



Da'wah and Commodification of Religion in West Java Broadcasting Institutions

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the ideology underlying the operation of religion-based broadcasting institutions and how the process of commodification of da'wah occurs in West Java. Using a qualitative approach and case studies, this study examines three Broadcasting Institutions in Bandung, Cirebon, and Tasikmalaya, which were selected based on their active involvement in da'wah broadcasting and wide audience reach. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews, field observations, and analysis of the content of the da'wah program for six months. The results of the study show that da'wah has undergone a transformation from a spiritual function to a media product that is packaged according to market interests and dominant ideologies. Commodification occurs in three aspects: broadcast content, audiences as commodities and sources of funds, and media labor that acts as a capitalistic production apparatus. This research confirms that Broadcasting Institutions in West Java not only prioritize educational functions in da'wah, but also make religion an economic and ideological instrument to maintain its existence in the midst of competition in the broadcasting industry. These findings contribute to the study of the political economy of the media and become an important reference for policymakers in balancing commercial interests and da'wah functions in the media.

Keywords: Broadcasting industry; broadcasting institutions; da'wah; religious commodification; west java.

INTRODUCTION

Da'wah as an activity of delivering Islamic teachings has undergone a significant transformation in the modern media era, especially through the presence of Broadcasting Institutions, both television and radio. Broadcasting media is now not only a means of spreading religious values, but also part of a competitive and profit-oriented industry. This phenomenon raises an important question: whether da'wah in the

broadcasting media is still purely a form of worship and religious education, or has it become an industrial product that is commodified for the benefit of the market. In the midst of the increasingly competitive dynamics of the broadcasting industry, da'wah not only serves as a means of spreading Islamic teachings, but also becomes part of the media business strategy (Sarbin, 2018).

This issue is particularly relevant in West Java, the province with the largest Muslim population as well as the largest number of broadcasting institutions in Indonesia. To date, the number of Broadcasting Institutions in the region has reached 476, most of which insert religious programs in their various broadcast formats. Among the various program options broadcast by Broadcasting Institutions, both television and radio, religious content always comes with a variety of creative packaging, such as monologue lectures, interactive dialogues, religious motivations, muratals, Islamic stories, and religious music chanting. The presence of this religion-based content is an integral part of the broadcast that airs every day (Hikmat & Firdaus, 2021).

West Java, as a region with a very religious society, has a wide market potential for religious programs. This factor is one of the main reasons why television and radio maintain religious programs, both through special formats of "religious broadcasts" and in other general programs (Manap et al., 2024). Although only a small percentage of Broadcasting Institutions formally carry a religious broadcast format, in reality almost all still include religious content, especially Islam, in their various forms of broadcasting. On the one hand, this shows the high demand of the audience for da'wah content. But on the other hand, a critical question arises: to what extent does the broadcast da'wah program reflect authentic Islamic values, or has it been shaped by market logic, ratings, and sponsorship interests?

This phenomenon is known as religious commodification, which is the process when religious values are repackaged into a media product that can be sold. In the context of broadcast media, this is evident in religious programs that are not only aimed at conveying Islamic teachings, but also adapted to the demands of the industry, such as increasing ratings, advertising appeal, and audience segmentation (Kong, 2006). Da'wah in the media no longer stands solely as a normative da'wah mission, but must also adapt to market logic to remain competitive and commercially attractive (Nisa, 2024). Thus, the content of da'wah becomes an object that is modified in such a way that it suits the tastes of the market and the

expectations of capital owners.

Within the framework of the political economy of media, commodification encompasses three main aspects: the commodification of content (content), audience (audience), and labor (journalists or broadcasters) (Mosco, 2009). In the system of media capitalism, da'wah that was originally spiritual and social has shifted into a tool of economic production, even in many cases an ideological tool (Mg, 2018). Commodification in the media industry creates a close link between Broadcasting Institutions, audiences, markets, and even the country, as each has its own interests in the broadcasting system (Sitompul & Akbari, 2021). To have an exchange rate, a commodity needs certain packaging that makes it more attractive to the market, thus obtaining maximum profits (Muslikhin et al., 2021).

