THE MILLENNIAL *KIAIS*
Contemporary Indonesian *Dakwah* Activism through Social Media

Evi Fatimatur Rusydiyah
UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia
evifatimatur@uinsby.ac.id

Halimatus Sa'diyah
IAIN Madura, Indonesia
halimah261282@iainmadura.ac.id

Masykurotin Azizah
PP. Raudatul Qur'an, Indonesia
rotinaziz@gmail.com

Abstract

The development of social media technology has provided people with more accessible information about religious knowledge. Everyone can learn religion from social media, particularly Youtube. This phenomenon seems to force young Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) kiais (religious experts) such as Gus Baha, Gus Miftah, and Gus Muwafiq to be more adaptive and familiar to social media platform, like Youtube. This makes them deserved to be called as "the millennial kiais." Using a phenomenological approach based on observations on Youtube, this paper examines the performance of millennial kiais in carrying out the process of dakwah (Islamic proselytization) and in becoming role models for social education as they do. The educational interaction carried out by these millennial kiais on Youtube seems to be very effective in attracting the interest of wider citizens. The number of their viewers reaches between

four to eight million in one year. The number of videos viewed is around one hundred. The model of social education introduced by these millennial kiais is analyzed through the Bandura theory which starts through a process of stimulation and observation, and is followed by a process in mental cognition, which creates motivation and demands a response by clicking the likes button and subscribing comments. The response marks the beginning of constant change of behavior.

[Perkembangan teknologi melalui media sosial memudahkan manusia mengakses informasi, termasuk belajar tentang pengetahuan agama. Siapa pun dapat belajar agama melalui media sosial, salah satunya Youtube. Fenomena tersebut seolah memaksa kiai-kiai muda Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) seperti Gus Baha, Gus Miftah dan Gus Muwafiq untuk adaptif mengikuti perkembangan zaman dengan akrab dengan media sosial seperti Youtube. Hal demikian menjadikan mereka akrab disebut sebagai kiai millenial. Artikel ini dengan menggunakan pendekatan fenomenologi dengan berbasis pada observasi di Youtube mengkaji tentang interaksi edukatif kiai milenial dalam melakukan proses dakwah dan membuat model peran pendidikan sosial yang mereka lakukan. Pada akhirnya interaksi edukatif yang dilakukan oleh kiai millenial di Youtube tersebut sangat efektif dalam menarik animo warganet. Jumlah viewer mereka antara empat sampai delapan juta dalam satu tahun. Jumlah video yang dilihat tersebut sekitar seratus edisi. Sedangkan model peran pendidikan sosial kiai millenial dianalisis melalui teori Bandura yang dimulai melalui proses stimulus, observasi, kemudian diolah dalam mental kognitif, lalu menimbulkan motivasi sehingga menuntut respons dengan memberikan komentar suka dan berlangganan. Respons tersebut merupakan awal dari perubahan perilaku yang konstan].

Keywords: *Millennial Kiai, Dakwah activism, Social media*

Introduction

The 4.0 industrial revolution era is marked by the rise of digital information, through which anyone can access information anytime and anywhere. It clearly affects the change in social interaction, especially in education. The use of social media as a communication tool is familiar

in broader global community, especially among the millennial generation. The millennial generation are those born after the revolution of digital technology since the 1980s or later, who are often called the Y generation.[1] They are associated with the frequent use of gadgets and the internet, which have destroyed the boundaries of space and time. They spend much time in front of the mobile screen—around three hours per day,[2] and their time spending even increase to 20 percent in the following years.[3]

The use of social media and the Internet is one of the most activities that features the current generation. Social media like *Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp*, and video sites like *Youtube* and *blogs* intensify social interaction. Such media and sites offer communication, education, and entertainment for the millennial generation in recent years.[4] The increasing accessability of the Internet enables them to spend more time watching videos directly through *Youtube*. They rely on social media as a tool to get information. The millennial generation often look for solutions to the problems of their life, including consuming religious topics through existing social media. In response to this development, the Indonesian Muslim scholars (*kiais*) consider to use the various types of social media for the purpose of their *dakwah* activism.

Social media such as *Youtube, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook*, and the like function as a new media of information that may generate both positive and negative impacts. The ease of accessing information through technology enable people to carry out social interactions wherever they

---

[1] Carol Elam, Terry Stratton, and Denise D Gibson, "Welcoming a New Generation to College: The Millennial Students", *Journal of College Admission*, 2007, pp. 20–25.

[2] Tim Redaksi, "*Youtube*, Medsos No. 1 di Indonesia", *Katadata.co.id*, 2019, *https://katadata.co.id/infografik/2019/03/06/youtube-medsos-no-1-di-indonesia,* accessed 16 May 2020.

