

Islamic Apologetics in the Perspective of Religion and Development in the Digital Era

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Abstract:

Digital Islamic apologetics has become a new phenomenon in the relationship between religion and socio-cultural development. Digital space, especially YouTube, has become not only an arena for the dissemination of religious teachings, but also a platform for the formation of new religious authorities that influence solidarity and polarization in society. This study uses qualitative methods to analyze the structure of religious messages presented in two Bang Zuma videos uploaded on YouTube based on Robert Entman's (1993) framing analysis. Insights from Craig's (2008) apologetic epistemology consisting of five models: classical, evidential, Reformed epistemology, Presuppositional and Cumulative Case, as well as Berger & Luckmann's social constructionism model will be used to understand the emergence and development of digital faith reality. The findings show that Bang Zuma's apologetics integrates Craig's four main models: evidential (analysis of biblical texts and history), presuppositional (the Qur'an as the standard of absolute truth), classical (philosophical arguments against the Trinity), and reformed epistemology (tawhid as human nature), which emphasizes the rational and moral defense of Islam. This message study affirms Islam as a rational and ethical religion, but also fosters an oppositional logic of "us versus them," reinforcing exclusive identities. Digital Islamic apologetics has a dual function: strengthening spiritual literacy and community solidarity (bonding social capital), but also potentially causing sociocultural polarization and narrowing the space for interfaith dialogue (bridging social capital). This research emphasizes the importance of a cumulative and moderate approach that integrates rationality, morality, and social empathy to make digital Islamic apologetics a moral and intellectual force in the development of an inclusive society.

Keywords: religion and development; Islamic apologetics; social solidarity; digital polarization; mediatization of religion.

INTRODUCTION

The digital era has significantly transformed the world, affecting all areas of life and shifting the way people express and embrace societal diversity. Religion today faces the pressures of globalization and the challenges of modernization, as well as secular values, yet it continues to bear the burden of morality and social balance. Religion functions not only as a belief system but also as moral capital and social glue that enhances social solidarity, strengthens public morale, and fosters community (Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 2000; Bingaman, 2023). Religion becomes a moral force in social development, driving social change toward equitable prosperity. The relationship between religion and development is complex and intricate. Various studies have shown that religion has a dual potential: on the one hand, it can be a driving force for social development, but on the other, it can also be a hindering factor when politicized, manipulated, or practiced exclusively (Arora et al., 2022; Supartono et al., 2024). This complexity is increasingly apparent in the digital era, where social media has become a new arena for religious expression, the dissemination of teachings, and the formation of collective identities. Platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram serve not only as means of disseminating religious messages but also as interactive spaces that facilitate the transformation of meaning, public participation, and the redefinition of religious authority in the contemporary communication landscape (Muhammad, 2021; Mukhroman et al., 2024).

This phenomenon marks the emergence of the digital religion era, referring to Campbell (2012; Campbell (2021), where not only religious practices are integrated into the digital world, but also how people's involvement in public religion undergoes a transformation within it. In the Islamic context, this phenomenon is represented by digital da'i, religious influencers as well as digital Islamic apologetics, a rational defense of one of the Islamic doctrines in the virtual space. The main goal is to maintain the image and values of Islam in the contemporary world dominated by modernity, secularism, and religious distortion. Research by Kusnawan & Machendrawaty (2022) revealed that challenges to Islam in Indonesia, including doubts about the credibility of Islamic da'wah scholarship and digital-based attacks, are addressed by strengthening Islamic da'wah through academic seminars and scientific publications. Digital da'i, such as Ustaz Adi Hidayat, Felix Siau, and Bang Zuma, integrate visual communication with logical arguments on social media platforms, creating a form of Islamic apologetics for the digital era. This strategy emphasizes the importance of a strong scientific foundation and extensive publication to defend Islamic teachings and build awareness and understanding among the wider community.

This approach demonstrates that the success of modern digital da'wah depends not only on persuasive rhetoric, but also on the presentation of systematic, theory-based content that is relevant to the socio-cultural context and information challenges of the digital age. This phenomenon illustrates the transformation of religious authority and da'wah practices, which are increasingly influenced by the algorithmic logic and participatory culture of social media (Febrian, 2024). This phenomenon presents two conflicting sides. On the one hand, it positively contributes to strengthening solidarity among Muslims, expanding access to religious education, and fostering pride in Islamic identity in the global era (Aida et al., 2024). However, on the other hand, the dynamics of the digital space, driven by the logic of popularity, virality, and engagement algorithms, actually encourage social and cultural polarization. When religious content is constructed with a binary narrative of "we are right" and "they are wrong," the space for dialogue between differing views becomes increasingly narrow. Consequently, the religious echo chamber is strengthened, hindering the process of public deliberation and weakening the spirit of inclusivity in religious life (Iandoli et al., 2021; Jiang et al., 2021).

This raises a fundamental question about social development: Do digitally based religious practices create social capital conducive to inclusive and cohesive development, or do they deepen polarization that threatens societal cohesion? This is the initial question of this research, which aims to examine the position and role of digital Islamic apologetics in the relationship between religion and social development. From this perspective, this research aims to articulate how religious values and digital communication behaviors utilize the social world to contribute to a just and characterful society. Religion as a force for development is more than just a belief system; it serves as a powerful social catalyst, driving collective transformation and progress. Several studies have shown that the participation of religious communities in the digital realm fosters social participation, community solidarity, and philanthropic practices geared toward the "welfare of society" (Sukayat, 2023; Anto et al. 2025). However, when not founded on moderation and theological depth, digital da'wah can also contribute to the emergence of "new authorities" that prioritize popularity over scholarly content (Febrian,

2024). This shift has given rise to a phenomenon that Hjarvard (2008) calls the mediatization of religion, where media not only serves as a means of transmitting religious messages but also structures authority, communication logic, and societal understanding of religion in digital modernity.

Based on empirical evidence, a survey conducted by the Center for Islamic and Social Research (PPIM) at UIN Jakarta (2021) found that 64.66% of young Muslim respondents in Indonesia obtained religious information from social media (Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Jakarta., 2021). A survey conducted by the Alvara Research Center (2024) found that approximately 44.4% of respondents relied on digital platforms as their primary source of information about Islam (Arina, 2024). These findings confirm that cyberspace is no longer an adjunct to da'wah activities, but has become a new public space for religious opinion and authority (Febrian, 2024; Kholili et al., 2024). In line with this, research by Ulyan (2023) and Rohmawati et al. (2025) discusses hyper-mediation, in other words, the extreme intensity of interaction between audiences and religious content as a factor shaping new digital authority. On the one hand, this strengthens public accessibility and participation in religion; on the other hand, it also challenges traditional religious authority, once the dominant reference point for religious communities, as illegitimate and inadequate.

