Polemics of The Virtual Da'wah Hyperreality in Parepare City

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ABSTRACT

Preachers in Parepare City have utilized social media to deliver da'wah messages, but on the other hand conventional preachers still think that da'wah on social media has not supported the effectiveness of da'wah. Therefore, this research will analyze the hyperreality of virtual da'wah which has an impact on the polemic in interpreting the professionalism of preachers in Parepare City. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method using a case study approach to analyze and facilitate the narrative presentation of observation and interview results that have sparked debates regarding the use of social media by preachers in Parepare City for preaching purposes. The results of this study show various forms of da'wah transformation in social media, a description of the hypperality of da'wah in social media and cognitive dissonance which is the cause of the polemic of preachers in Parepare City. The implications of this research will show that the collaboration between conventional da'wah and the use of social media is needed in order to improve the professionalism of preachers, so as to minimize the occurrence of polemics in the use of da'wah media.

Keywords: *Cognitive dissonance; dai polemics; da'wah hipperality; social media; Parepare city.*

INTRODUCTION

The flow of distributing da'wah messages on the internet demonstrates significant development, parallel to the increasing number of users on various digital media platforms. These include websites, digital applications, and personal interaction networks via social media. Many users widely employ these platforms to disseminate da'wah messages using effective and appropriate methods (Arifin et.al, 2022; Aliyudin & Rustandi, 2023). There are two views in explaining the relationship between technology and society. First, technology plays a role in shaping culture in society which focuses on social effects. This views consists of three main

thoughts which views the medium is the message, technology as dominant social force, and media as a driver of culture (Muqsith, 2022). This view implies that technology has become an inseparable part in terms of ideology, organization, technical tools and aspects of society's cultural elements, including preaching on digital social media.

Preachers tend to use social media, guided by six distinctive characteristics of these platforms. Firstly, the network character pertains to the social structure formed within the network infrastructure or the internet. Secondly, the information character reflects how communication takes place among users. Thirdly, the archival character highlights the storage and accessibility of data on social media through digital devices. Fourthly, the basic interactivity character fosters network formation among users. Fifthly, the simulation character provides a social environment that mimics real-world interactions. Lastly, the content character allows users to freely create and disseminate content among each other (Karomah & Setiady, 2022). According to the six social media characters above, it can be concluded that social media has an information network structure that allows users to create and modify content contained in digital archives to be shared with other social media users. This is also what happens in the distribution of da'wah messages through social media.

Da'wah as a communication activity includes several elements, such as content, communicator, channel, audience, and goals (Hendra & Saputri, 2019; Aliyudin & Rustandi, 2023). In the context of using social media as mentioned above, it allows da'wah to be viewed as Muslims' self-actualization while also competing with the availability of information about Islam from various perspectives and certain interests.

The use of media as a communication/ da'wah activity can have several purposes. First, socializing the teachings of Islam itself. Second, providing relevant information for Muslims communities. Third, as a counter/ balancing to information that is tendentious, stereotypical and has been trying to discriminate Islam (Tebba, 2023; Rustandi & Kusnawan, 2023). Social media enables anyone who has concern with da'wah to easily share da'wah messages with family, friends, colleagues, and people in different regions or countries . Preacher seize this opportunity to broadcast their da'wah to a wide audience audience by promptly creating social media accounts. In short, social media facilitates the outreach of da'wah to the community at large (Mubarak, 2022).

The utilization of digital social media platforms in preaching is

relevant to current social media user data. Based on a report of Digital 2023 Indonesia in January 2023, there are 212.9 million (77% of the total population) of active internet users in Indonesia and 167 million (60.4% of the total population) of active social media users. WhatsApp is still the most popular social media platform in Indonesia with 92.1% of the total population use the app, followed by Instagram with 86.5%, Facebook with 83.8%, TikTok with 70.8%, Telegram with 64.3% and Twitter with 60, 2% of the total population. As for the most visited digital media, YouTube occupies the first position with 833 million visits per month. In general, 83.2% of the total users expressed that the main purpose of accessing digital media was motivated by the desire to get the latest information (datareportal.com). Based on this data, it is evident that sharing da'wah messages on social media holds vast and widespread potential.