Broadcasting institutions, both television and radio, have a variety of options in broadcasting or broadcasting their content to the audience. As an industry, Broadcasting Institutions have strict considerations in determining the broadcast format and content that will be delivered (Sarbini, 2018). In its operational process, Broadcasting Institutions use frequencies that are public property, so that each Broadcasting Institution manager has a great responsibility for the content of its broadcasts (Janah & Mayesti, 2020). This responsibility is not only limited to the fulfillment of the regulations contained in the Broadcasting Code of Conduct and Broadcast Program Standards (P3SPS), but also covers social, cultural, and spiritual aspects, including broadcasting programs that are positive, educational, and able to strengthen national integration and religious life of the community (Jan Sompie et al., 2024).

Among the various types of content broadcast by Broadcasting Institutions, da'wah programs occupy a fairly strategic position, especially in religious societies such as in West Java. Da'wah programs in the broadcasting media function as a means of spreading Islamic teachings and building community morals (Salsabila et al., 2022). However, in an increasingly competitive era of the broadcasting industry, da'wah programs must also keep up with market dynamics, such as increasing ratings, audience interest, and commercial appeal for advertisers. As a result, da'wah is no longer solely oriented to the spread of religious values, but also undergoes a process of commodification, which is transformed into media products that can be sold and packaged in accordance with the business interests of the Broadcasting Institution.

The phenomenon of commodification of da'wah poses various challenges, both in terms of content and methods of delivering religious messages. On the one hand, broadcasting media allows da'wah to reach a wider audience with a more interesting and dynamic format. However, on the other hand, commercial pressures can lead to simplification or even distortion of da'wah messages to better suit market demands. As an industry, Broadcasting Institutions in carrying out their broadcasting work are certainly inseparable from certain ideological elements that move them. Therefore, this paper will examine this aspect of media ideology using a critical theory of media political economy, in order to understand how "hyper-commercialism" has influenced the landscape of broadcasting institutions as well as cultural practices that place great emphasis on market worship. Basically, the theory of political economy is critical, so that in the media it is seen as a system of production, distribution and consumption of symbolic forms that increasingly require the mobilization of social resources that are materially and culturally scarce (Nicholas, 2000).

From a business perspective, the presence of religious content is a strategic opportunity for Broadcasting Institutions to attract the attention of advertisers. Religious programs, especially those with loyal and large congregations or audiences, can be capitalized as an attractive broadcast product for sponsors or advertisers (Gray et al., 2017). This phenomenon shows how the media industry not only plays a role in spreading religious values, but also makes religion part of economic strategy. In media studies, the process by which religious values are packaged and sold as media products is known as religious commodification (Ridwan, 2019).

This study aims to analyze how the ideology underlying the operations of faith-based broadcasting institutions in West Java affects the policies and preparation of da'wah content broadcast to the audience. In addition, this study examines how the process of commodification of da'wah takes place, especially in transforming religious values into media products that are attractively packaged and directed to support the sustainability of the broadcasting industry. The focus of the study includes how da'wah content, audience, and labor are used as part of a market-patterned media production strategy. Recent research also shows that da'wah content on social media, such as Instagram, is produced by paying attention to algorithms, trends, and audience segmentation as part of the creative industry's strategy (Obiyanto et al., 2024). This study also examines the practice of managing religious audiences, both as advertising targets and

as financial support communities through donation and infaq systems. Thus, this study seeks to explain how da'wah in the media not only carries out a spiritual function, but is also constructed as an economic and ideological tool in the modern broadcasting landscape.

The study of the commodification of religion in the media has become a concern in the study of the political economy of the media and communication. Several previous studies have discussed how religious content in the mass media is packaged and used as a tool to achieve industrial interests. Study by [Mufadil et al. \(2022\)](#) shows that the commodification of da'wah on social media has led to a shift in the function of da'wah from simply delivering Islamic teachings to being part of an industry that follows market trends. Meanwhile, research by [Manggaga \(2018\)](#) discusses how to commodify TV content through a political economy perspective that emphasizes social relations, especially the mutually beneficial power relations of the sources of production, distribution, and consumption, including the source of communication. On the other hand, [Risdayah \(2020\)](#) highlighting how the commodification of da'wah in the Broadcasting Institution leads to the phenomenon of religious symbolization in the media, where religious values are constructed and capitalized for the benefit of the broadcasting business.