Although research and literature on religion and development have extensively discussed the importance of religious spiritual values in social ethics, in line with the research of Bingaman (2023) and also the research on digital religious literacy by Khotimah et al., (2024), there is still little research that directly addresses digital Islamic apologetics in the context of socio-cultural development. Most of the existing literature still focuses on normative elements related to da'wah (Sukayat, 2023), media research by Hjarvard (2008) and Campbell (2021) or analysis of how digital religious authority has transformed digital religion (Febrian, 2024). However, only a few studies provide a systematic exploration of how digital apologetics discourse is involved in building social solidarity on the one hand and exacerbating religious polarization on the other. This represents an important scientific gap to be addressed in this research. This research begins with the identification of three fundamental and relevant research gaps for the development of digital Islamic apologetics research in the context of social development. First, the limitations of an interdisciplinary approach. Research on Islamic apologetics generally focuses on theological and linguistic aspects, with little reference to issues of social development and change in digital society. Second, the absence of comparative epistemological analysis. Research on Islamic apologetics is rarely compared with classical epistemological models of apologetics, such as those developed by William Lane Craig (2000, 2008), even though this approach could broaden the perspective of rationality and methods of defending the faith. Third, the lack of research on mediatization. Research on digital da'wah has not yet highlighted how media algorithms and message framing shape social reality and their impact on solidarity and polarization in society.

This study offers substantial novelty in three key dimensions that distinguish it from previous research. First, it integrates apologetic epistemology and social development theory. This study uses a sociocultural development perspective to categorize online da'wah activities using William Lane Craig's five apologetic methods: classical, evidential, Reformed epistemology, Presuppositional dan Cumulative Case (Craig & Cowan, 2000). This integrated approach will address the gap in the literature that separates biblical-theological research from socio-community impact assessment. Second, the use of framing and social constructionism approaches in relation to digital preaching. By adopting Entman's Framing Theory and Berger-Luckmann's Social Constructionism, this study reveals the mechanisms by which digital apologetic narratives shape public perception, strengthen group solidarity, and trigger potential identity polarization in cyberspace. This method provides valuable insights into the balance between social unity and division in the digital world. Third, this study contributes to the discourse on digital religious moderation as a tool for sustainable development. This study not only describes the phenomenon of digital Islamic apologetics but also offers a model for digital da'wah moderation that aligns with the principles of maqā (obligatory)yesid al-sharī'ah and SDGs target point 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Religion and Socio-Cultural Development

In the current social science paradigm, religion is not only viewed as a theological institution, but is also discussed as a social actor and development capital (religious social capital). This perspective is based on Robert Putnam's (2000) theory of social capital, which states that faith-based networks can increase public trust, mutual assistance, and social engagement (Putnam, 2000). Similarly, Fukuyama (1995) asserts that

religious ethics plays a role in strengthening trust as an important foundation for economic and social development (Fukuyama, 1995). In the context of sustainable development, religion is one of the pillars of economic morality and social ethics. The values of justice, equality, and universal compassion embodied in religious teachings contribute to strengthening inclusive growth and societal resilience. Bingaman (2023) emphasizes that modern religious practices are no longer separate from the digital and socio-economic life of society; spirituality now also serves as a driving force for sustainable moral development.

However, religion also has ambiguous potential. When religious teachings are practiced exclusively, it can trigger social segregation and identity conflict (Arora et al., 2022). In the context of socio-cultural development, religious exclusivity can reduce bridging social capital, namely the ability to build relationships between groups—something essential to an inclusive development process. Research by Faizin et al., (2025) revealed that the politicization of religion can lead to social polarization, weaken social ties, and hinder intercommunity cooperation. From an Islamic perspective, the correlation between religion and development is generally approached through the values of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), *'adl* (justice), *rahmah* (compassion), and *ihsan* (social goodness). Within society, these values can be practiced to foster unity among people and build a development ecosystem based on spiritual values. However, when religion ceases to be a distinguishing identity, these values can be reduced to morally discredited legitimacy.

The understanding of religion in development must be dialectical, religion is a symbolic and social resource that has the potential to increase solidarity, but can also cause polarization when it becomes unbalanced towards the exclusivity of beliefs (divisive religious identities) at the expense of inclusivity in the broader sense. In this context, Abidin et al. (2022) offer a solution through a moderate da'wah framework relevant to Islamic apologetics in the digital era. The applied concept of *wasatiyyah* (moderation), encompassing *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), and the integration of Islam and Indonesianness, serves as a model for inclusive, faith-based development. Through a data-driven da'wah monograph approach, they aim to demonstrate the effectiveness of *da'wah bil hal* (real empowerment) in addressing the challenges of modernity without losing religious identity, while avoiding the trap of divisive exclusivity. This method is highly applicable to addressing the complexities of the digital era, which requires rational, moderate, and empowering Islamic apologetics, rather than reactive or exclusive.

Apologetic Epistemology: Integration of Rationality and Spirituality

In modern apologetics research, William Lane Craig developed five epistemological approaches to defending faith: classical, evidential, presuppositional, Reformed epistemology, and cumulative case (Craig & Cowan, 2000) (Craig, 2008). Methodologically, these are frameworks for understanding Islam, much like the frameworks originally intended to demonstrate defenses of the Christian faith, because these approaches to defending religious belief emphasize rationality, empirical evidence, and logical consistency. In the Islamic context, apologetic epistemology can be linked to classical Islamic intellectual elements, namely *burhān* (rational argument), *bayān* (textual explanation of rational justification), and *irfān* (intuitive knowledge) (Nasr, 2006). This occurs in the works of Al-Ghazali, who paradoxically uses philosophical logic to defend Islam from threats (Al-Ghazali, 2002). Then there is Ibn Rushd, who balances the realms of religion and rationality (Ibn Rushd, 2001). Finally, Fakhrudin al-Razi, who integrates the rational and spiritual in his works of commentary (Ar-Razi, 2000). This approach not only preserves Islamic teachings but also adds to the moral-spiritual discourse (Rahman, 1982). In the context of digital apologetics, Craig's five epistemological approaches have undergone the following transformations: classical, evidential, presuppositional, Reformed epistemology, and cumulative case. Classical epistemology appears in logical arguments on social media that prove the existence of God and His unity using a cosmological or teleological approach. Evidential refers to content that uses scientific and historical evidence to prove the truth of the Quran, such as debates about "science in Islam." Presuppositional reflects the idea that Islam is an absolute truth that does not require external validation, but rather highlights contradictions in the secular worldview to prove Islam's legitimacy. Reformed epistemology (Reformed epistemology is seen in sermons that emphasize the human moral need for divine revelation and forgiveness as a path to moral development in society. Cumulative approach, comes in the form of a content strategy that combines science, history, and spiritual experience to build a complete religious narrative.