Preachers conduct da'wah on various digital media platforms using diverse formats aimed at facilitating distribution of da'wah message. On WhatsApp, da'wah messages are shared in the form of photos and videos within user groups (Salsabila & Muslim, 2022). Da'wah on Facebook takes the form of sharing information through personal status updates and posts taken from writing by scholars or preachers published in online news (Masri et.al, 2022). On YouTube, da'wah messages are delivered in an engaging and comprehensive manner through pre-recorded lecture videos (Mahendra, 2021). On Instagram, da'wah tends to be presented in the form of posters or designed images (Nurrahmi & Farabuana, 2020). The use of social media for preaching is enhanced by platforms allowing direct audience interaction. Digital media, now a primary communication tool, significantly enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of da'wah dissemination (Nidya et.al, 2023). This transformation of da'wah activities into virtual spaces on social media has indirectly shaped a hyperreal cyberspace.

Hyperreality refers to a state where distinguishing between reality and fantasy reflections in virtual space becomes challenging (Antony & Tramboo, 2020). It describes human action within a self-created space containing virtual elements perceived as more realistic than reality itself. In virtual hyperreality, the reality of an object no longer has real significance because of the depiction in a different virtual world, so reality has lost its referential value (Wolny, 2017). This opinion refers to a reflection on the pattern of simulacra in the virtual realm that has replaced reality with various representations through a false image in such a way that it is difficult

for a person to distinguish between the real and the unreal.

These days, millennials increasingly inhabit a world of hyperreality, as simulated reality begins to fade (Baudrillard, 2016). Baudrillard identifies several forms of simulation. Firstly, there is counterfeit, which involves the natural imitation of the real where the copy closely matches the original. Then, there is production, where copies of the original are produced virtually, often surpassing the original and blurring the distinction between copy and original. Simulation goes further by severing ties with the original reality, as the created simulations circulate independently of real references. In this context, simulated life can appear more vivid and realistic than actual reality. Finally, hyperreality emerges as a consequence of simulations that are more vibrant and intense than anything experienced in the real world (Angeliqa & Andriani, 2020). This level of hyperreality formation process is created through the development of media technology and consumer culture, thus creating circumstances that construct public perceptions of reality that have been shaped by the proliferation of images and representations.

In virtual da'wah context, simulation in virtual space is evident through interactions between preachers and the public on social media platforms. Media technology that has developed rapidly over time is also one of the causes of the creation of communication and media hyperreality, especially in the spread of da'wah on social media. For example, on social media there are many people who receive information packaged in the form of da'wah messages without going through the fileterization process first, so that sometimes the da'wah actually causes rumors or issues that develop polemics in society (Akgul, 2020). Criticism of various polemics of da'wah on social media is what tends to cause cognitive dissonance among preachers.

Cognitive dissonance, as defined by Leon Festinger, is a theory that explains how humans consistently strive to reduce discomfort or dissonance caused by conflicting beliefs or situations where incompatible beliefs clash psychologically (Marikyan et.al, 2023). The description shows that cognitive dissonance arises as a result of the conflict of individual beliefs in responding to a change that occurs in their social environment (Harmon & Mills, 2019).

There are several assumptions underlying the occurrence of cognitive dissonance in society. First, human nature is concerned with consistency. This assumption is based on the potential of each individual to always

maintain a pattern or structure that has long prevailed in society. Second, dissonance stems from a human attitude that never feels satisfied and happy, so it can create a feeling of discomfort in a person. Third, the stimuli created by dissonance will motivate people to avoid situations that create inconsistencies and try to find situations that can create consistency (Hanum et.al, 2022; Vico, 2022). In the context of virtual da'wah, the ongoing polemic highlights cognitive dissonance stemming from efforts to maintain consistency with traditional methods of disseminating da'wah directly. There appears to be a lack of readiness among some preachers in Parepare City to fully embrace and implement virtual da'wah methods.