Although various studies have discussed the commodification of da'wah in the context of social media and Islamic-based television, there is still a research gap in understanding how Broadcasting Institutions in West Java, as the province with the largest number of Broadcasting Institutions in Indonesia, manage the commodification of da'wah in their broadcasting. As noted by [Fakhrurroji et al. \(2020\)](#), studies on da'wah in the media tend to focus on preacher figures or digital platforms, while the institutional dimension and production strategies of local media are still rarely touched in depth. This research offers a new perspective by exploring how Broadcasting Institutions not only make da'wah a media product, but also construct economic relationships with audiences through a congregational approach. In addition, this study will highlight how economic, political, and regulatory factors also affect the form and substance of the da'wah broadcast, as well as how the existence of broadcasting institutions oriented to religious broadcasting takes advantage of the potential of the highly religious market in West Java to obtain economic benefits.

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to explore the phenomenon of commodification of da'wah in Broadcasting

Institutions in West Java. The case study was chosen because it allows researchers to understand in depth the specific context, namely how Broadcasting Institutions with religious formats and general formats that continue to broadcast religious content package da'wah as part of a market-oriented media strategy. The case study approach is best used when researchers want to gain a deep understanding of a phenomenon in a real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clear. In this case, the approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of media practices in managing da'wah as a commodity (Creswell, 2018). This research focuses on institutional behavior in the production and distribution process of commodified da'wah content. The object of the research includes several broadcasting institutions in West Java, both television and radio, that actively broadcast da'wah programs. Of the 476 existing institutions, three were selected as case studies by considering certain criteria, namely having da'wah programs that broadcast regularly, reaching a wide audience, representing a variety of media types and broadcast formats, and being willing to provide access to data to researchers.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with producers, broadcasters, and da'wah program managers; direct observation in the broadcast room; as well as content analysis of several episodes of da'wah programs aired in the last six months. Data analysis was carried out thematically with the approach from Miles and Huberman which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The main themes analyzed include da'wah packaging strategies, commercial logic behind religious broadcasting, and patterns of interaction with audiences through infaq or donations. The research was carried out in three major cities in West Java—Bandung, Cirebon, and Tasikmalaya. In its implementation, this research pays attention to ethical principles, especially as it relates to religious institutions. All informants provide written consent before being interviewed, and their identities are kept confidential upon request. The researcher also seeks to maintain neutrality in understanding the diversity of religious and institutional views that arise in the practice of da'wah broadcasting. Academic ethics and narrative integrity are maintained to ensure that the research results are not only scientifically accurate, but also sensitive to the social and religious context being studied, as Firman Maulidna et al. (2025) also emphasize that the qualitative approach in da'wah studies must be based on ethical principles, empathy, and awareness

of cultural sensitivity so as not to cause bias or misrepresentation in the results of the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ideology and Commodification of Da'wah in Broadcasting Institutions

As a social institution, Broadcasting Institutions that are also part of the media have ideological interests to ensure operational sustainability and strengthen their influence in society. Scientifically, Broadcasting Institutions and journalism are studies in the social sciences that function to convey content or discourse to the public. Ideology in the media is built by dominant groups with the aim of reproducing and legitimizing their dominance with the main strategy of building audience awareness (Eriyanto, 2009).

The diversity of genres of Broadcasting Institutions, whether general nuances, certain themes, or religions, does not deny the existence of ideology in each institution. As an industry, all Broadcasting Institutions have the same common thread because of the presence of the dominant in their social structure. This similarity is seen in commercial interests that make the media formulate various policies that strengthen the dominance of certain groups. Broadcasting institutions with a religious format are inseparable from this; In fact, it uses religious symbols strongly to strengthen legitimacy. Religion, which is understood as a belief or belief that guides the ummah in action, is also an instrument of values that is used as a guideline in various activities (Berger & Kahmad, 2000). In the limitations of human beings facing social reality, religion becomes the main basis for things that are transcendental (Boon, 2020).