Referring to Sukayat's (2023), research, the digital da'wah model using a cumulative approach has proven to be most effective because it combines emotional, rational, and moral aspects that meet the needs of digital audiences. This approach not only maintains faith but also educates the public through socially and

culturally relevant content. But, Aida et al. (2024) highlighted the emergence of the phenomenon of religious influencers using aggressive and confrontational apologetic rhetoric. While successful in capturing public attention, this model has the potential to create cognitive dissonance and social tension due to the conflict between the rationality of preaching and moral exclusivity. Therefore, the epistemology of digital apologetics needs to be developed with a dialogical and humanistic approach to support an inclusive social development agenda.

Digital Religion and the Mediatization of Religion

The concept of Digital Religion, developed by Campbell (2025) explains that digital space is not only a new medium for religious activities, but also a social space that shapes new meanings of religion. In this context, the interaction between humans, technology, and religious values creates a new form of spirituality that is more open, interactive, and personal. This phenomenon also marks what Hjarvard (2008) calls the mediatization of religion, a process in which media becomes not only a means of religious communication but also an agent of transformation that changes the way religion is understood and practiced (Lövheim & Hjarvard, 2019).

In a digital society, religious authority is no longer monopolized by formal religious institutions, but rather spread across various public figures who possess the ability to manage media narratives and algorithms. Research by Zaid et al. (2022) shows that Muslim millennials shape their understanding of Islam through interactions with religious influencers on social media, rather than solely through traditional religious institutions. This demonstrates a shift in religious authority from formal scientific foundations to digital authority based on popularity, aesthetics, and media credibility (Febrian, 2024). Aziz (2015) emphasized that effective da'wah must be based on a da'wah map: mapping the character of the mad'u and selecting the right approach (*hikmah, mau'izhah hasanah, mujadalah ahsan*) to avoid missing targets. In the context of digital era development, mediatization does expand the reach of da'wah, but without a clear da'wah map, da'wah is trapped in sensationalism, popularity, and algorithmic logic, thus changing from an educational mission to a mere performance. As a result, public religious standards decline and social divisions widen—exactly what is feared when the da'wah approach is no longer contextual and directed.

Rohmawati'sc et al. (2025) study on the hypermediation of Muslim practices in Indonesia found that enthusiasm for consuming religious content through digital media changes the relationship between religious adherents and religious authorities, opening up opportunities for more relational religious experiences, which in turn are susceptible to what the authors call "information tendencies." Therefore, it is important for this study to examine digital Islamic apologetics within the framework of mediatization as part of the dynamics of contemporary socio-cultural development.

Framing Theory and Social Constructionism in Apologetic Analysis

The framing theory introduced by Robert M. Entman (1993) has become an important tool for analyzing how religious messages are shaped, selected, and highlighted in the media (Entman, 1993). Entman further proposed four main elements of framing: define the problem, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, treatment recommendation. In the context of digital Islamic apologetics, framing is used to emphasize Islam's ideological position on global issues, secularism, and the challenges of modernity. For example, the framing "Islam as a rational and scientific religion" serves to affirm the truth of Islamic teachings amidst Western scientific discourse. Conversely, the framing "oppressed Muslims" is often used to foster collective solidarity and community identity.

Berger & Luckmann's (1966) social constructionist approach helps explain how these narratives shape society's social reality. This process occurs through three stages: Externalization: the expression of ideas or beliefs in the digital public sphere. Objectivation: the social recognition of the disseminated narrative, usually through virality and user interaction. Internalization: the adoption of these values and perspectives by audiences in everyday life (Berger & Luckmann, 2016). Through these two frameworks, it can be understood that digital Islamic apologetic content not only disseminates theological messages but also shapes the cognitive and social structures of Muslim communities in the digital age. When its framing is inclusive and educational, it strengthens social solidarity; however, when its framing is confrontational and exclusive, it deepens cultural polarization.

This is crucial in social development, framing, and social construction. Positive religious meta-narratives can enhance social solidarity and contribute to community engagement in development.

Conversely, narratives with identity polarization can undermine shared trust within communities and thwart cooperative relationships with other groups. Therefore, framing theory and social constructionism are necessary perspectives in the study of digital Islamic apologetics to understand its benefits or drawbacks for inclusive development.

METHOD

Using framing analysis, this study adopts an interpretive qualitative approach in which the author intentionally interprets Bang Zuma's Islamic apologetic messages, disseminated digitally through media. This approach is most appropriate for uncovering the meaning behind the messages, their communicative strategies, and their social consequences on the themes of religious solidarity and polarization in the digital age. The object of this research is two videos on Bang Zuma's YouTube channel, namely:

1. "OTEN GIVES UP, BUT THEN CHALLENGES YOU... WHO COME OUT OF THE GRAVE?"
2. "FRANCISCUS KEOK ..OTEN FOLLOWERS OF FALSE PROPHET.."

These two videos were chosen because they showcase a rational apologetic argumentation style that is popular on social media and has received a significant public response. Primary data was obtained from transcripts of the video content, while supporting data came from YouTube comments and descriptions to understand the context of the interaction between the communicator and the audience. Data collection was conducted through digital documentation and online contextual observations, without intervention into the video content. Data analysis used Robert Entman's (1993) framing model, which includes four elements: define the problem, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, treatment recommendation. These four elements of framing analysis form the basis for discussing how Bang Zuma constructs his religious narrative, establishes religious authority in digital media, and shapes audience responses and attitudes toward apologetic messages.