In Parepare, a city with a predominantly Muslim population, there is a debate surrounding da'wah activities in digital media. Preachers who possess knowledge and skills in digital media argue that distributing da'wah messages through social media is significantly more effective and efficient in terms of time and energy compared to traditional face-to-face methods (Uddin & Muhid, 2021; Rustandi & Kusnawan, 2023). This is also a measure of the level of professionalism of preachers as an effort to maximize the use of media technology. Conversely, preachers who lack of digital media skills argue that face-to-face da'wah is more effective. They believe it fosters direct interaction between the preacher and the public, allowing for better understanding of the da'wah message based on personal rapport. This personal closeness is seen as a gauge of the preacher's professionalism (Azizah, 2023).

The term preacher professionalism, or commonly known as professional preachers, refers to people (individuals or groups) who deliberately prepare themselves to hold or perform preaching tasks supported by special intelligence, abilities, and skills related to the implementation of preaching (Kohari et.al, 2022). The competence of a preacher is required to emulate the character of the Prophet Muhammad, as an example in the context of *bil-lisan* and *bil-qalam.* Therefore, a preacher is legitimized to have met the standards of credibility, if he has scientific competence in preaching, personality integrity, sincerity of soul and has a good image, and has morals that reflect Islamic values in society (Rodiyah, 2018; Aliyudin & Rustandi, 2023). The activities of preachers who have been legitimized as a form of profession in society require a form of motivation and performance that always adapts to the conditions of social changes that occur in society.

Previously, there were several studies related to digital virtual da'wah,

one of which was entitled *Dakwah Virtual Masyarakat Bermedia Online* (Yahya & Farhan, 2019). This research examines the effectiveness of da'wah in technological societies by adapting cultural da'wah practices to fit the dynamics of virtual society, particularly within the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It underscores the necessity for preachers in this modern era to strategically enhance their da'wah efforts on social media, which is not only widely embraced but has also become a cultural norm in contemporary society. However, on the other hand, preachers must also anticipate themselves and increase their knowledge so as not to get caught up in the negative effects of social media.

Meanwhile, there are also research that discusses the hyperreality of da'wah, one of which is entitled *Simulacra In Women's Majelis Taklim Based On Jean Baudrillard's Perspective* (Srinarwati et.al, 2020). The research discusses the da'wah that occurs in the Salafi Taklim Assembly group which describes that through media support, the Salafi Taklim Assembly becomes a simulacrum for the simulation process of its members which ultimately gives rise to hyperreality in the religious field, especially in the practice of consuming fashion signs and worship groups.

Last, research that examines the professionalism of modern preachers is found in a study entitled *Profesionalisme Dai di Era Society 5.0: Mengulas Profil dan Strategi Pengembangan Dakwah* (Wibowo, 2021; Rustandi & Hendrawan, 2022). This study aims to describe and emphasize the importance of enhancing the professionalism of preachers to meet the demands of Society 5.0. It identifies nine competencies crucial for preacher professionalism in this era: creativity, critical thinking, leadership, digital literacy, emotional intelligence, entrepreneurship, global citizenship, problem-solving, and teamwork. These competencies are essential due to widespread access to social media content in today's society.

Among those existing studies, this research aims to complement and deepen previous research by comprehensively analyzing the polemics over the increase in preacher professionalism that refers to the interpretation of preachers in Parepare City regarding the use of digital media as a medium of preaching.