In a more reflective and interdisciplinary perspective of religious studies, religion is understood as an entity that does not stand alone in a single and fixed manner, but is formed and interpreted in certain social, cultural, and historical contexts that can be influenced by power dynamics and social relations (Van Buren et al., 2020). This shows that the meaning of religion in the media, including in the da'wah program, is very likely to be constructed in accordance with the ideological interests of those who have power over the media. Meanwhile, in the context of Indonesian Islam, da'wah is prophetic: da'wah that liberates, humanizes, and transcends. When da'wah is over-commodified, it is feared that these noble functions will be reduced to mere spectacle or market commodities (Syihabuddin &

Huda, 2024).

Broadcasting institutions in West Java position religion as an ideological instrument as well as a strategic economy. Religion is used to establish certain ideological values and mobilize audiences for the sake of political economy. Religious symbols are not only present as a means of spirituality, but also as part of capitalism's strategy that benefits the dominant group in the market that suits their ideology. Every event in the media is influenced by a "circle of influence" consisting of individuals, journalists, work routines, organizations, external factors, and ideologies (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). In practice, Broadcasting Institutions also have economic and ideological interests that affect how da'wah is commodified in the broadcasting industry. The commodification of da'wah occurs when religious values are not only disseminated as moral and spiritual teachings, but also packaged as media products that have a selling value and can be commercialized (Zailani & Ulinnuha, 2023).

Da'wah broadcast through Broadcasting Institutions is no longer purely a means of education and the dissemination of religious teachings, but has become part of a business strategy aimed at attracting as many audiences as possible (Manap et al., 2024). The increasingly fierce competition between Broadcasting Institutions encourages religious content to be packaged more attractively with professional production techniques and adapted to market tastes. The selection of preachers who appear in broadcast programs is often based more on their popularity and attractiveness in front of the audience, rather than purely their religious knowledge.

In addition to the economic aspect, political factors also play an important role in determining how da'wah is broadcast in Broadcasting Institutions. Broadcasting institutions that have links to certain political or economic groups tend to present da'wah that supports the interests of capital owners. As a result, the da'wah broadcast not only prioritizes religious values, but also becomes a tool to shape public opinion and build ideological awareness that is in line with the interests of the owner of the Broadcasting Institution. This phenomenon is in line with research Lee (2017) which highlights how religious broadcasting in Korea has long been a political tool closely linked to power and social dynamics. Furthermore, research by Grosfeld et al. (2024) in Poland it was found that media affiliated with political interests can influence the religious level of society, where independent media are more likely to lower religious participation

than government-controlled media.

The mass media in the capitalist system expands the process of commodity production by creating a message that reflects not only economic but also political interests, in which the Broadcasting Institution acts as an integrated ideological production tool in all its journalistic activities (Mosco, 2009). In this system, Broadcasting Institutions are not only transmitters of information, but also part of the commodity production chain and the spread of ideology. Media is never value-free; When not in the form of news content, commodification appears in the form of advertisements, narrative choices, and symbolic representations. Da'wah broadcasts in the mass media are often packaged more for reasons of industry strategy than purely educational motivation (Sarhini, 2018).

Along with the development of technology and digital media, the commodification of da'wah in Broadcasting Institutions is growing massively. Digitalization opens up wider commodification opportunities, especially with the transformation of communications that include data, text, images, video, and sound into a single digital format that can be disseminated more quickly (Putri et al., 2024). This advantage of digitalization not only increases the speed of information transmission, but also significantly expands the coverage of broadcasting. If previously radio and television were only limited to the frequency space of certain service areas, with digitalization Broadcasting Institutions were able to reach a wider audience through online and streaming platforms (Fitri et al., 2024).

Commodification in electronic communication allows da'wah content to be packaged in a variety of formats and distributed to various communication channels, ensuring more efficient use of the network. As part of the commodification efforts, the Broadcasting Institution packages da'wah content in a more attractive way, not only in terms of visuals and audio, but also through the selection of speakers who have great appeal to the audience. Broadcasting personnel in Broadcasting Institutions play the role of agents who capture, package, and present reality that has been constructed to suit the economic interests and ideology of the owner of the Broadcasting Institution (Sjøvaag et al., 2019).