[3] Iffah Al Walidah, "Tabayyun di Era Generasi Millenial", *Jurnal Living Hadis*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2017, pp. 317–44.

[4] Gwenn Schurgin O'Keeffe and Kathleen Clarke-Pearson, "Clinical Report - The Impact of Social Media on Children, Adolescents, and Families", *Pediatrics*, Vol. 127, No. 4, 2011, pp. 800–804.

are, without necessarily meeting up face to face. This is commonly called "cyberculture."[5] But this also has a negative impact, because no one can control who has the rights to speak and upload content in the media.[6] Frequently someone who does not have the capacity of knowing send comments and even audio responses which can be accessed by many people and are used as a reference by a community in making decisions. The media can present information quickly, but may not be able to control the presence of potentially harmful content.

The transformation of social media has invited *kiais* to adopt digital technologies in their *dakwah* activism. Previously they carried out *dakwah* from stage to stage, from lecture to lecture, which were later transformed into social media. *Dakwah* is becoming intensified because of the presence of social media. Netizens, users or followers can quickly learn Islam from clerics, *kiais*, and religious teachers. However, there are things to observe, namely the rise of "Islamic preacher celebrities" who particularly having a limited Islamic knowledge. Ideally, Muslims should learn religion from professional teachers who are indeed experts in religion. The rise of new actors in religion becomes a common phenomenon in many societies. Religious extremism that emerge in recent dacades can be rooted from those Muslims who learn religion from religious actors with intolerant and even radical religious tendencies.[7]

Creative imagination methods may overcome these problems[8] Muslims can learn religion from *kiais* as religious experts through social media. They have become preachers along with their role as religious

---

[5] Francisco J. Ricardo, *Cyberculture and New Media* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009), p. 65.

[6] Faizatun Khasanah, "Communication Ethic in Social Media: Analitical Study of Surah Al-Hujarât", *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 2019, pp. 209–28.

[7] Iswandi Syahputra, "Penggunaan Media Sosial dan Kemarahan Religius dalam Kasus Pembakaran Vihara di Kota Tanjung Balai, Indonesia", *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2018, pp. 149–72.

[8] Toyin Falola and Fallou Ngom, *Facts, Fiction, and African Creative Imaginations* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2009).

experts. There are some *kiais* who have been active in *dakwah* activism through social media, like *Gus* Muwafiq, *Gus* Baha', and *Gus* Miftah. They are often referred to as "millennial *kiais*" because they are quite familiar among millennial Indonesian Muslims and their *dakwah* activism through social media. Some researchers are interested in studying the educational interaction of the millennial *kiais* in Muslim community by employing a social learning theory. The purpose of this study is to find out and analyzes the transformation of *dakwah* activisim through social media and how the interactions between millenial *kiais* and their audiences can be explained from the perspective of Albert Bandura's social learning theory.

This study uses a qualitative research adopting a phenomenological approach.[9] It looks at people's enthusiasm for using virtual media, including a survey on the *kiais* when educating public through *dakwah* on social media. To do so, I observe some videos from the official accounts of *Gus* Muwafiq, *Gus* Miftah, and *Gus* Baha'. The data are also drawn from interviews with several viewers, and analyzed by calculating the number of viewers and summarizing comments which are interpreted by using qualitative data analysis.[10]

The Millenial *Kiais* and Their Educational Interaction in Social Media

Through his anthropological research, Clifford Geertz uses the term *kiai* as an equivalence term to the concept of *ulama* (religious experts).[11] Karel A. Steenbrink argues that a male person attains the title *kiai* because Muslims recognize his religious authority, seek his religious

---

[9] John W. Creswell, *Research Design; Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th edn (Washington, DC: SAGE, 2014).

[10] Robert C Bogdan and Sari Knoop Biklen, *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*, 5th edn (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2007).

[11] Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960).

advices, and maintain him as a religious teacher.[12] Indeed, being a *kiai* one does not need formal criteria such as study requirements, diplomas, and so on. In Java, the term *kiai* is commonly used for senior religious figure, while for young experts the title *gus* is commonly used. Like in other Muslim countries, in Indonesia some Islamic religious experts serves cultural and administrative roles as they are affiliated to Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI).[13]

The relationship between *kiais* and Muslim community is very close, especially in the field of social development. *Kiais* are social and cultural actors. They can adjust themselves to the needs of the society and invite Mulim public for such transformation. Contemporary *kiais* consider the importance of social media to perform *dakwah* activism.[14] They are indeed reforming methods of *dakwah* as digital technologies are becoming popular, particularly among the millenials. Important *kyais,* such as *Gus* Muwafiq, *Gus* Baha' and *Gus* Miftah, are very popular Muslim preachers (*dai*) among the millenials. Indeed, each of them introduces a different style of preaching. The material they present at *dakwah* activitie is also different. The online *dakwah* activism is carried out massively and openly. Moreover, the relationship between *kiais* and their audiences are also less hierarchical.[15]