To deepen the analysis results, the framing analysis framework is combined with two theories considered as adjacent theoretical obstacles, namely William Lane Craig's (2000) apologetic epistemology and Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's (1966) social construction theory. Craig's apologetic epistemology approach is used to analyze the rationality patterns and forms of arguments in the defense of faith that appear in Bang Zuma's narrative. Meanwhile, Berger and Luckmann's social constructionism theory is used to explain the dialectical relationship between individual subjectivity and digital sociocultural structures in constructing, articulating, and disseminating religious discourse on social media. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, two-source triangulation and theory triangulation were used. The data were analyzed based on the results of the analysis of two main videos. These findings were strengthened by applying three theories: sources, media frames, Islamic apologetics, and the relationship between religion and development. This study is descriptive-analytical, focusing on the dynamics of communication and the construction of meaning without assessing the theological truth of any particular view. The entire research process was conducted in accordance with socio-religious research ethics and the principle of religious moderation, so that the results can contribute to the development of religious communication studies in the digital era, both empirically and academically.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines two videos by Bang Zuma that demonstrate the practice of digital Islamic apologetics on YouTube. The two videos are "YERAH ALSO OTEN THIS, BUT CHALLENGE AGAIN... WHO CAME OUT OF THE GRAVE?" and "FRANSISCUS KEOK... OTEN, FOLLOWER OF THE FALSE PROPHET." The analysis was conducted using Robert Entman's (1993) framing model, which includes four main elements: Define Problems, Diagnose Causes, Make Moral Judgments, and Treatment Recommendations. The results of the study show a strong, rational, and defensive framing pattern of digital Islamic apologetics, aimed at building faith solidarity amidst digital diversity.

Social Context and Character of Communication

Bang Zuma is a digital apologist who utilizes social media, particularly YouTube and TikTok, as a platform for preaching and as a discursive platform to explain, defend, and spread Islamic teachings. Through strategies of logic, rhetoric, and cross-references to scripture, Bang Zuma builds an image as a critical communicator of other religious narratives, while simultaneously fostering open dialogue in the digital public sphere. His communication style reflects a blend of academic debate and popular rhetoric.

He is interactive, spontaneous, and confrontational, often responding directly to comments or challenges in a format that resembles a scholarly debate forum. However, his delivery is delivered in a light and conversational language, enabling him to reach a wide audience, including laypeople without a formal theological background. Socially, Bang Zuma's YouTube channel functions as a space for the production of new meanings about Islam, presented as rational, open to criticism, and argumentatively testable. This phenomenon indicates a shift in religious authority from traditional institutions—such as ulama, Islamic boarding schools, and fatwa institutions—to charismatic digital figures who gain legitimacy through popularity and interaction with audiences. This shift aligns with the concept of the mediatization of religion (Campbell, 2021; Zaid et al., 2022), where digital media is no longer merely a channel for the dissemination of religious messages but also a space for the formation of authority and the construction of new religious meanings.

Using Berger and Luckmann's (1966) social constructionism theory, Bang Zuma's communication dynamics can be understood through three interrelated dialectical processes: (1) Externalization occurs when Bang Zuma narrates the rationality of Islam and the inconsistencies of the Gospel in the digital space; (2) Objectification emerges through audience support, such as likes, comments of agreement, and sharing of videos, which legitimizes his scientific authority; (3) Internalization occurs when the audience adopts the view that "strong faith must be in line with common sense" and that "true sacred texts must not contradict each other."

Thus, Bang Zuma's content and communication serve not only as a means of digital preaching but also as a mechanism for the social construction of religious meaning in the era of mediatization. Through a combination of rationality, popularity, and interactivity, he successfully positions himself as a new religious figure renegotiating the boundaries between traditional religious authority and digital authority based on media performativity.

Video Framing Analysis 1: "This OTEN GIVES UP BUT THEN CHALLENGES... WHO CAME OUT OF THE GRAVE?"

This video highlights a central doctrine in this narrative, namely the resurrection of Jesus, a major theological debate within Christianity. In the story, Bang Zuma presents himself as an Islamic apologist who challenges his debate partner, Oten, to examine the testimony of two or more witnesses and the narrative coherence of the various resurrection narratives in the Gospels. He engages in a dialogic and polemical discussion that invites the audience to question the authenticity of the texts and the validity of the doctrine. Framing analysis of this video reveals several significant findings that symbolize Bang Zuma's rhetorical and epistemological methods in creating a narrative of religious truth:

Table 1. Findings of Video Framing Analysis 1

Framing Elements	Key Findings
Define Problems	The resurrection of Jesus is positioned as a matter of logic and historical validity. The framing is directed at the question of "who really came out of the tomb," to challenge the reliability of the Gospel testimony about the most fundamental event in Christianity.
Diagnosis Causes	The source of error is considered to be internal contradictions in the Gospel texts (narrative differences between books), rather than the divine teachings themselves. This shifts criticism from the theological to the historical-textual level.
Make Moral Judgments	Islam is seen as rational and consistent in its prophetic narrative, while the Bible is constructed as a confusing, incoherent text and the result of flawed human transmission.
Treatment Recommendation	The solution offered is a "return to pure revelation," namely the Qur'an as a source of truth without human distortion and without internal contradictions.

Epistemological Analysis of Video 1

Thus, Bang Zuma's content and communication serve not only as a means of digital preaching but also as a mechanism for the social construction of religious meaning in the era of mediatization. Through a

combination of rationality, popularity, and interactivity, he successfully positions himself as a new religious figure renegotiating the boundaries between traditional religious authority and digital authority based on media performativity. Epistemologically, in video 1, Bang Zuma uses three apologetic models according to William Lane Craig (2000): Evidential, Presuppositional, and Reformed Epistemology. All three are used to strengthen arguments in defense of Islamic faith while also testing the rationality of the teaching of Jesus' resurrection in the Gospels.

Bang Zuma applies evidential apologetics by comparing the four Gospels to highlight differences in witnesses, the timing, and location of Jesus' resurrection. This approach emphasizes that religion must be logical and consistent, so the reliability of the Gospels is questioned through rational analysis and textual evidence. This approach also employs presuppositional apologetics, positioning the Quran as the final authority without external verification. The truth of revelation is viewed as self-authenticating, highlighting that Islamic epistemology operates independently of Christian theological logic. This approach asserts the supremacy of revelation over human rationality. The epistemological dimension of reformation emerged implicitly. Bang Zuma emphasized that monotheism is a rational human trait. He urged netizens to recognize that true revelation must align with reason, and that rejecting the logic of revelation is a rejection of nature. Faith and reason emerged as an epistemological unity.

