology, characteristic of Ustad Khalid Basalamah's preaching, emphasizes purifying faith and religious practice from what is considered *bid'ah* (baseless innovation), *shirk* (associating partners with Allah), and *khurafat* (superstition). Consequently, the concept of tolerance put forward is heavily influenced by efforts to maintain the purity of this faith. Any interaction or attitude that could potentially blur the boundaries of faith or tarnish the purity of monotheism is considered a violation of this fundamental principle (Chukwuebuka Ohaekwusi, 2021). Therefore, the boundaries of tolerance he outlined, especially in relations with non-Muslims and their religious practices, are a direct reflection of the priority of preserving the faith. The statement that the place of unbelievers is in hell and the prohibition on following their rituals is a manifestation of the strictness in distinguishing between faith and disbelief, which is the essence of Salafi teachings (Gauvain, 2022).

Furthermore, the emphasis on monotheism as "the practice that causes the rejection of the punishment of Allah Ta'ala" demonstrates the centrality of faith in his worldview. Tolerance, in this context, must be subordinated to the imperative of maintaining monotheism. (Nurhidayah & Nurhayati, 2023). If a tolerant act, such as wishing another religion a happy holiday, is perceived as compromising monotheism, then it will be rejected, regardless of the social value or harmony it might bring from a secular perspective.

Ustad Khalid Basalamah's theological view of non-Muslims is clear: those who do not adhere to Islam are considered to be on the wrong path and will be at a loss in the afterlife. However, in everyday social interactions (*muamalah*), Islam teaches us to treat them fairly and kindly, as long as they do not oppose Islam. This creates a dichotomy between theological judgment and social treatment (M. M. Rahman, 2021). Tolerance in social interactions, such as helping non-Muslim neighbors or conducting economic transactions, is encouraged. However, this tolerance does not extend to aspects related to the recognition or participation in non-Muslim religious rituals.

This attitude is also reflected in his views on living in a non-Muslim country, which should be avoided unless for urgent needs such as seeking knowledge or preaching. The preference for living in an environment that "more supports faith and facilitates the implementation of sharia" implies that intensive interaction with non-Islamic norms, which demand a high level of tolerance, is seen as a potential "fitnah" or test that could weaken faith. Thus, tolerance in the context of a non-Muslim majority society is seen more as a pragmatic necessity in certain situations, rather than as an ideal state to be pursued solely for the sake of harmony (Spencer, 2021).

Ustad Khalid Basalamah's views on leadership and the ideal social order also shaped his conception of tolerance. He argued that a leader must be a Muslim because a leader's primary role is to implement Islamic law. In this idealized social order, where Islamic law is upheld, the status and rights of non-Muslims would be governed by the provisions of that law (e.g., the concept of *ahl al-dhimma* in classical Islamic jurisprudence) (Bosanquet, 2020).

In relation to local traditions and culture, Ustad Khalid Basalamah applies the same principle: conformity to Islamic teachings (according to his interpretation) is the primary standard. Traditions that align with Islam are acceptable, but those that contradict it must be abandoned. The case of his comments on *wayang*, suggesting that *wayang* be eliminated if they conflict with Islamic teachings, is a clear example of this approach (Wai Weng, 2024). Despite attempts at clarification and interpretation, suggesting that the criticism may be satirical or aimed at specific contemporary practices, the underlying principle remains that religious (Islamic) teachings should take precedence over tradition.

This approach demonstrates that tolerance for cultural expression also has clear limits. Culture is not viewed as a neutral entity, but rather must be examined in relation to religious norms. (Verkuyten et al., 2022). This often creates friction with groups that view culture as an integral part of local identity and religious practices, as seen in the debate over wayang and the reactions from various parties, including Gus Miftah.

Ustad Khalid Basalamah's tolerant views are closely intertwined with his commitment to the purification of faith, a literal understanding of sacred texts, a vision of an Islamic social order, and a critical approach to cultural traditions. The rhetorical style and persuasive techniques used by Ustad Khalid Basalamah in delivering his sermons, including those on tolerance, have distinctive characteristics that contribute to the effectiveness of his preaching among certain audiences (Kulsum, 2021). One of his primary strategies is referential authority, consistently basing his arguments on the Qur'an and Sunnah, as well as the opinions of the early scholars. This gives the impression that what he conveys is not his personal opinion, but rather the truth revealed. The comment that he "dared to speak the truth and the falsehood without equivocation" demonstrates a firm and unambiguous style that can appeal to an audience seeking certainty (Renlund, 2022).

The argument structure in his lectures is often expository and deductive. He would begin with a principle or proposition, then elaborate on it, providing examples or practical implications. In question-and-answer sessions, which were also a popular format for his lectures, his arguments became more responsive but still adhered to the same frame of reference. A tendency to present views in terms of dualities (either sin or reward, halal or haram) was a prominent feature of his argument structure (Anjum, 2022). Complex issues are often simplified into binary choices, making it easier for audiences to take a stance. In the context of tolerance, this can mean clearly distinguishing between permissible (*halal*) and prohibited (*haram*) practices.