Gus Baha' or *Kiai* Bahaudin, a son of *Kiai* Nur Salim, is a well-known preacher due to the spread of his religious lectures on *Youtube*. The followers of channels uploading his lectures reach thousands. His lectures primarily cover the fields of theology, the Qur'an and its commentary, and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*).[16] *Gus* Baha' was born in

---

[12] Karel A Steenbrink, *Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah ; Pendidikan Islam Dalam Kurun Moderen* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1986).

[13] Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002).

[14] Dhofier, "Kinship and Marriage among…", pp. 47-58.

[15] Dhofier, "The Pesantren Tradition : A Study…".

[16] Nur Sholihah Zahro'ul Isti'anah and Zaenatul Hakamah, "Rekonstruksi Pemahaman Konsep I'jaz Al-Qur'an Perspektif *Gus* Baha'", *QOF*, Vol. 3, No, 2, 2019,

Narukan in 1970 in the Pesantren al-Qur'an Kragan, Narukan-Rembang. He is famous for his modest style, wearing a white shirt and a black cap that is pushed a bit back. His distinct style makes him a role model for his audiences, particularly millennial Muslims. The vastness of the science of al-Qur'an and the science of *fiqh* that he masters makes him known as an expert in these fields. He is entrusted to teach at the Indonesian Islamic University (UII) in Yogyakarta. He also becomes the head of his father's Islamic boarding school in Narukan and teaches the Qur'an and its commentary in Bojonegoro, East Java.[17] During his busy schedule, he also delivers his recorded lectures which are later broadcasted by his students. His relaxed but loaded lectures interspersed with some humors make his audiences feel not bored. The religious material he delivers is always integrated with the dynamics of social life, so the audiences can easily understand the message.

Meanwhile, *Kiai* Ahmad Muwafiq, known as *Gus* Muwafiq and once served as *Gus* Dur's assistant during his presidency,[18] introduces a unique method of preaching to attract his audiences. *Gus* Muwafiq's simple appearance, long-haired, loud voice, and big tall body make him more easily recognized. His audiences cover not only adult Muslims but also the millennials. *Gus* Muwafiq often delivers historical material when delivering religious lectures, from the history of human civilization at large to the history of the Indonesian archipelago.

As a former student movement activist, *Gus* Muwafiq has a good understanding of political complexities. He is quite familiar with contemporary issues encountered by Muslim society. With his organizational backgrounds at Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia/ PMII—a youth organisation belonged to the traditionalist NU—he

pp. 179–93.

[17] Admin Duta Islam, "Biografi Intelektual *Gus* Baha' Nursalim Rembang'", 2019, *https://www.dutaislam.com/2019/05/biografi-intelektual-gus-baha-nursalim-rembang.html*, accessed 16 May 2020.

[18] Muhammad Ainur, *Gus Muwafiq: Menggenggam Dalil, Merawat Tradisi, Menjaga Kebangsaan Indonesia*, 1st edn (Yogyakarta: Laksana, 2019), p. 13.

experienced intellectual adventures from his almamater of The State Islamic University (UIN) of Sunan Kalijaga in Yogyakarta to foreign countries as serving as secretary-general of Muslim students in Southeast Asia.[19] So it is not surprising when he is still often invited to give some lectures abroad. His humorous style makes him admired by his audiences who feel that listening to his lectures is entertaining. The language he uses is easily understood by both youths and adults-either with good academic backgrounds or not. Addressing lay people, he often uses popular stories. Likewise, when interacting with young people (the millennials), he appears to be more relaxed and shows more flexible gestures. That is what makes *Gus* Muwafiq an idol among the NU members.

Meanwhile, *Kiai* Miftah Maulana Habiburrahman, known as *Gus* Miftah, originates from Ponorogo, East Java. He began his *dakwah* activities at the age of 21 years old. In contrast to a common description of *kiais* who preaches at mosques and religious congregations (*majelis taklim*), *Gus* Miftah often delivers his sermons in places associated non-religous settings, like brothels and night clubs. His appearance in these places makes him quickly famous, but also controversial. He talks a lot about peace education throughout his preachings.[20] Performing *dakwah* activities at entertainment venues, he receives the pros and cons of the Muslim community because it is seen as not normal. *Gus* Miftah encountered many challenges at that time. Using a persuasive approach, in 2000 he started giving lectures at brothels and other entertainment venues in Yogyakarta. Often, some of his audiences change their lives for the better and repent from the 'sins' they committed. Some even devoted themselves to *Gus* Miftah's *pesantren*, namely the Ora Aji Pesantren in Tundan, Purwomartani, Kalasan, Sleman Yogyakarta, which was founded in 2011.