Video Framing Analysis 2: "FRANCIS KEOK, A FOLLOWER OF A FALSE PROPHET"

This video explores the Christian doctrine of the Trinity and explores the question of whether Christians believe in a rational God. In this series, Bang Zuma debates Francis in an open-ended debate to test whether the internal logic of the Trinity can withstand various linguistic and philosophical strategies. Bang Zuma explores the rational discourse of the "Son of God" and the "Incarnate Word" to demonstrate that such claims contradict Islamic monotheistic principles and deductive reasoning.

Framing analysis of this video highlights the themes of rationality, maintaining faith, and theological deconstruction, which reveals the following findings:

Table 2. Findings of Video Framing Analysis 2

Framing Elements	Key Findings
Define Problems	The doctrine of the Trinity is constructed as a belief system that violates the laws of logic. Islam is positioned as a rational monotheistic teaching that conforms to the principle of non-contradiction.
Diagnosis Causes	Inconsistencies are ascribed to "human intervention" in God's revelation, asserting historical misinterpretations of the church (especially the Council of Nicaea and the establishment of the dogma of the Trinity).
Make Moral Judgments	Islam is seen as a religion of reason that respects human rationality, while Christianity is seen as upholding paradoxical and irrational beliefs.
Treatment Recommendation	Returning to the principles of pure monotheism and the rationality of faith as the theological, moral, and intellectual solution.

Epistemological Analysis of Video 2

Epistemologically, in video 2, Bang Zuma uses two apologetic models according to William Lane Craig (2000), namely Classical and Evidential. Bang Zuma also uses the law of identity ($A = A$) and the principle of non-contradiction ($A \neq \text{non-}A$) as Classical apologetic methods (classical apologetics) to refute the Trinity. The Trinity, according to him, contradicts the most fundamental principles of sound theological rationality, namely that the One God cannot possibly consist of three distinct persons. Bang Zuma also uses evidential apologetics in comparing the Quran and the Bible. Surah Al-Ikhlâs provides clear and consistent evidence for Tawhid (monotheism), but the Bible is unclear. Rational-philosophical arguments are emphasized, not justification based on revelation.

Unlike the first video, here Bang Zuma does not explicitly present presuppositional or reformed epistemology elements, because the focus lies on rational-philosophical argumentation, not on revelation-based justification.

Empirical Synthesis: Comparison of Two Videos

This Table 3 presents a comparison of the core research results:

Table 3 Comparison of Two Videos

Aspect	Video 1 (The Resurrection of Jesus)	Video 2 (Trinity)
Main Theme	The resurrection of Jesus and the validity of historical testimony	The logic of the Trinity and the rationality of the doctrine of divinity
Dominant Apologetics Model	Evidential (textual analysis of Gospel inconsistencies)	Classical (anti-Trinitarian philosophical argument)
Secondary Apologetics Model	Presuppositional (Qur'an as standard) + Reformed Epistemology (nature)	Evidential (textual comparison of the Qur'an vs. the Bible)
Dominant Framing Function	Define Problem & Make Moral Judgments	Define Problem & Treatment Recommendation
The Constructed Image of Islam	Religion with pure and consistent revelation	Logical and rational religion
Target of Criticism	Historical reliability of the Bible	Logical coherence of Christian doctrine
Main Social Impacts	Bonding capital: Internal solidarity increases	Polarization: The epistemic distance with Christianity widens

Three Framing Patterns of Digital Apologetics

Both video contents exhibit three common framing patterns:

- 1) Framing Rationality (Rational-Evidential)
 - **Definition:** The truth of Islam is represented as a logical conclusion and coherence of the scriptures.
 - **Function:** To break the image of Islam as a religion that is contrary to science, philosophy and common sense.
 - **Example:** "How can there be three if God is One?" This is a violation of the laws of common sense."
- 2) Framing Morality (Ethics-Morals)
 - **Definition:** Islam is defined as a religion that values intellectual honesty and spiritual justice.
 - **Function:** To make Muslims more honest and organized in their faith.
 - **Example:** "We are not afraid to test one word with another, because indeed the Quran is eternal." But why are Christians afraid of seeing contradictions in the Gospel?
- 3) Framing Solidarity (Identity-Bonding)
 - **Definition:** Muslims are urged to unite to protect their faith from foreign ideas and narratives that are considered wrong.
 - **Function:** Increase group membership loyalty and socio-religious boundaries
 - **Example:** "This is why we must be trained in apologetics, so that we are not led astray by teachings that destroy faith."

These findings suggest that digital Islamic apologetics has a dual function: supporting the bonding social capital of the community and shared pride in their rational beliefs, while simultaneously encouraging socio-cultural polarization in the pluralistic digital public sphere (Iandoli et al., 2021; Arora et al., 2022; Faizin et al., 2025).

Digital apologetics, as practiced by Bang Zuma, is an ambivalent phenomenon, strengthening internal solidarity while also testing the strength of social inclusivity within the context of religious development. However, it also has the potential to reinforce attitudes of mutual abuse and narrow the space for interfaith dialogue in the digital public sphere.

William Lane Craig's Five Models of Apologetics and Their Relevance in Digital Islamic Apologetics

William Lane Craig, in his book *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics* (2008) and his contribution to *Five Views on Apologetics* edited by Steven B. Cowan, identifies five main approaches to apologetics: classical, evidential, presuppositional, Reformed epistemology, and cumulative case (Craig, 2008; Craig & Cowan, 2000). These five approaches, although originally developed to defend the truth of the

Christian faith, are relevant as epistemological frameworks for reading the dynamics of contemporary digital Islamic apologetics.

In the Indonesian context, Islamic apologetics on social media, as practiced by Bang Zuma (Zulkifli M. Abbas), founder of the Indonesian Islamic Apologetics Association (APII), demonstrates the creative adoption of several of these principles. Craig asserts that apologetics is not merely an activity of defending faith, but also a means of building religious rationality and a bridge of dialogue between faith and reason (Craig & Cowan, 2000; Craig, 2008; Moreland & Craig, 2017). Furthermore, Craig's five models are relevant to digital Islamic Apologetics.