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore and elucidate the factors contributing to cognitive dissonance in the debate over using social media as a platform for preaching among preachers in Parepare City. Data collection involved observations, interviews, and documentation of 16 preachers (dai and daiyah) from

diverse age groups, educational backgrounds, and professions in Parepare City. Additionally, supplementary data from screenshots of speakers' social media accounts were analyzed using descriptive analysis. The study aims to benefit researchers, academics, dai/daiyah, social media activists, and the public by examining the advantages and disadvantages of conventional versus digital da'wah, thereby enhancing the professionalism of preachers in Parepare City.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Along with the development of digital technology, preachers in Parepare City also participate in utilizing social media facilities to carry out da'wah activities. On the other hand, there are still many preachers who think that conventional da'wah conducted face-to-face, is still far more effective than the virtual da'wah method. Research data were obtained from interviews with several preachers (dai and daiyah) in Parepare City who became samples in interviews with references based on different age, education, and professional background criteria. In addition, other additional data was obtained from screenshots of the informants' social media accounts. The personal data of informants from this study can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Informant's Data

No	Name	Age	Gender (M/F)	Profession
1	Muhammad Fajri	23	M	Course Mentor
2	Rusdi	23	M	Teacher
3	Suparman	22	M	Freelancer
4	M. Taufiq Hidayat Pabbajah	32	M	Lecturer
5	Syamsul Ma'ruf Abdullah	23	M	College Student
6	Dzul Jabbar	23	M	Tahfiz Teacher
7	Zulfajar	28	M	Extension Worker of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Parepare
8	Abd. Karim Fiaz, M. Si	35	M	Lecturer
9	Suryadi Syarif, S.H	26	M	Master's Student
10	Nasruddin, M.Pd	43	F	Lecturer
11	Prof. Dr. Hj. Hamdanah, M. Si	65	F	Lecturer

12	Dr. Hj. Rusdaya Basri, Lc., M.A	52	F	Lecturer
13	Dr. Rahmati, M. Ag	46	F	Lecturer
14	Hayana, M. Sos	27	F	Lecturer and Content Creator
15	Muh. Akbar	22	M	College Student
16	Dr. Suhardi, M. Sos	33	L	Lecturer

Source: Research interview results

The findings from interviews with the informants were analyzed to identify the transformation of preaching by preachers on social media, the depiction of hyperreality in their preaching, and the cognitive dissonance stemming from debates over the use of digital media in preaching. These findings serve as benchmarks aimed at enhancing the professionalism of preachers in Parepare City.

The Hyperreality of Da'wah on Social Media in Parepare City

This study describes the use of technology in social media for preaching, illustrating how preachers in Parepare City utilize social media to transform the dissemination of preaching. This transformation shifts the natural realm of reality and social-cultural communication into an artificial model of media technology. The evolution of traditional preaching on social media manifests as a form of hyperreality characterized by elements such as counterfeit, production, simulation, and hyperreality itself. These elements work to shape public perceptions of preachers, converting their real-world presence into a visually representative proliferation in the digital realm.

*In counterfeit, t*his study finds that preachers tend to imitate the way they preach as is usually done in conventional da'wah in the community. They do so in order to make the public easily remember and identify the preacher's identity. In addition, this imitation is done to strengthen the image identity of the preacher with their own characteristics. The preachers tend to imitate the way of preaching as is usually done in conventional da'wah in the community (Rustandi, 2022; Ahmad, 2023). In the imitation process, preachers will imitate or follow the way other preachers preach, which is usually a famous preacher with many followers. The goal is for public to have an interest in watching the da'wah content they upload. However, not all preachers will do this because some preachers prefer to imitate themselves when preaching directly.

Sources: YouTube account of Parepare's preacher in, @suhardidiri8416

Figure 1. Counterfeit in da'wah

This video (Figure 1) was uploaded by Ustad Suhardi Diri on his YouTube page, contains an invitation to increase the remembrance of Allah SWT. The da'wah theme presented in the video had previously been presented when preaching at one of the *takziyah* events that invited him as a preacher. This was done with the aim that public who did not have time to attend the event could also get the da'wah message.

"The theme of da'wah in this video was once delivered by me when I was invited to be a *takziyah* speaker in Parepare. Many worshipers who attended told me that this lecture was good and I thought of making a video with the same theme and uploading it on YouTube according to their request (Dr. Suhardi Diri, M. Sos, Lecturer and Preacher, interview on September 29, 2023)"

This statement shows that there has been a form of imitation on social media carried out by preachers in Parepare. This imitation is aimed at maintaining public interest in the da'wah theme, ensuring it continues to be presented by the preacher. The choice of YouTube as a medium for distributing da'wah messages is strategic because most followers have subscribed to the preacher's personal account, making it easier for them to access this content.