---

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Admin NU Online, "*Gus* Miftah Kisahkan Sebuah Ujian Bagi Umat yang Tak Rukun", 2019, *https://www.nu.or.id/post/read/114373/gus-miftah-kisahkan-sebuah-ujian-bagi-umat-yang-tak-rukun*, accessed 16 May 2020.

Gus Miftah was known to the public as his video recording his *dakwah* acitivism at a night club in Yogyakarta was uploaded in *Youtube*. Performing *dakwah* at night clubs is almost unnoticed by many Indonesian Muslims. *Gus* Miftah on the other hand believes that everyone deserves Islamic callings. He believes that Allah's guidance might to come to everyone, including to those who come to night clubs. It seems that *Gus* Miftah's lecturers are so touching that many are listening to him solemnly. Sometimes some of them are even sobbing and repenting for their sins.

As social beings, humans certainly cannot avoid social interaction, which sustains the demands of their life. Interactions that take place within human life can be transformed into "interactions of educational value", namely communications consciously carried out in putting a goal to change one's behavior and deeds. The educational value interactions are often referred to as "educational interactions", which have been widely used in the classroom.[21]

In the learning process, the relationship between teachers and students is exercised through educational interaction. As technology develops, communications are not only performed directly in a face-to-face way. Interaction can be mediated by existing social media such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Youtube*, *Instagram*, and *Telegram*. Likewise, in education, educational interactions can be performed through technology-based social media; even now, it can use elaborative tools that can increase the ability to train and educate people more effectively.[22] Currently, a *kiai* can deliver material through existing social media; he may just record while delivering his lectures and upload it on social media at the same time. People can follow his lectures at any time.

---

[21] Richard Anderson and others, "Classroom Presenter : Education with Digital Ink", *Computer*, Vol. 40, No. 9, 2007, pp. 56–61.

[22] Dan Dwyer, Kathy Barbieri, and Helen M Doerr, "Creating a Virtual Classroom for Interactive Education on the Web", *Computer Networks and ISDN Systems*, Vol. 27, No. 6, 1995, pp. 897–904.

The process of educational interaction contains several norms or ethics. All these norms must be transferred to the students. Educational interaction does not occur in an empty space. It functions as a bridge that links between knowledge and deeds, an ethical consequence of education received by students.[23] Thus, it can be understood that educational interaction is a two-way relationship between teachers and students with some norms as a medium to achieve educational goals.

The interaction that occurs between teacher and student not only happens in the teaching and learning process but also takes place amid society in which the teacher becomes a moral agent as well as a role model of what he has taught. Thus, students are able to witness a role model of the good personality from the teacher (*uswa al-ḥasana*), which demands an adjustment between words and actions. When teacher's behaviours do not correspond to with his words, students may neglect his words, and this negligence also brings Allah's wrath towards him. In this case, Imam al-Gazālī likens a teacher and his student to a stick and its shadow; how can the shadow be straight if the stick is just bent? Therefore, it is essential to see the personality of a teacher in the al-Gazālī's concept of education because not only does the teacher perform knowledge transfer but also transferring value.[24] A teacher must be able to set an excellent example following what he has taught to the students. It seems that his *sufi* inclination orients al-Gazālī in defining educative interactions between the teacher and the student in the learning process.

The characteristics of educative interactions include several aspects: objectives to be achieved, materials or messages that constitute the contents of the communication, the teacher, the student who actively experiences the learning process, a conducive situation, and an assessment

---

[23] Bonnie Beeman, "Interactive Education Tool" (United States, 2008) *https://patents.google.com/patent/US7360158B1/eñ.*

[24] Naufal Ahmad Rijalul Alam, "Pandangan Al-Ghazali Mengenai Pendidikan Akliah (Tinjauan Teoretis dan Filosofis)", *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2015, pp. 346–67.

of the results of the interaction.[25] Thus in the process of educational interaction, there is a two-way relationship between teachers and students with some norms as a medium to achieve educational goals.