In the process of commodification, the Broadcasting Institution actively determines the elements in the da'wah program that are tailored to ideological interests, including the news structure, point of view, and selection of sources. Language is the main instrument in shaping the reality that the media wants to construct, through the choice of words and

narratives that reflect certain ideologies (Karapetjana & Roziņa, 2021). News, in this case, is no longer a reflection of objective reality, but rather a result of construction based on the interpretation of journalists and broadcasters influenced by their consciousness and social environment (Li et al., 2023).

The existence of a news in a Broadcasting Institution is actually the result of a transaction between the Broadcasting Institution and its source (Montgomery, 2008). In media reality, the main source of information is not what actually happens in real life, but rather how the social and cultural relationship between journalists and sources develops in the media industry. The reality of news is also greatly influenced by the politics of knowledge that develops in every newsroom and news beat (Hassell et al., 2021). Therefore, every news presented in the Broadcasting Institution always goes through a selection process that emphasizes certain aspects and disguises other aspects that are considered irrelevant or unfavorable to the Broadcasting Institution.

Constructivism in the media views that Broadcasting Institutions not only present information, but also construct and distribute content that has been tailored to the internal and external interests of Broadcasting Institutions (Knoblauch, 2013). In fact, the audience itself also constructs the messages they receive from the Broadcasting Institution, making the media an ideological instrument used by the dominant group to disseminate their influence to a wider audience. The media or Broadcasting Institutions thus define and interpret social reality based on the ideology they adhere. In the formation of this reality, the two main factors that play a role are language and political markings. Political marking reflects how a reality is constructed, controlled, and interpreted within a broader social framework (Barbehön, 2020). Broadcasting Institutions play an important role in providing markers for a certain event or issue, so that the audience understands reality in the perspective that has been determined by the Broadcasting Institution.

To further understand how the commodification of da'wah in Broadcasting Institutions occurs, it should be noted that Broadcasting Institutions operate in various layers of broadcasting practices that influence each other. Shoemaker & Reese (2014) Identify five main factors that influence media content, namely individual factors, work routines, organizations, external factors, and ideology. Finally, the practice of commodification of da'wah in Broadcasting Institutions is not something

that happens by chance, but is part of the media industry's strategy that has certain economic and ideological interests. As a capitalist apparatus, broadcasting personnel in the Broadcasting Institution are tasked with securing the interests of the industry by carrying out the agreed broadcasting pattern. Broadcasting institutions and the human resources in them are greatly influenced by various internal and external factors, including media ownership which plays a very important role in determining the direction of broadcast policy. Thus, the commodification of da'wah in Broadcasting Institutions is an unavoidable phenomenon, especially in the increasingly competitive broadcasting industry ecosystem.

Commodification Work Pattern in Broadcasting Institutions

As usual, each reality has its own uniqueness as a social fact that is spread among the community. Culture and religion, for example, have a high level of wisdom that cannot be equated with each other. One culture with another, traditions and rituals in it, has a value that cannot be converted by anything, including material aspects (Solikin & Wahdini, 2024). Religion is also a part of the social fact with which humans carry out various traditions. Then religious people carry out religious rituals with their own beliefs (Santiago, 2023).

All religious traditions, both individual rituals and those with social nuances, when entering the newsroom at the Broadcasting Institution become public and very open. Religious content has become part of popular culture and has also changed people's perceptions of the meaning of religion (Leicht et al., 2021). Religious rituals become more provant and negate their sacred meaning. When it becomes media content, religion will have similarities with other objects such as sports, politics, economics, art, and entertainment. The media's perspective does not sort out which is religious or not, but is raised as content or not an object determined by the extent to which it can provide benefits.

Of course, to change the meaning of ritual or sacred to be more provan, it takes efforts from the Broadcasting Institution to make it attractive and suitable for consumption by the public. In the process of shifting the meaning of a news object, Mosco calls it commodification as the process of changing from use value to exchange rate (Mosco, 2009). This means that in commodification there is a process of transformation of goods and services that are originally seen because of their use value, then change to commodities that are considered valuable because they go

through certain packaging so that they have a high selling value. A commodity is considered a product when it has gone through an engineering process and exchange, carried out in an organized manner involving many parties. In fact, the use value in question is not only in the aspect of consumption for human survival, but also for a prestige and lifestyle of the community in order to gain social prestige. To see more about the commodification process carried out, it can be seen from at least three important sectors that are the material for Mosco's analysis, namely content commodification, audience commodification, and labor commodification (Mosco, 2009).