In production, people will make modifications to the original form and display the results of their production on social media. This production is carried out with the aim that this da'wah content can adjust to the segmentation of public by looking at its social and cultural background, so that adjustments can provide opportunities for uploaded da'wah content to have appeal (Luthfi et.al, 2022; Rustandi, 2022). The preachers who modify

da'wah content on social media are generally people who have the ability in audio-visual editing. The adjustment of uploaded content with the target segmentation of public provides an opportunity for this da'wah message to be more easily accepted and understood.

Sources: Instagram account of da'wah content creator, @hayanaaa

Figure 2. Production in da'wah

For example, the image above shows how a da'wah content uploaded by Hayana (da'iah) on Instagram in the form of images that have previously been modified by providing quotes so as to produce a new form of product. This modification is done with the aim to attract people who follow her account, most of whom are millennials, to her da'wah content.

> "Before posting this image, I searched for photos of the Qur'an on Google and put the quotes in this image. After that, I edited it in an editing application on smartphone, adjusting the color and font in such a way that people are interested in the post because most of my followers are students. I also hope that someone else will repost this image (Hayana, Lencturer and Da'wah Content Creator, interview on September 29, 2023)"

This statement illustrates that in delivering da'wah messages on social media, it is necessary to carry out a modification process in producing a da'wah content and thus requires editing skills. The production carried out shows that there is a change from the original form to a new form that adjusts the target of public to be addressed on social media.

In simulation, interpreted that there is no longer a relationship between reality and the virtual because the simulation created has created a

manipulative nature, even the impression that this simulation will look more realistic. The term manipulative in the context of da'wah does not mean negative, but rather an attitude or action taken by a preacher who displays his good character on social media with the aim of influencing others to change their perceptions and behavior. On social media, some preachers will show his character as a good figure (Pihlaja, 2020; Rustandi & Hendrawan, 2022). Appearing with an authoritative, charismatic or assertive attitude is done so that public can listen and receive da'wah messages seriously. In addition, the image of preachers built on social media will provide references to other social media users in representing the preacher's figure in real life.

Sources: Instagram account millenial preacher, @ akbarmuhammad_21

Figure 3. Simulation in da'wah

Figure 3 shows a da'wah content uploaded by Muhammad Akbar on his personal Instagram account conveys a da'wah message to become a human being who can be grateful for all the blessings given by Allah SWT. This content portrays the preacher as a figure who motivates others by being supported by narratives in the form of writing, sound and video recordings of himself who is depicted enjoying the beauty of life. This shows that in this da'wah content is made by manipulating his personal character in real life, becoming an authoritative and charismatic figure on social media. The goal is that people who see this content can be motivated to do the same thing.

"Although in my daily life, I realize that many of my friends see me as a man who has a feminine attitude, when I am invited to be a

preacher, I will appear with a firm and authoritative attitude. This is also will show in the videos of lectures that I upload on social media. I hope they will see me as a preacher, not as they know me everyday (Muhamad Akbar, College Student and Millenial Preacher, interview October 1, 2023)"

The results of this interview show that sometimes a preacher must manipulate his character in real life, becoming a different character according to the representation and wishes of the public on social media. The simulation that is carried out follows the public's perspective on the image of a preacher that they have understood, so that in the end this perception can be carried over, influencing and changing their view of the preacher.

In hyperreality, which illustrates that social media has a more realistic space and is even able to replace the position of the real world which has various limitations (Rustandi, 2022; Chairunnisa et.al, 2023). Hyperreality provides an opportunity for preachers to carry out da'wah live on social media, such as conventional da'wah carried out face-to-face. Such live preaching on social media also provides an opportunity for public to see preachers only through their respective smartphone devices. In addition, the public can also provide responses to the da'wah content, either using symbols or providing written responses in the social media comments column.