Contemporary *kiai,* like *Gus* Baha', *Gus* Miftah, and *Gus* Muwaffis, deliver their sermons through social media. Though these media, *kiais* can deliver certain characteristics of educational interaction that may be different from the previous method. With the new method, a *kiai* does not need to interact directly with the audiences. Nowadays, new communication media have facilitated people with easier ways to access information, including listening to religious sermons. With new media people can relatively access whatever and whenever they want and in wherever they are. They can also respond to the material they watch by clicking like or dislike. Interaction on social media can be seen by the public so that it can also influence others in responding to the material presented by a *kiai.* The audience can give any comment about the content of a topic delivered by a *kiai* as a form of dialogue in social media. His comments may not directly be responded by the *kiai* in question, but at least others may give comments on his. So, it becomes visible as to who agrees or disagrees with the presented content. More interestingly still, the educational interactions on social media are not merely between the teacher and his students but involving others as well. (Virtual) dialogue provides opportunities for people to exchange opinions, even though sometimes it generates debates. In this regard, ethical standards are highly needed on social media to avoid unnecessary conflicts.[26]

Public responses by giving comment or clicking "like" or "dislike" in fact represent a public value given by the audiences to videos or

---

[25] Ethan E. Danahy, Amul Goswamy, and Chris B. Rogers, "Future of Robotics Education: The Design and Creation of Interactive Notebooks for Teaching Robotics Concepts", in *2008 IEEE International Conference on Technologies for Practical Robot Applications, TePRA*, 2008, pp. 131–36.

[26] Muh. Ngali Zainal Makmun, Masrurotul Mahmudah, and Muhamad A*gus* Mushodiq, "Internalisasi Etika Bermedia Sosial Nahdlatul Ulama dalam Pendekatan Saintifik", *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2019, pp. 55–70.

contents uploaded in relation to the material delivered by the *kiai* and the performance of the *kiai*. Examples can be seen from videos on *Youtube* by the *Santri Gayong, Gus Miftah official* and *Gus Muwafiq official*.

Social Learning Model of Millenial *Kiais*

Humans, as social creatures, certainly require a learning process in their lives. Learning process requires a condusive environment. Social learning theory tries to explain how a social environment influences a person's personality and how a person can change a certain situation.[27] The learning process undertaken by humans certainly involves the social environment. It is called a stimulus responded by human behaviours. Social learning theory is a theory that seeks to explain socialization and its influence on personality development, and studies learning processes, personality formation, and environmental impacts on individuals who are socializing. Socialization in turn influences individuals in influencing their environments.[28]
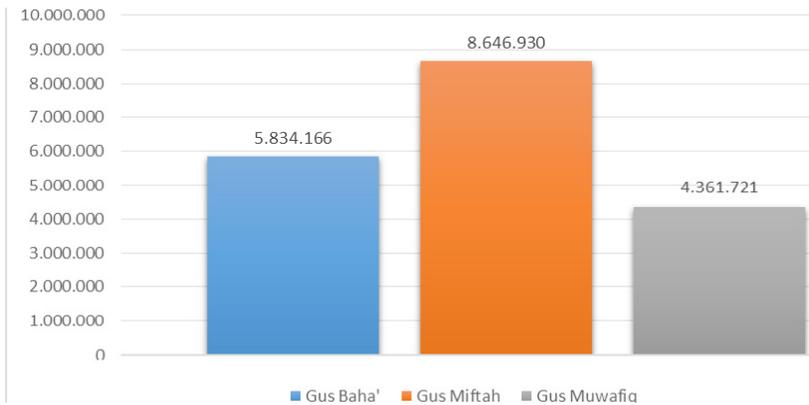

Figure 1. Viewers of Gus Baha', Gus Miftah and Gus Muwafiq

---

[27] Albert Bandura, "Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication", *Media Psychology*, Vol. 3, 2001, pp. 265–299.

[28] M. Ayaz Naseem, "Reimagining Peace, Reimagining Education: Peace Educational Potential of Social Media", *TARBIYA: Journal of Education in Muslim Society*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2015, pp. 1–11.

In the context of education through *dakwah* activism, millenial *kiais* stimulate the audiences by using *Youtube* to adjust to the trends of society in the millennial era. Their lectures can be followed by individuals anywhere and whenever via *Youtube* channels. Compared to lectures delivered in face-to-face spaces, online lectures are more flexible. It can be seen from the results of data analysis through interviews and observations on *Youtube* viewers of Millenials' *kiais* videos. The statistic (fig. 1) shows that the number of the viewers of the *Youtube* accounts of *Gus* Baha, *Gus* Miftah and *Gus* Muwafiq ranges between 4,000 and 8,000 viewers. This number is concluded from the official accounts of the millenial *kiais* from November 2018 to November 2019.