First, commodification of content. In the study of media political economy, the main concern in the process of commodification lies in the tendency to ignore the social, cultural, and educational dimensions of the media, and instead focus on content as the main commodity. This aspect of content is a strategic vehicle used by industry players to commercialize the media production process. The emphasis on content is very logical given the central position of content in the media industry ecosystem that considers that "content is king" and is a major magnet for the economic growth of broadcasting institutions. Therefore, when political economists examine the forms of commodities in the world of communication, broadcast content is the first and foremost concern. From this point of view, the process of commodification in communication involves transforming messages—from bits of data to complex thought systems—into products that can be marketed to the public and advertisers. This is reinforced by research by Muslikhin et al. (2021) which shows that online media such as Tribunnews.com actively convert social media content into news that has economic appeal through clicks and impressions. In addition, Luhukay & Rusadi (2023), within the framework of Mosco's thinking, emphasized that not only content, but also audiences and digital workforce are also commodified in the digital media landscape in Indonesia, creating a new phenomenon in the communication industry that is highly determined by market logic.

The process of producing an exchange rate in the content of communication involves all social parts into the orbit of commodification, including labor, consumers, and capital. A general trend in communication research has been to concentrate on content as a commodity and, by extension, to identify the relationship between the commodity status of content and its meaning. As a result, communication is considered a

commodity because in addition to generating more value, it also contains symbols and images whose meanings help form certain awareness. Finally, the mass media in capitalist societies has expanded the process of commodity production by, among other things, producing messages that reflect the interests of capital (Mosco, 2009).

Second, public commodification. Mosco explained that the audience or audience is the main commodity of the mass media (Mosco, 2009). In the world of Broadcasting Institutions, that is, those who are identified as radio listeners and television viewers. Here, the Broadcasting Institution is formed from a process in which the company produces an audience and delivers it to advertisers. Broadcast content is created for none other than for the audience.

When the system has been digitized, Broadcasting Institutions remain loyal in conducting information transactions, intended to further pamper their audience so that it is easier to access broadcasting content. In essence, the broadcasting industry can package and repackage customers in a form that specifically reflects their actual purchases and demographic characteristics. The condition of the audience for Broadcasting Institutions is very important data to become a commodity again for advertisers who are always looking for people in certain segments (Ismail et al., 2019). With specific data related to the right demographic, it is easier for advertisers to market products.

The explanation of audience commodification actually occurs outside the direct process in which media companies produce all media, be it print, electronic, or online media. The process of commodification integrates the media industry into capitalist economic activities in creating media programs or content with the intention of seeking a specific segment of the audience or audience (Manggaga, 2018). Each audience demographic is an important capital for the media to become the path of advertisers. Even in the context of commodification, the creation of audiences is more important than producing ideology.

It is becoming increasingly clear that this audience commodification applies to advertisers who will provide material benefits, which measure media from audience presence or media reach regardless of the platform. Media as an industry is part of a process that sees media companies produce audiences to deliver to advertisers. Program design or media content is nothing but an effort to reach as many audiences or audiences as possible whose existence is then offered to advertisers. Ads will then be entered

based on the number of counts and segmentation adjusted to the broadcast program (Sutrisno & Putranto, 2005).

Third, labor commodification. No less important in commodification in the political economy is the presence of the workforce, commonly known as broadcasting personnel. Massively, the presence of the communication workforce in the field of broadcasting is thriving, along with the opening of many educational institutions that produce journalists or broadcasting people in general in various regions and countries (Luhukay & Rusadi, 2023). In fact, broadcasting is so open to people who have the same specialization even though they do not get a linear education with the world of broadcasting such as communication science, for example.