Sources: Instagram of Al Irsyad Mosque admin, @hisbul.rauf.14

Figure 4. Hyperreality in da'wah

This image (Figure 4) is obtained from a screenshot of a live video of Ustad Abdul Karim Faiz's lecture on Instagram when he preached at the

Al Irsyad Mosque in Parepare City. This video was recorded by the mosque admin live so that it allows worshipers who are unable to attend, to still follow directly at the same time. Meanwhile, another advantage of this form of hyperreality is that the video can still be saved on the Instagram account to be watched multiple times and this cannot be found in conventional da'wah.

> "Every Thursday night, I give a da'wah study at Al Irsyad Mosque in Parepare City. The social media admin will place his cellphone in front of me before I speak so that other worshipers who don't have time to come can still follow this study on social media. Sometimes in the Q and A session there are also viewers of this Instagram live video asking questions. The admin will write and forward the question to me (Abdul Karim Faiz, Lecturer and Preacher, interview, October 2, 2023)"

The results of this interview show that in the hyperreality, da'wah can reach all public by utilizing the services available on social media platforms. This is what represents that social media da'wah can replace the role of conventional da'wah because there is no limit to the interaction between preachers and public.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the four forms of hyperreality that occur on social media provide options for preachers to choose the form of delivery of da'wah content that suits their desires and abilities. This is in order to keep the delivery of da'wah messages sustainable, effective and efficient. However, on the other hand, this is considered by preachers to have shortcomings because it will further create distance between preachers and the public, so that there is a polemic in responding to the difference.

The Polemic of Da'wah in Parepare City

The use of social media in preaching is not fully considered to have a positive impact on da'wah activities in Parepare City. This polemic occurs because of the assumption of some preachers that preaching on social media has not been able to replace conventional preaching which until today is still being carried out by preachers. In addition, there is still an assumption that the benchmark of preacher professionalism cannot be based on proficiency in social media literacy for preaching.

Table 2. Standardization of Professional Preacher

No	Standart	Count	Presentase
1	Content of da'wah	16	18.82
2	Rhetoric Skills	12	14.12
3	Social Media Abilities	9	10.59
4	Personal Branding	9	10.59

Source: Research Result

The different perceptions of preachers in seeing the level of professionalism by comparing conventional da'wah and digital da'wah are motivated by cognitive dissonance and described in the factors that cause cognitive dissonance.

The first factor, the insistence on maintaining consistency in preaching contributes to cognitive dissonance in the debate over using social media for preaching. This perception stems from the belief that preachers should adhere to traditional methods that have long been accepted in society. These conventional preaching methods are still viewed as the most effective way to convey religious messages to the public, who are familiar with and prefer this approach. The assumption is that conventional da'wah allows for direct interaction between preachers and the public, fostering personal closeness and integration, which is considered more effective compared to da'wah on social media.

> "Preaching by conventional method is still much better than online. The congregation can ask the preacher if there is something in the content that is not clear, whereas with online da'wah we can only watch it. (Rusdi, Teacher in MI/ MTS DDI Ujung Lare of Parepare and preacher, interview October 3, 2023)"

In this statement, it can be assumed that there is a tendency for preachers to maintain the pattern of da'wah communication that has been carried out in the community. The question-and-answer process found in the narrative above can indicate the establishment of personal closeness between preachers and the public in da'wah activities carried out with conventional methods, which cannot be accommodated through preaching on social media.

Conversely, for preachers who are active in preaching on social media, they consider that the consistency of preaching is not only measured based on the methods used, but consistency refers to how often a da'wah

activist can continue to convey his preaching messages, anytime and anywhere. So da'wah on social media provides an opportunity to maintain that consistency.