1. Classical Apologetics: Rational Philosophical Arguments

The classical method attempts to prove God's existence through a priori philosophical arguments about why one should first examine revelation or scripture. This approach relies on formal logic, metaphysical principles, and universal rational laws such as the law of non-contradiction ($A \neq \text{non-A}$). In several interfaith debate sessions, Zuma continued to present philosophically based rebuttals to the Christian belief in the Trinity. For example, he applied the laws of non-contradiction and identity to demonstrate that the statement "God is one and three" contradicts basic logical concepts:

If $A = \text{One God}$, then $A \neq \text{three distinct persons}$. Forcing them to be equal violates the most fundamental principle of logic. For example, Bang Zuma argues that Tawhid in Islam is ontologically less self-contradictory. This method demonstrates that rationality is a tool to strengthen, not replace, faith (Musta'in, 2024). This strategy is consistent with classical Christian apologetics, which uses cosmological and teleological evidence for theism. This method is powerful because its logic is universal and does not rely on the authority of a single sacred text. However, its weakness also lies in the risk of reductionism, reducing divine mysteries to rational boundaries. This method is suitable for audiences who prioritize consistency in their reasoning, and worst of all, it lacks the experiential/spiritual aspects of faith that are often more important than mere logic.

2. Evidential Apologetics: Text and History

The empirical approach in evidence-based methods seeks to verify the reality of faith through history, archaeology, and textual analysis. This approach emphasizes empirical verification of the truth (as far as possible) of religious beliefs, especially in cases of faith that depend on history.

Bang Zuma uses textual criticism to examine the historical accuracy of the story of Jesus' resurrection. In one of the videos he posted, where he disputes the inconsistencies of the Gospel accounts, he highlights the narrative differences between the canonical Gospels regarding the story:

- 1) Matthew 28:1-10: The two Marys meet the angel outside the tomb
- 2) Mark 16:1-8: A young man dressed in a white robe appears to three women at the tomb
- 3) Luke 24:1-12: The group of women who met two angels
- 4) John 20:1-18: Only Mary Magdalene met two angels

Bang Zuma raises crucial questions: "If this was the culminating event of Christianity, why do the primary testimonies contradict each other?" Or: "How can we trust its historical significance?" This approach is consistent with rational empiricism in current Islamic studies, where digital da'wah utilizes data, text analysis, and public logic to prove the legitimacy of the message (Ulyan, 2023)(Siregar et al., 2025).

This model has the advantage of creating a verifiable and relatively simple presentation of evidence. However, a hermeneutical critique of the evidence-based approach is revealed here: narrative inconsistencies are reflected as complementary, not conflicting, perspectives. Furthermore, the focus on textual inconsistencies ignores the overall theological and symbolic meaning of the sacred text.

3. Presuppositional Apologetics: Revelation as the Standard of Absolute Truth

The presuppositional approach starts from the assumption that God's revelation is the ultimate source of truth, which is authentic and requires no external proof. All rational arguments serve only to explain the internal superiority of a worldview based on revelation. Zuma consistently asserted in debates that the Quran is the absolute standard of truth that cannot be measured by any external epistemic standards. He frequently used a framework such as:

"We don't need to prove the truth of the Quran by any external standard. The Quran is the standard itself." They told us that we must show that other standards, even the Bible, contradict it in the same sense.

This is in line with Cornelius Van Til's millennium principle of presumption, which argues that every worldview is based on the presumption of the end, and only the Christian (or in Bang Zuma's case, Islamic) worldview can rationally explain rationality, morality, and science as we find them (Van Til, 1967). These assumptions collectively strengthen bonds of social capital by fostering a strong communal identity among Muslims, but can diminish interfaith social capital by closing off epistemic possibilities beyond the Qur'an. 'ān (Putnam, 2000; Arora et al., 2022). For a pluralistic country like Indonesia, this option must be considered with an open attitude towards interfaith dialogue to avoid social polarization that would ultimately threaten the unity and integrity of the nation.

Presuppositionalism is a highly internally consistent system that serves well to reinforce a community's internal beliefs. However, it also raises accusations of a vicious cycle and is risky in conversations with someone who doesn't share your prejudices. In the context of da'wah, this method functions more as a defensive apologetic than an evangelical apologetic.

4. Reformed Epistemology: Tawhid as a Basic Belief

Reformed epistemology, developed by Alvin Plantinga, argues that belief in God is a "basic justified belief," that is, a basic belief that does not require inference from external evidence, such as belief in the reality of the external world or the reliability of memory (Plantinga, 1983; Plantinga, 2000). This belief is rational as long as it is formed by cognitive abilities that function well in the right environment.

Bang Zuma applies a similar principle by asserting that belief in Tawhid is a natural human trait—a natural gift embedded in the cognitive-spiritual structure of humankind since creation. He frequently directs his debaters to recognize that rejection of Tawhid is not the result of superior rational arguments, but rather a distortion of human nature due to cultural, doctrinal, or psychological factors.

This argument about human nature aligns with Plantinga's concept of *sensus divinitatis*—the natural human capacity to recognize God (Plantinga, 2000). Bang Zuma uses the following syllogism: (1) Humans are born in a natural state of knowing One God. (2) Tawhid is human nature, deviations from Tawhid (such as Trinity or polytheism) are deviations from human nature. (3) The return to monotheism is a return to human nature.

This approach is not merely an intellectual proposition, but rather an ethical and existential imperative for realizing the reality of what it means to be human. In relation to the process of social development, Reformed Epistemology embodies the role of religion as a moral force that warns and rebukes the social order (Bingaman, 2023).

The advantage of this approach is that it provides epistemological legitimacy for faith without relying on complex chains of argument. However, its weakness is that it is difficult to convince those who do not feel the "nature" or *sensus divinitatis*. In interfaith dialogue, this approach can be considered a self-serving argument if not combined with other arguments.

5. Cumulative Case Apologetics: Multi-Argument Synthesis

Cumulative arguments use a more eclectic approach, combining various arguments—rational, empirical, moral, existential, and experiential—to construct a unified argument that shows that a particular worldview is the most rational compared to other options (Craig & Cowan, 2000). This approach is not based on a single argument, but rather on the accumulation of evidence from various dimensions.

Although Zuma doesn't use the term "cumulative argument," he demonstrates the cumulative argument approach as systematic apologetics. He incorporates into every debate or discussion session:

- 1) Philosophical argument: Critique of Trinitarian logical inconsistencies
- 2) Linguistic arguments: Between the Qur'an and the Bible
- 3) Historical arguments: Concerns about the transmission of biblical texts
- 4) Moral argument: Tawhid as the core of universal morality
- 5) The existential argument: Conversion testimony as empirical evidence of a changed life

This multidimensional combination creates a more convincing argument than either argument alone, while appealing to both epistemic audiences. Those uninterested in philosophy are convinced by the testimony of conversion; those who are logocentric by historical criticism of the Bible.