Ustad Khalid Basalamah's language is a blend of formal Indonesian and Arabic terms relevant to the religious context. The use of Arabic terms lends authoritative weight and authenticity to his message. Although formal, there are also elements of a "conversational style," which makes his lectures feel more accessible and accessible to a wide range of audiences. The tone of his lectures is generally didactic (teaching) and sometimes admonitory (reminding or reprimanding), especially when discussing matters considered deviations or errors (Trofimov, 2024). However, this tone is often balanced by a calm and structured delivery. The combination of "a certain formality with the best facial expressions, and a lively sense of communication" contributes to his appeal.

Ustad Khalid Basalamah demonstrates an awareness of his audience, which is often urban Muslims. His choice of themes and examples relevant to urban life can be one way he reaches this segment. In a question-and-answer format, he directly responds to audience questions and concerns, creating a sense of engagement. However, his highly textual approach and emphasis on the authority of evidence can sometimes appear unaccommodating to counterarguments based on "common sense" or contextual reasoning, as criticized by some (Groenewald, 2023). If "common sense" leads to a different conclusion than the textual interpretation, then the authority of the text will prevail.

The combination of firmness in principle, strong references to sacred texts, a relatively accessible yet authoritative style, and the simplification of complex issues into binary choices are key elements of Ustad Khalid Basalamah's rhetoric and persuasive style. This style is effective in building confidence and loyalty among his followers who seek clear and unambiguous religious guidance, including understanding and practicing tolerance within the Salafi framework (Ibrahim, 2022).

3.9   Comparative Analysis: Teachings on Tolerance

Analyzing the teachings on interfaith tolerance from three popular Indonesian figures—Gus Baha, Ustad Adi Hidayat, and Ustad Khalid Basalamah—it is clear that each presents a different approach, both in definition, evidence, limitations, and practice. These differences are not merely terminological but also touch on philosophical and theological dimensions rooted in their interpretation of sacred texts and social realities.

Gus Baha views tolerance, or tasamuh, as a form of openness to differences, considered part of divine will. He emphasizes respect for the rights of others and uses verses such as QS. Al-Hujurat: 13 and QS. Al-An'am: 108 as a basis for supporting the idea that diversity is a space for mutual understanding, not hostility. (Ikhsan, 2017). Gus Baha's emphasis is more on empathy, communication wisdom, and recognition of plurality as both a historical and theological fact. In contrast, Ustad Adi Hidayat emphasizes the importance of maintaining social harmony by defining tolerance as an attitude of mutual respect between religious communities. He clearly distinguishes between the social sphere (muamalah) and the realm of faith (aqidah), with strong references to Surah Al-Kafirun and Surah Al-Baqarah: 256 (Budi, 2022). Ustad Khalid Basalamah views tolerance as an obligation to maintain justice for all, but with a firm line against involvement in the rituals or beliefs of other religions. He frequently refers to verses that restrict Muslim participation in non-Muslim religious practices, such as the prohibition against saying "Merry Christmas" or attending funerals with ritualistic overtones (Wahab, 2015).

The differences become even more striking when discussing the limits of tolerance between faith and social interaction (Verkuyten, 2022). For Gus Baha, social tolerance does not mean compromising on faith, but still requires showing respect. Ustad Adi Hidayat clearly separates the two realms: social interaction is broadened, but faith remains exclusive. Meanwhile, Khalid Basalamah draws stricter boundaries—muamalah is permitted as long as it does not involve symbols or rituals of other religions, and interactions deemed to resemble recognition of non-Islamic theology are strictly prohibited. This gives rise to different practices in daily life. Gus Baha encourages people to be fair and supportive of non-Muslims in social life; Adi Hidayat teaches active tolerance while maintaining the boundaries of worship; and Khalid Basalamah only permits worldly social relationships and rejects symbols or expressions that contain theological recognition of other religions.

However, it's not just what is conveyed that matters, but also how it is communicated. Gus Baha emphasized empathy and a warming historical narrative; Adi Hidayat chose a rational and dialogical approach; while Khalid Basalamah emphasized the principle of normative assertiveness. Too harsh a message can give the impression of intolerance, even if the message is normative. Conversely, a gentle delivery can make strict principles more acceptable. This is where the affective dimension of tolerance plays a crucial role: how someone feels respected or disliked is largely determined by how the message is conveyed (Lefebvre & Beaucousin, 2025).