The worker of the Broadcasting Institution is nothing more than the apparatus of capital or the means of production of capitalism, so that he reduces the whole human dimension to a mere object, he loses the subject for himself because his creativity has been lost (Hardiman, 2009). Braverman in "*Labor and Monopoly Capital*", for example, explains that in the world of capitalism there is always an important instrument in its work process, namely workers. In the process, management becomes the scientific brain of a company and workers, who once had the craft skills to control the work process, are transformed into complementary machines (Braverman, 1974). There is an understandable tendency to emphasize the individual creative dimension of broadcast production that distinguishes this sector from many sectors of work that share the characteristics of industrial production. But the emphasis on individual creativity in the work of the Broadcasting Corporation actually hides the complex production process. This means that the workers of the Broadcasting Institution are the same as the workers of the production system of another industry outside the Broadcasting Institution and the media in general.

Religious Broadcasting and Audiences as Objects of Commodification

The practice of commodification carried out by the media in several cases studied by communication scholars is related to media ownership, including broadcasting institutions, both in terms of diversity, ownership, content, and impact. One of the highlights is for example a study that examines the ownership of Broadcasting Institutions by politicians who are very thick with political content (Kartinawati & Wijaya, 2020). The impact can be seen in the process of commodification of news, especially in

political moments such as elections, regional elections, or similar political activities, where information is compiled and disseminated to accommodate certain interests. In this context, religion is often used as a strategic instrument to shape public opinion and strengthen political support through specially framed religious narratives. The process of commodifying religious content is also increasingly massive with very diverse packaging (Halim, 2018).

Meanwhile, the Broadcasting Institution in West Java is a content production entity that is also inseparable from economic and political interests. So that when the existence of a Broadcasting Institution that has a religious broadcast format, it becomes very interesting, because in it we will see how the process of commodification in the realm of religious content is. Statistically, there are no less than 30 radio stations in West Java that have a religious broadcast format. There are also several televisions in West Java that have a religious broadcast format. The existence of Broadcasting Institutions with a religious format is certainly not a coincidence, but a business strategy on how they seek material benefits from the religious programs they raise (Astuti et al., 2024).

With the choice of religious broadcast format, it means that almost all of the Broadcasting Institution's programs are related to religious content. As an industry, it means that the owners and managers of Broadcasting Institutions already believe that how to run this broadcasting business can be done by "selling" religious issues -- regardless of religion (Sarhini, 2018). So it can be ascertained how the presence of religious broadcasts in Broadcasting Institutions has shifted the function of religion into a commodity by positioning it as a selling point.

Unlike places of worship, or other places where religious teachings are conveyed, in Broadcasting Institutions, religious content requires expertise and professional management to package it better (Viney, 1999). So that religious content is not presented as it is, but there must be a touch of art, entertainment nuanced packaging, involving human resources who are very experts in their fields. With dozens of broadcasting institutions that choose the format of religious broadcasting, it means that religion is so attractive and worthy of sale that it can support a broadcasting industry. Even though there are a total of 476 broadcasting institutions in West Java that also choose other broadcast formats, still present religious content (Slamet et al., 2024). That means how interesting religion is for Broadcasting Institutions in West Java.

The commodification of religion in the context of Broadcasting Institutions in West Java is very relevant, considering that West Java has the largest population in Indonesia and a very high level of religiosity. This means that based on commodification theory, the market or audience of Broadcasting Institutions in West Java is very conducive and promising in terms of business, especially Broadcasting Institutions that present religious or religious content. Factually, there are several Broadcasting Institutions in West Java that are full broadcasts from on to off again or even 24 hours a whole religious broadcast. They have listeners or audiences that are so fanatical and very loyal (Slamet et al., 2024). His presence is very much needed and fulfills the spiritual thirst of his audience so that what is called the audience is then strengthened by calling him a pilgrim. This means that people who are in one line, including in terms of their religious understanding.

Field data obtained with religious program managers in five broadcasting institutions in Bandung, Cirebon, and Tasikmalaya, shows that more than 70% of the audience of da'wah programs on the radio follow the broadcast regularly every day. One station even noted that their dawn broadcast was followed by more than 60,000 listeners in one hour of broadcasting, based on the results of streaming platform monitoring and SMS interaction reports. In addition, in an interview with the program manager, it was mentioned that donations from listeners account for up to 40% of the station's daily operating income.