> "A good preacher is one who can continue to preach anytime and anywhere, so with the presence of social media, this kind of da'wah can be realized. Preaching on social media can be done anytime, can reach distant worshipers and can also save costs. Simply uploading content on each social media, we have carried out the task of da'wah (Zulfajar, Extension Worker of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Parepare and Preacher, interview October 3, 2023)"

In the statement above, it can be concluded that there is a perception that da'wah on social media is more effective than conventional da'wah in order to maintain the consistency of a preacher in delivering da'wah messages to the public. The legitimization that social media is dynamic and economical is a reason for preachers to continue using social media. The two statements above show that there are different perceptions in understanding the meaning of consistency in da'wah. On the one hand, they consider that consistency refers to the da'wah method used, while on the other hand, they consider consistency more to the da'wah activity itself.

The second factor, satisfaction in preaching is also the cause of the polemic of da'wah on social media due to the emergence of different interpretations in interpreting the form of satisfaction with the transformation of da'wah that occurs today. Preachers who opt for conventional da'wah derive greater satisfaction and happiness from direct interaction with the public. They argue that this satisfaction and happiness stem from the ability to engage in face-to-face conversations, gather insights, listen to the congregation's issues firsthand, and offer solutions to these problems.

> "I'm feeling pleasure and satisfaction when I lecture in front of the congregation and then someone asks about religious issues, then I provide an answer to the statement. I feel happy because one of my duties as a preacher is to enlighten the congregation. On social media, maybe this can also be done, but I haven't gotten that sense of satisfaction because I don't meet them directly (Dzul Jabbar, Tahfiz Teacher and preacher, interview October 3, 2023)"

This statement indicates that conventional da'wah, which has always been an integral part of the Islamic movement, is more likely to provide satisfaction to preachers. The factor of face-to-face involvement and

personal closeness built through conventional da'wah is the main thing that must be maintained in the da'wah process.

On the other hand, preachers who are active in preaching on social media are more likely to feel satisfaction through the delivery of preaching messages on their social media. These preachers assume that if they preach on social media, then all information can be conveyed without any restrictions, themes, time and number of publics as has been the case in conventional da'wah. In general, da'wah activities carried out conventionally will be limited by the theme and time set by the organizer of da'wah activities. In addition, the worshipers who attend are also certain people who are invited to attend the activity. So, preachers sometimes feel less satisfied with such restrictions.

> "On social media, I can upload and share whatever da'wah message I want without being limited by certain themes. I prefer to be a da'wah content creator on social media rather than having to come directly to preach in front of the congregation, because in addition to my lack of confidence, I am also more free to create and edit my own da'wah content that will be uploaded on social media to make it more interesting and contemporary (Hayana, Lencturer and Da'wah Content Creator, interview on September 29, 2023)"

The acquisition of satisfaction between conventional da'wah and virtual da'wah is the reason for the polemic in addressing the phenomenon of hyperreality of da'wah that occurs. Some preachers think that the satisfaction of conventional da'wah can be obtained when they can interact and meet face-to-face with the public, while other preachers will get satisfaction on social media because they can create and share various da'wah content according to their wishes, without having to face various restrictions as usually happens in conventional da'wah.

The third factor, motivation in preaching, is also the cause of the polemic in interpreting the hyperreality of preaching on social media. Motivation provides a stimulus for preachers in Parepare City in deciding the form of da'wah consistency that will be carried out in the community; by continuing to preach conventionally or trying to preach on social media and vice versa, the professionalism of preachers can be a stimulus to determine these choices.

Preachers who choose conventional da'wah have the perception that conventional preaching is a measure of their level of professionalism. The ability to deliver memorable lecture content, proficiency in rhetoric, and

attractive personal appearance of preachers in front of the congregation become objects that can show their image as professional preachers.

> "When I deliver the Friday sermon, I will always raise themes that are relevant to current conditions. Sometimes I even include a Bugis proverb in the sermon, so that the congregation is more impressed and the da'wah message can reach them (Suparaman, Freelancer and preacher, interview October 3, 2023)"

This statement assumes that the ability of a preacher can only be measured when they are directly confronted with the public, therefore the quality of the content of the lecture and the art of da'wah rhetoric is the standard they must meet to gain legitimacy as a professional preacher.