A large number of viewers shows that the social learning model of millennial *kiais* is widely welcomed by the public. Social learning theory also emphasizes individual identity, which is not only the result of subconscious thinking as suggested by Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, but also involves the individual's responses to the expectations of others. The behavior and attitude of a person grow because of encouragement or confirmation from other people.[29] Based on our interviews, the audiences are interested in following an exciting discussion from *Gus* Baha's online contents because, despite his traditional background of religious learning[30], he can manage himself to adapt to contemporary issues and explain the issues logically so that the public is able to understand his sermons well.[31]

Gus Muwafiq has more viewers on *Youtube* because the material he delivers contains history, especially on popular history of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago. His language is easy to understand, even though he sometimes makes repetition.[32] Meanwhile, the audiences are interested

---

[29] Albert Bandura, "Influence of Models' Reinforcement Contingencies on the Acquisition of Imitative Responses", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 1965, pp. 589–595.

[30] Interview, Komunitas Guru MADIN, December 10, 2019.

[31] Interview, Komunitas M18D IAIN Madura, December 21, 2019.

[32] Kelas PAI S3 UINSA, December 16, 2019.

in *Gus* Miftah's lectures because they find Islam dynamic and flexible, not rigid. His audiences follow him on *Youtube* after knowing from their friends or colleagues. Many viewers respond to the content by giving likes and comments, even distributing (sharing) it to their relatives. This context depicts how online contents become viral among Muslim society today. Some who come accross his contents and are not interested, they may not give any response; some even give a negative response by clicking on "dislike" or writing negative comments.

According to Bandura, humans tend to imitate behaviors of others and may obtain benefits from several things they experience directly.[33] Humans in the process of behaving do not just make observations to be responded. Still, they also require a space for thinking over to decide whether they want to adopt new behaviors or not. When certain behaviors have to be adopted, they may have also to rethink about the acceptance of the social or community. Bandura's theory on learning process to change someone's personality and behavior in social learning can be described through the following procedure.

```
        ┌─────────────────┐
        │    Stimulus     │
        └─────────────────┘
                 ⇩
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Observation (Understandable Instructions │
│    and interesting explanations)    │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                 ⇩
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Processing (Involving cognitive mentality) │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                 ⇩
        ┌─────────────────┐
        │    Response     │
        └─────────────────┘
```
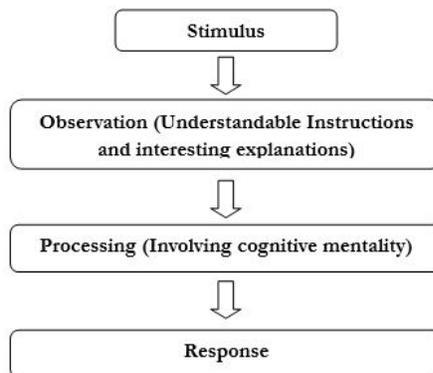
Figure 2: Social Learning Model of Kiai

Digital transformation reserves as a driving element for the millenial *kiais* to adopt digital technologies and translating traditional method of *dakwah* into uploaded file of audio-video, like *Youtube*. Their

[33] Albert Bandura, "Behavior Theory and the Models of Man", *American Psychologist*, Vol. 29, No. 12, 1974, pp. 859–869.

sermons are received by the public through observation and then processed in their mental cognition, giving a birth to reinforcement in the form of emotional satisfaction and motivation that incite a response in the form of typing comments or clicking "like" or subscribe. However, if someone, who watches *Youtube* shows as a form of observation, and processed in their mental cognition, is not impressed or interested, he has no motivation to respond. This context indicates that individual attraction to a certain programs is essential. When the sermon does not cause any reinforcement in the form of motivation, there would be no response from the viewers. Topic of sermon plays key roles to attract viewers' responses. The most popular topics delivered by the millenials *kiai* are about life concepts originating from the Qur'an, *hadith*, tradition of the Prophet's companions, and stories of the Muslim prophets and the history of Islam in the Archipelago. The *kiais* use logical explanations and popular language. In this way, the audiences will be attracted to watching and listening to their lectures.

As for observation techniques in social learning, there are three kinds of observations: life, instructional, and symbolic models.[34] Individuals can make observations with instructional models, by listening carefully to the lectures and explanations of these millennial *kiais* delivered on *Youtube*. Individuals can also find symbolic models by observing the figures of the millennial *kiais*, observing their life, educational backgrounds, and career in *dakwah* activities. A modest appearance represents a symbol that delivers some precedence. The depth of knowledge delivered inspires enthusiasm in learning various books. An open and flexible attitude towards diversity inspires a tolerant and moderate life.