This cumulative process can be utilized to formulate a model of moderate Islamic apologetics to support interfaith social development (Mukhroman & Halim, 2025). By integrating various types of arguments, Islamic apologetics can achieve a more inclusive character while maintaining the steadfastness of faith.

This kind of cumulative approach tends to be broader in scope and more flexible. However, there are risks involved in this method: if one point in the "case" collapses, does the entire argument collapse? Furthermore, not all apologists have the multidisciplinary expertise required by this approach.

Integration with Entman Framing Analysis

Entman's (1993) framing model is used to analyze how Zuma emphasizes rationality and morality in his two apology videos. The "define problems" function is used to define Christianity as a theological system with logical contradictions, while Islam is positioned as a rationally consistent epistemological solution. Meanwhile, the "make moral judgments" function emerges when Zuma affirms Islam as an ethically and intellectually noble religion.

This emphasis on rationality and morality, however, is not merely rhetoric; it serves as a social justification for the truth of the faith. This framework maintains a narrative of Islamic superiority, not only in terms of revelation, but also in rationality and ethics. This approach, in the realm of digital communication, can have a dual effect: on the one hand, strengthening public religious literacy, and on the other, potentially creating a more populist online space by reinforcing the "us versus them" narrative (Iandoli et al., 2021).

Epistemologically, Bang Zuma's framing is defensive-moralistic, aimed at protecting Islamic identity while asserting the moral superiority of the community. However, when treatment recommendations are limited to calls to "return to the Qur'an," the space for interfaith dialogue becomes narrow. Within the framework of the mediatization of religion theory in Hjarvard's (2008; Lundby (2023); Fakhruroji (2021)) research, YouTube is not only a medium for da'wah but also an arena for the formation of religious identity, where viewers form solidarity and participate in digital religious communities (Zaid et al., 2022).

Social Constructionism Perspective: Constructing Digital Faith Realities

Referring to Berger & Luckmann (2016), social constructionism theory, Bang Zuma's apologetics practice is a production of socio-religious reality through digital technology. In the externalization phase, Bang Zuma presents Islamic arguments with rhetoric that combines rational reasoning, polemical wit, and emotional appeal. This approach effectively transforms cyberspace into an arena where religious beliefs are publicly and interactively tested, while simultaneously navigating a da'wah platform (Mokodenseho et al., 2024). Thus, apologetic content becomes a communicative practice that reproduces religious values in a media-friendly manner: fast-paced, entertaining, and familiar conversation.

The objectification phase begins when the narrative created by Bang Zuma achieves social validation, evidenced by audience support through views, positive comments, and participation in digital debates. This public recognition transforms apologetic arguments into widely recognized social truths. This process establishes a new epistemological legitimacy, where authority derives not only from textual expertise but also from digital engagement and persuasion (Ulyan, 2023).

In the internalization stage, audiences adopt these messages as personal truths, which are then shared and amplified in other online communities. This process forms what can be called the spiral of digital authority, a cyclical mechanism in which popularity, rhetoric, and performativity reinforce each other to produce religious validity (Lewis, 2002).

This phenomenon points to a shift in the locus of religious authority from text (environment) to context, where media becomes a platform where classical scholars, digital influencers, and audience members can negotiate and construct shared meaning. Bang Zuma acts as a media agent, presenting Islam as a rational and communicative religion in accordance with the concept of the mediatization of religion (Hjarvard, 2008; Lundby, 2023). This marks the emergence of a new type of performative religious authority, where credibility derives not only from academic expertise but also from storytelling skills and digital influence. These

findings reinforce research by Musta'in (2024), which shows that religious influencers are now key actors in shaping the religious orientation and moderation of the younger generation.

Bang Zuma's socio-religious construction does not stand alone, but is intertwined with William Lane Craig's apologetic epistemology and Entman's framing strategy. Craig's epistemology explains how the rationality of faith is constructed through logical argumentation and empirical evidence, while Entman's framing helps understand how narratives of truth are packaged in discourses that emphasize Islamic rationality and question the consistency of Christian theology. The integration of the two shows that Bang Zuma's digital apologetic practice is not merely religious rhetoric, but also a mediation strategy that builds authority through logic, morality, and social legitimacy. Thus, the digital space functions dually: as a theological arena and a social laboratory for the formation of a rational Islamic identity in the era of mediation (Solahudin & Fakhruroji, 2019).

Implications for Religious Discourse and Social Development

From a social development perspective, the phenomenon of digital Islamic apologetics practiced by Bang Zuma has two implications: constructive and destructive. This dialectical dynamic reflects the uncertainty of religious communication in the digital era, where new information technologies play a dual role: as a tool that promotes the dissemination and recognition of values; and as a potential generator of social polarization.

Constructive Potential

- 1) **Democratization of Theological Discourse:** Social media opens public access to theological discourse previously limited to academics or Islamic boarding schools. Platforms like TikTok and YouTube eliminate geographical and economic barriers, making theological discussion more accessible to everyone, although they risk oversimplifying complex ideas (Hakim & Harapandi Dahri, 2025).
- 2) **Improving Spiritual and Theological Literacy:** Apologetic content, such as that presented by Bang Zuma, helps deepen spiritual and theological insight by providing a broader, more rational, and contextual view of Islamic teachings. This method encourages critical thinking and promotes reflective and rational religiosity (Siregar et al., 2025).
- 3) **Enhancing Public Ethics and Intellectual Integrity:** Debate practices that emphasize evidence and rationality foster an epistemic culture that values intellectual honesty and consistency of argument. This can help foster constructive and healthy public discourse (Sukayat, 2023).
- 4) **Increasing Religious Social Capital (Bonding Capital):** Digital Islamic apologetics strengthens internal solidarity among religious communities through pride in Islamic rationality and the intellectual capacity of Muslims to engage in dialogue. This solidarity supports religious social movements and community-based empowerment (Putnam, 2000; Bingaman, 2023).
- 5) **Clarifying Beliefs and Enhancing Interfaith Dialogue:** Well-managed confrontational debate can deepen mutual understanding between religious communities. Dialogue becomes more substantial when each party understands the theological basis of the other's beliefs (Volf, 2011; Swidler, 2014; Pratt, 2017).