On the other hand, preachers who opt for digital da'wah on social media believe that professionalism extends beyond the content of their lectures, rhetoric, and appearance. They view professionalism as their capacity to adapt to societal changes, including utilizing social media effectively for preaching. They argue that social media allows them to build their image beyond just their spoken content, rhetoric, and appearance in uploaded da'wah content. This perspective is supported by the increasing popularity of Indonesian preachers who have gained more prominence through social media than they did through conventional preaching methods.

> "Das'ad Latif, Abdul Somad, Adi Hidayat and many preachers who are more popular on social media. They often appear on social media and then there are many invitations to lecture directly and many preachers now actually follow their way. This means that we preachers in the millennial era are required to be able to utilize social media for preaching, not only for financial matters but also so that people can judge us as professional preachers (M. Taufiq Hidayat Pabbajah, Civil Servants and preacher, interview October 4, 2023)"

This argument shows that preaching on social media provides a stimulus that can motivate preachers to be aware of the benefits of social media, especially in the field of da'wah in the current digital era. Labeling as professional preachers from the public today is based on how many people watch preacher content on social media and how popular they are in the community. In the third form of cognitive dissonance that causes the polemic of da'wah on social media, especially when it is relevant to increasing the professionalism of preachers. Therefore, there needs to be a solution to reduce cognitive dissonance among preachers in Parepare, so

some solutions can be offered to overcome the polemic.

First, increasing the knowledge aspect for preachers is not only necessary to increase knowledge in the field of religion to answer current social conditions, but preachers also need to increase knowledge in the field of utilizing social media technology, in order to intensify the da'wah movement that can reach the public widely and thoroughly. Second, preachers need to understand that currently communication interactions are mostly carried out on social media, so they need to adjust to the development of communication that occurs. Da'wah carried out on social media reflects effective and efficient communication while conventional da'wah reflects a directed and measurable form of communication, so that both can be elaborated according to the needs of the public. Third, direct da'wah training is still needed to ensure that da'wah knowledge is delivered by people who have the capacity and capability to teach it, but it must also be supported by information obtained on social media with the aim that the two can complement each other. Fourth, increasing the awareness and responsibility of preachers towards society and Muslims by interpreting the conditions and social changes of society, without having to focus on the delivery of da'wah only in one form. The condition of society that always needs religious learning and information is the responsibility of preachers to use various methods and media in preaching.

Based on the solutions mentioned above, it can be concluded that reducing the debate between conventional da'wah and digital da'wah requires increased awareness and understanding of the forms, functions, and benefits of both media. This awareness will enable da'wah activities to evolve into a widespread and sustainable movement, adapting to current public conditions through strategic adjustments.

CONCLUSION

The hyperreality of da'wah on social media arises from the transformation of reality into a digital virtual format. This transformation is driven by elements such as imitation, production, simulation, and hyperreality within da'wah practices. The goal is to shape public perceptions regarding the role of social media as a platform for da'wah. However, this phenomenon also sparks debates among preachers in Parepare City regarding the authenticity and effectiveness of digital da'wah. Cognitive dissonance formed in the perception of preachers is motivated by differences in interpreting the attitude of consistency, form and motivation built when da'wah

conventionally and da'wah through social media. Therefore, increasing the professionalism of preachers is expected to be a solution to reduce the polemics caused by cognitive dissonance among preachers in Parepare City, including through increasing aspects of preacher knowledge, increasing aspects of effective da'wah communication, increasing aspects of self-coaching and increasing awareness and responsibility.

The implications of this research suggest that preachers in Parepare City are utilizing social media as a means to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of da'wah efforts. This approach aims to complement rather than replace traditional, targeted, and measurable da'wah patterns. Elaboration between the two is needed in order to adjust to the current social conditions of society. In addition, increased training in da'wah professionalism carried out periodically is expected to minimize the occurrence of cognitive dissonance that can cause polemics in terms of utilizing social media. Future researchers suggest that further research can be carried out related to the motives and image formation of preachers on social media.

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