Furthermore, discussions of tolerance often simplify the term "non-Muslim" into a single category. However, in classical Islamic jurisprudence, there are classifications such as Ahl al-Kitab, musta'man, dhimmi, and harbi—each with different laws and boundaries for interaction (Akbar, 2022). When preachers simplify this, the nuance and depth of Islamic jurisprudence are potentially lost. This risks creating practices of tolerance that are either too loose or too rigid. Therefore, contemporary religious discourse needs to be more sensitive to this complexity, so that people understand that Islam not only teaches tolerance but also provides a contextual and historical normative framework for establishing relationships with those of different faiths (Riaz et al., 2023). Public education that enriches understanding of the various categories of non-Muslims and the principles of Islamic jurisprudence that govern them will enable the emergence of wiser, fairer, and more contextual practices of tolerance. (Azar, 2024).

Table 5. *Results of a study of religious sermon content on social media*

Feature	Gus Baha	Ustad Adi Hidayat	Ustad Khalid Basalamah
Core Definition	Tasamuh: Openness, mutual respect, forgiveness, wisdom, contextual understanding	Mutual respect, social harmony, no compulsion in religion	Justice for all, clear demarcation in religious matters, no support for non-Islamic beliefs
Main Argument	Al-Qur'an (Al-Hujurat, Al-An'am), Hadith, stories of the Prophets/Companions	The Qur'an (Al-Kafirun, Al-Baqarah 256, Al-Mumtahanah), Hadith	Quranic verses on leadership, limits of interaction, warnings against justifying non-Islamic paths
Limitation: Belief/Worship	There is no compromise or legitimacy towards the basic teachings of other religions; different from social tolerance	Strict restrictions; "Lakum dinukum waliya din"; social tolerance does not include faith/worship	The boundaries are very sharp; any participation deemed to be in non-Muslim worship is prohibited.
Limitation: Muamalah (Social)	Broad: empathy, justice, mutual support, good neighborliness	Broad: good relations, mutual assistance, respect for rights, avoiding conflict	Permitted: trade, assistance in worldly affairs, family ties, as long as no religious support is involved.
Example: Tolerant Action	Forgiveness (Prophet & Da'sur), respect/integrate practices (Ashura), courtesy to non-Muslims	Stopping sermons to respect Hindu call to prayer, sharing food with non-Muslim neighbors	Giving donations, helping non-Muslims in need, fair business transactions
Example: Prohibition	Does not affirm the truth of the core beliefs of other religions	Do not mix beliefs, do not participate in rituals of other religions	No "Merry Christmas" greetings, no attending non-Muslim funerals (if religious rites), no non-Muslim leaders

3.10   Strengths and Weaknesses of the Tolerance Approach

The tolerance approach developed by Gus Baha' has several outstanding advantages, particularly in terms of intellectual depth and contextualization. He is known for his deep understanding of classical Islamic texts and his ability to present them in historically rich and nuanced interpretations. This makes his approach effective in countering extremist narratives, as it demonstrates the breadth and depth of the Islamic tradition. Furthermore, Gus Baha' strongly emphasizes the values of *hikmah* (wisdom) and compassion in his preaching, which encourages the growth of tolerance based on empathy, forgiveness, and understanding, thus supporting the creation of social harmony. His religious views also align with the moderate stance of Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's largest Islamic organization, which emphasizes Islam *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for the universe) that is adaptive to local cultures (Marjani, 2023).

Another strength of Gus Baha' is his ability to convey complex ideas in simple, accessible language, often using Javanese and examples from everyday life, making him very accessible to the general public. However, this approach also faces several challenges. His subtle and profound arguments sometimes lose context when condensed into short clips or consumed by audiences lacking a basic understanding of Islam, creating the risk of misunderstanding (Leighton, 2024). Furthermore, because much of his content is uploaded by fans or students (santri) and is not officially managed, there is considerable variation in the quality and choice of material presented. Criticism is also often directed at the general model of "moderate Islam," which some conservative groups consider insufficiently rigorous theologically or even suspect of being a Western construct, even though Gus Baha's moderation is firmly rooted in classical Islamic sources.

Meanwhile, Ustad Adi Hidayat's approach stands out for its clear, systematic, and detailed delivery, making it highly appealing to audiences seeking an "authentic" understanding of Islam. He is known for frequently citing verse numbers in the Quran and the location of hadiths with precision, thus strengthening the credibility of his sermons. The material he delivers is also highly relevant and practical, connecting Islamic teachings to contemporary issues and everyday life, including national identity and interfaith harmony. Another strength of Ustad Adi is the broad reach of his preaching through digital platforms, such as YouTube, which enables him to connect with diverse segments of society. He also consistently refers to the principle of "*la ikraha fid din*" (there is no compulsion in religion), which reinforces the spirit of tolerance and religious freedom in Islam. His responsiveness to current issues makes his sermons feel relevant and contextual. However, he also faces several challenges, including the limited direct interaction in digital preaching, which makes it difficult to address personal issues or specific doubts of the audience (Zayadin et al., 2023). On the other hand, despite its detail, the content still risks being oversimplified when cut into short clips, which can lose important nuances. The length of the lecture can also pose challenges in maintaining audience attention. Furthermore, like other digital preachers, he is also at risk of message distortion or the spread of hoaxes, possibly perpetrated by unauthorized third parties (Ahmad et al., 2024).