Whereas in the processing stage, the function of education as conducted by these millennial *kiais* shows how knowledge becomes the

---

[34] Abdullah Abraham Hossain, Mazlin Bin Mokhtar, and Mohd Ekhwan Hj. Toriman, "Social Learning in Facing Challenges of Sustainable Development : A Case of Langat River Basin, Malaysia", *Research Journal of Applied Sciences*, Vol. 5, No. 6, 2010, pp. 434–443.

concept of life that direct people's deeds according to Islamic teachings. The core concept in social learning theory is that first humans can learn through observation. The second is that cognitive mental states are an essential part of the learning process, and the third is that learning does not necessarily produce behavioral changes.[35]

Audiences of mediated religious contents can learn by observing phenomena that occur, through which they find solutions by discussing with their colleagues[36] and teachers. Bandura's theory has the nuances of cognitive-developmental theory. Bandura calls his approach a social cognitive theory. The theory considers that, in addition to social factors, the cognitive and mental elements of individuals play an essential role in learning processes. Cognitive factors are the expectations of individuals to achieve success.[37]

From the above theory, when a *kiai* conducts the education process with lectures on social media, all that can be seen is his appearance during delivering lectures. What appears here is a verbal instructional model. Through verbal instructional model, a *kiai* describe and explain his lecture topic by giving examples that are closely related to the life experience of the audiences so that the content can be easily understood and implemented in their everyday life. The audiences' response is undoubtedly different because the language style and appearance of every *kiai* are also different as can be seen in the following table.

[35] Kendra Cherry, "How Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory Works", 2019, *https://www.verywellmind.com/social-learning-theory-2795074*, accessed 17 May 2020.

[36] Hossain, Mokhtar, and Toriman, "Social Learning in Facing…", pp. 434-443.

[37] Concetta Pastorelli and others, "The Structure of Children's Perceived Self-Efficacy: A Cross-National Study", *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2001, pp. 87–97.

Aspects	*Gus* **Baha'**	*Gus* **Muwafiq**	*Gus* **Miftah**
Youtube account	Santri Gayong	*Gus* Miftah official	*Gus* Muwafiq official
Num. of viewers	5.834.166	8.464.930	4.361.721
Souce	*Tafsir Jalalain Fiqih Tasawuf Nashoihul Ibad*	*Islam Nusantara Aswaja* Islamic history in Contemporary Indonesia	Moral temporary
Event	*Ngaji weton*	Public lecture	Routineed lecture
The educational method through *dakwah* actitivites	Delivered in *wetonan* (thirty-five-day), lectures take one particular topic with a special reference to the Qur'an and *hadith*. Material is delivered with a broad and profound explanation of the proposition. It is interspersed with straightforward and pleasant statements. The material with reference to classical books is more favored by *pesantren* students. For general public, lectures are delivered by using quotes and short videos about beautiful sentences from lecture conclusions	Storytelling is used in relation to contemporary problems. The style is straightforward, funny, and communicative. Lectures are delivered in Muslim community in general, general public, boarding schools, and agencies. Lectures are equipped with short videos and quotes for *Muhibbin* on social media.	He uses a slang language, and reflects on contemporary problems. Lectures are delivered communicatively and humorously. Lectures are delivered at cafes, brothels, celebrities circles, mosques, and offices.
Appearance	He wears a simple, white shirt, black cap, protrudes to the top, and a sarong. It gives the impression of a simple, modest, low profile.	White shirt dressed, long hair, pure, low profile. This gives the impression of closeness, easy to communicate.	He has long hair, and wears a *blangkon* (a typically Javanese hat) combined with trousers, which gives the impression that anyone can join regardless of different ages and professions.

Table 1. Social learning differences of millenial kiais

The above comparison shows how *Gus* Baha', *Gus* Miftah, and *Gus* Muwafiq have educated the muslim public through *dakwah* activism on *Youtube*. They have many viewers between 4,000 and 8,000 as can be concluded from their official accounts, from videos uploaded from November 2018 to November 2019. *Gus* Baha's account uploaded 129 videos with 5,834,166 viewers; *Gus* Muwafiq's with 79 videos and 8,464,930 viewers; and *Gus* Miftah's with 72 videos of 4,361,72 views.[38] The above table suggests that there has been an educational interaction within the framework of social learning theory with massive interaction effects, reaching about eight million marks in one year with a number of videos under one hundred. It shows how effective the educational interactions that have taken place using social media.

The videos of these millennial *kiais* are also equipped with Indonesian translation to facilitate viewers who do not understand the Javanese language. Language barrier is then anticipated as the adiminstrator of the channel provides Indonesian translation to the Javanese sarmons. Thus, the translation is essential to broaden audiences and viewers of the videos, reaching also non-Javanese speakers and viewers. Thus, the millenial *kiais'* influence is likely to win the minds of non-Javanese viewers who also often raise their comments and responses.