From the behavior of the broadcasting audience who are so loyal and have a high need for religious content, the existence of religious content is no longer just a means of da'wah, but has also become an object of commodification. There are two approaches that are commonly used by broadcasting institutions. First, audiences are used as commodities that are sold to advertisers. The large audience for religious content provides a high selling point for advertisers, so the media sees the economic potential of the popularity of religious broadcasts. Second, the audience is also a direct contributor, both through infak and alms, to broadcasting institutions. This pattern continues to increase, especially in institutions that apply a congregational religious approach, thereby creating a close relationship between the audience and broadcasting institutions as a spiritual space as well as an economic institution (Slamet et al., 2024).

In terms of content and managerial, KPID West Java noted that there are sensitive aspects related to the issue of religious moderation in

religious broadcasting. Many broadcasting institutions are owned or affiliated with certain religious institutions, so the editorial policy and direction of religious messages cannot be separated from the ideology or doctrine of the parent organization. In this context, religious teachings are not only a moral value, but also a tool to shape the ideological awareness and financial loyalty of the audience. Content commodification also occurs not only to attract advertisers, but also to mobilize viewers to actively support broadcasting institutions economically (Muslikhin et al., 2021).

The practice of audience generosity in the form of infak and alms to broadcasting institutions managed by religious communities is a direct effect of viewer loyalty. In this case, audiences not only act as statistical numbers for advertising, but also become part of alternative funding strategies in the broadcasting industry. This phenomenon shows that religious broadcasting institutions have succeeded in combining spiritual and economic interests in a single media production system (Luhukay & Rusadi, 2023).

Finally, the commodification of religious broadcasts in West Java is a practice that is difficult to avoid due to a combination of various supporting factors: large audiences, abundant religious content, and qualified broadcasting human resources. From 2021 to 2024, the number of broadcasting institutions in West Java continues to increase, in line with the popularity of da'wah programs on local television and radio (Slamet et al., 2024). This indicates that religious content has become a strategic instrument, not only in shaping public piety, but also as a driver of the local broadcasting economy. Thus, religious broadcasting in West Java broadcasting media no longer only functions as a means of spreading spiritual values, but also as a tool for economic capitalization and strengthening group ideology. This study of the commodification of da'wah is increasingly relevant to understand how religious media not only shapes religious discourse, but also constructs power relations and economic interests behind the broadcast screen.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that da'wah in Broadcasting Institutions in West Java has undergone a significant shift in meaning and function as a result of commodification practices in the media industry. Da'wah, which was originally interpreted as a prophetic activity to liberate, humanize, and transcend, is now constructed as a media product that has a selling value

and is adjusted to the ideological and political economic interests of the owner of the Broadcasting Institution. This is in line with the media's political economy theory which views the media as a symbolic means of production controlled by market interests and power.

The practice of commodification occurs through three main dimensions: broadcast content, audience, and broadcast workforce. The content of da'wah is packaged in an attractive and entertaining format in order to attract as many audiences as possible. Audiences are not only positioned as recipients of messages, but also as commodities sold to advertisers, and even become a direct source of income through infak and donations. Meanwhile, the media workforce is reduced to a capital apparatus that supports the sustainability of a content production system controlled by market logic.

These findings indicate that religion in the media no longer stands as a neutral spiritual space, but has become part of the practice of capitalism that makes religious values an ideological tool as well as a source of economic profit. Broadcasting institutions in West Java take advantage of the potential of community diversity and audience loyalty as a sustainable business strategy, especially with a congregational approach that creates emotional and economic attachment between the audience and the media.

The practical implication of these findings is the need for stricter and more sensitive regulations on the issue of commodification of da'wah, both by the Regional Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPID) and other supervisory institutions, so that religious broadcasting is not solely subject to market interests. In addition, strengthening religious media literacy for the public is also important so that audiences are able to understand and sort authentic religious messages from those constructed for certain ideological interests. Media managers also need to be aware of their social responsibility in maintaining the substance of da'wah so that it continues to educate, touch the spiritual dimension, and enlighten society as a whole.

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