Destructive Potential

- 1) **Social Polarization and the Decline of Bridging Capital:** Confrontational frames of reference based on the "us versus them" binary reduce interfaith social trust, leading to the possible weakening of national bonds in religiously diverse countries (Iandoli et al., 2021; Arora et al., 2022; Faizin et al., 2025).
- 2) **Digital Religious Populism and the Collapse of Traditional Authority:** The authority of celebrity religious advocates with large social media followings is replacing that of traditional religious scholars. This has given rise to oversimplified teachings and a shift in authority based on virality but not rooted in in-depth knowledge (Raya, 2024; Dahlan et al., 2025).
- 3) **Theological Reductionism and the De-spiritualization of Islam:** The overemphasis on proving rationality has neglected the spiritual and contemplative dimensions of Islam. Therefore, religion risks becoming an arena for purely logical discussion (Chittick, 2000; Nasr, 2006; Schuon, 2011).

- 4) **Potential for Conflict and Symbolic Violence:** Aggressive responses to apologetics have the potential to cause conflict between religious groups when members fail to distinguish between criticism of religious doctrine and attacks on other groups. This can lead to social discrimination and symbolic violence (Panggabean & Ali-Fauzi, 2014; Pratt, 2017; Suryana, 2017; Burhani, 2021; Kholili et al., 2024).

Towards Constructive Islamic Apologetics: A Critical Synthesis

Islamic apologetics amidst the digital revolution faces a dilemma, particularly in terms of maintaining faith and remaining open to interaction. A moderate form of apologetics is needed that can strengthen faith without causing polarization. Craig & Cowan (2000), cumulative case method should serve as a methodological basis because of its integrative nature—rationally, historically, and existentially—indicating that arguments will also be more contextual and reflective.

This model combines theological rigor and intellectual humility. According to Siregar et al. (2025), research, an apologist does not view the essence of monotheism as a claim and is open to external criticism and interfaith discussion. A diversity of appropriate methods is necessary so that each apologetic method, whether classical, evidential, or presuppositional, can complement the others (Craig & Cowan, 2000).

The direction of apologetics must also be positive, not merely polemical. Its goal is brotherhood (*ikhwan*) and not debate (*infal ul-munazarat*) (Nasr, 2006). In contemporary pluralist Indonesia, apologetics must strengthen internal unity (bonding capital) and build interfaith relationships (bridging capital) (Putnam, 2000). With ethical and scientific credibility, in line with the research of Kholili et al. (2024), digital Islamic apologetics can emerge as a rational and inclusive da'wah medium, capable not only of upholding religious truth but also of empowering Islam as a moral force in achieving just and harmonious social development.

Theoretical Synthesis and Direction of Digital Preaching Moderation

By synthesizing Craig's epistemology, Entman's framing theory, and Berger & Luckmann's social construction, it is clear that digital Islamic apologetics functions as an epistemological layer (the realm of rational proof), a discursive layer (meaning-making), and a sociological layer (producing socio-religious reality).

In this way, we can philosophically affirm monotheism, introduce Islam as a rational religion for media, and create an interactive religious atmosphere in the digital realm. Therefore, rational and spiritually responsive digital da'wah must also encompass rationality, spirituality, and openness if Islamic apologetics is not merely about defense, but also about strengthening faith and enriching religious literacy and social cohesion in a pluralistic society.

To address the challenges of digital da'wah, the Cumulative Case Apologetics model is highly appropriate because it combines reasonableness, social empathy, and transformative spirituality. This methodology makes apologetics not only a defense of faith but also a means of social and spiritual teaching in a demographically diverse society. Through Bang Zuma's practice of digital Islamic apologetics, he emphasizes the transition in religious communication from the realm of theology to social activism. If implemented in a moderate and reflective manner, this model has the potential to create a digital society that is ethically and religiously intelligent in the future (Kholili et al., 2024; Febrian, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study examines the practice of digital Islamic apologetics through an analysis of two Bang Zuma videos on YouTube, integrating Entman's framing theory, Craig's apologetic epistemology, and Berger-Luckmann's social constructionism. The main findings of this study indicate that digital Islamic apologetics has an ambivalent role: strengthening religious solidarity and spiritual literacy among the community, but potentially triggering socio-cultural polarization in the digital public sphere. This phenomenon illustrates the mediatization of religion, where religious authority shifts from traditional pulpits to social media platforms. YouTube becomes a platform for theological reading through rhetoric, imagery, and engagement with audiences in the form of an emerging digital charismatic religious authority.

An empirical analysis of the videos "GIVING UP IS ALSO OTEN BUT CHALLENGING AGAIN... WHO CAME OUT OF THE GRAVE?" and "FRANSIS KEOK..OTEN FOLLOWER OF A FALSE PROPHET" reveals a pattern of apologetic communication that is phatic, defensive, rationalistic, and moralistic. Bang Zuma

uses a framing that defines the contradiction of non-Islamic beliefs as a problem, where Islam is evaluated as the most rational religion, which provides us with an ontological solution that returns to pure revelation.

Analysis of Bang Zuma's Islamic Apologetics practice in two YouTube videos on Bang Zuma's channel, reveals that the five models of William Lane Craig can be traced in his apologetic practice, although with different emphases and adaptations: Classical apologetics is present in the use of philosophical arguments⁸ to counter the doctrine of the Trinity; Evidential apologetics is seen in textual analysis and historical criticism of the Bible; Presuppositional apologetics takes the form of an epistemological foundation by positioning the Qur'an as the benchmark of absolute truth; Reformed Epistemology resonates in the concept of fitrah and tauhid as basic beliefs that do not require external evidence; Cumulative case apologetics is practiced in the modus operandi of multiple argument synthesis in its da'wah strategy.

These findings suggest that apologetic models originally developed in a Christian context can be adopted and adapted for digital Islamic apologetics. This process is not simply imitation, but involves a creative blend tailored to Islamic epistemology, Indonesia's sociocultural context, and the unique characteristics of social media. In the future, the cumulative case approach has the potential to be developed as a model of moderate Islamic apologetics that can contribute to interfaith social development in Indonesia. This model must be able to maintain a balance between: Firmness of faith (bonding capital) that strengthens communal identity and openness to dialogue (bridging capital) that builds social cohesion in a pluralistic society.

Thus, digital Islamic apologetics serves not only as an instrument of da'wah (preaching), but also as a medium for building mature religious rationality, productive interfaith dialogue, and social cohesion in diversity. The theoretical contribution of this research confirms that digital apologetics can transform into a force for moral and social development if it is oriented towards the values of moderation, social justice, and interfaith dialogue, in line with the principles of *maqāsid al-sharī'ah* and sustainable development goals.

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