Ustad Khalid Basalamah is known for his firm, consistent preaching style, firmly grounded in a Salafi textualist approach, which emphasizes the purity of faith and adherence to literal Islamic principles. His principled approach and firmness in answering religious questions are particularly appealing, especially to those seeking certainty and unambiguous religious guidance (Rosenblum, 2021). His sermons are also systematically structured, covering a wide range of topics, from Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and the Prophet's life (*sirah*), to etiquette and morals. He consistently applies Salafi methodology, which makes his messages structured and consistent. However, his approach has also drawn criticism. Many consider his preaching to be too rigid and insufficiently consider the socio-cultural context of pluralistic Indonesian society. Some of his statements on issues such as *wayang* art, pilgrimages to non-Muslim graves, or interactions with non-Muslims have often sparked controversy and even been considered to cause social friction. His style of presentation has also been deemed too dualistic—sharing a sharp distinction between what is permissible and what is forbidden, or sin and reward—which has the potential to oversimplify complex social realities. Furthermore, his textualism sometimes clashes with broader, contextual approaches to Islamic scholarship, as commonly found in the Nusantara Islamic tradition (Susanto et al., 2024). For example, his views on women have often been criticized as patriarchal and inconsistent with the discourse on gender equality in contemporary Islam.

The strengths of digital preaching, such as its wide reach and clarity of message for some, can ironically become its weaknesses (Hastings, 2021). For example, Ustad Khalid Basalamah's assertiveness, which is appreciated by his followers, when amplified by the media, it has also become a source of criticism for its rigidity and potential for social friction, especially when its messages are consumed without adequate context or by audiences with different expectations of tolerance. Similarly, Ustad Adi Hidayat's detailed references, while powerful, can lose their meaning if only brief excerpts are disseminated. Media characteristics—speed, shareability, and decontextualization—interact with the content and style of messages. This means that media are not neutral; they shape how religious messages are perceived and their social impact (Bleich et al., 2022). Messages intended for a specific,

like-minded audience, when broadcast widely, can encounter different interpretive communities, leading to unintended negative consequences, as was the case with Ustad Khalid Basalamah's comments on *wayang*. Therefore, preachers and religious organizations need media literacy and strategies to mitigate the potential negative impacts of digital dissemination, perhaps by providing more context or engaging in dialogue beyond their immediate audience (Zhang, 2025).

Furthermore, audience factors play a significant role in defining the "strengths" and "weaknesses" of a da'wah approach (Mar & Sari, 2025). What is perceived as a strength by one audience segment (e.g., Ustad Khalid Basalamah's uncompromising attitude) may be seen as a weakness (rigidity) by another segment. Gus Baha's intellectual depth may be a strength for those seeking a nuanced understanding, but a "weakness" (less accessible) for those seeking simple answers. Audience acceptance is subjective and influenced by prior beliefs, educational level, and expectations of religious discourse (Subchi et al., 2022). This suggests that audience segmentation occurs in the consumption of religious content, where individuals seek out preachers who align with their worldview or specific needs. The "success" or "failure" (in terms of positive reception of the message of tolerance) of a preacher's approach is co-constructed by the audience. Consequently, effective promotion of tolerance requires understanding diverse audience segments and tailoring messages or employing multiple communication strategies to reach different groups (Haumer et al., 2021; Rosyad et al., 2021). A one-size-fits-all approach to teaching tolerance is likely to be ineffective.

4.   Conclusion

Based on the previous description above, it can be said that the content of religious sermons from three authoritative figures—Gus Baha, Ustadz Adi Hidayat, and Ustadz Khalid Basalamah—disseminated through YouTube and TikTok, significantly influenced the increase in knowledge and the formation of attitudes of religious tolerance among the people of Bogor City. With a contribution of 88.2% to the variation in religious behavior, social media has been proven to function as a new dialectical space that not only transmits religious messages but also constructs a more reflective, inclusive, and contextual religious landscape. These findings show that social media is not only a channel for spiritual entertainment, but also an epistemic medium that transforms the religiosity of urban communities in a multicultural context. The main theoretical contribution of this study lies in the integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches in understanding digital da'wah, as well as the conceptual elaboration of religious digital literacy and technology-mediated social piety. Furthermore, this research offers practical implications for preachers, policymakers, and religious education institutions to develop preaching strategies that are responsive to the algorithmic reality and religious pluralism of contemporary society.

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