Important to the expansion of the millenial *kiais'* influence is the materil of their sermons. Different *dakwah* materials show that these three *kiais* target different audiences. *Gus* Baha delivers lectures using such classical Islamic books as *Tafsīr al-Jalālain*, *Naṣāiḥ al-'Ibād*, explaining them through other Islamic religious sciences. *Gus* Muwafiq regularly speaks about the teachings of *Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah*, *Islam Nusantara*, while *Gus* Miftah on Islamic morality in general that is adjusted to the wider audiences in cafes, brothels, and nightclubs. The material of sermons, thus, exibits identities of viewers. The Javanese *pesantren* communities,

---

[38] Documentation, videos collected on the official accounts of *Gus* Baha', *Gus* Muwafiq and *Gus* Miftah.

for example, are forming the majority of viewers. This is because the materials of these three millenials *kiais* is originated from the Javanese *pesantren* tradition.

Despite differences in style and materials, *Gus* Baha', *Gus* Miftah, and *Gus* Muwafiq do have similar techniques in their sermons. They use straightforward language, popular idioms, and humorous narratives, so that the goal of social learning can likely be achieved.[39] Some complicated teachings of Islam which are delivered in simple language make the educational process by the millennial *kiais* function its role. Islam, as presented by *Gus* Muwafiq, becomes more integrated to local culture. The concept of *walī* in *Gus* Baha's elaboration is easy to understand; he is someone who is highly committed to purified duties and possesses extraordinary spirit (*karāma*). In his lectures, *Gus* Miftah gives an emphasis on Islamic lifestyle; they are delivered in slang words, an effective method for wider audiences. All of these three *kiais* are humorous, and their style of dressing reflects Indonesian culture. Therefore, it is true that a majority of viewers can be categoriesed as viewers with a complex motivation, ranging from religious content to the entertaining content ones.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the transformation of *dakwah* activism among popular Muslim preacher in contemporary Indonesia. Despite differences in style, methods, and sources, the millenials *kyais* have sucessfully transformed *dakwah* acitivism into social media. The article also records patterns of educational interactions conducted by millennial *kiais* that shifts the paradigm of Islamic religious learning. The number of viewers that reach eight million within one year with the number of videos below one hundred suggests that this method of learning become increasingly popular. Through *Youtube*, *kiais* carry out educational processes through *dakwah* activism. Seen from Albert Bandura's social

---

[39] Interview with 12 Respondents on December 8, 2019.

learning theory, this process starts from a stimulus, which leads to observations. Observed objects are then processed in a cognitive mental state, and can cause motivation, which demands a response. In this case, the response is manifest in the form of comments, likes, and subscribes.

Bibliography

Admin Duta Islam, "Biografi Intelektual *Gus* Baha' Nursalim Rembang", 2019, *https://www.dutaislam.com/2019/05/biografi-intelektual-gus-baha-nursalim-rembang.html*, accessed 16 May 2020.

Admin NU Online, "*Gus* Miftah Kisahkan Sebuah Ujian Bagi Umat Yang Tak Rukun", 2019, *https://www.nu.or.id/post/read/114373/gus-miftah-kisahkan-sebuah-ujian-bagi-umat-yang-tak-rukun*, accessed 16 May 2020.

Ainur, Muhammad, *Gus Muwafiq: Menggenggam Dalil, Merawat Tradisi, Menjaga Kebangsaan Indonesia*, 1st edn, Yogyakarta: Laksana, 2019.

Alam, Naufal Ahmad Rijalul, "Pandangan Al-Ghazali Mengenai Pendidikan Akliah: Tinjauan Teoretis dan Filosofis," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2015.

Anderson, Richard, Ruth Anderson, Peter Davis, Natalie Linnell, Craig Prince, Valentin Razmov, and others, "Classroom Presenter : Education with Digital Ink", *Computer*, Vol. 40, No. 9, 2007.

Bandura, Albert, "Behavior Theory and the Models of Man", *American Psychologist*, Vol. 29, No. 12, 1974.

———, "Influence of Models' Reinforcement Contingencies on the Acquisition of Imitative Responses", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 1965.

———, "Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication", *Media Psychology*, Vol. 3, 2001.

Beeman, Bonnie, "Interactive Education Tool" (United States, 2008), *https://patents.google.com/patent/US7360158B1/en*.

Bogdan, Robert C, and Sari Knoop Biklen, *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*, 5th edn, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2007.

Creswell, John W., *Research Design; Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th edn, Washington, DC: SAGE, 2014.

Danahy, Ethan E., Amul Goswamy, and Chris B. Rogers, "Future of Robotics Education: The Design and Creation of Interactive Notebooks for Teaching Robotics Concepts", in *2008 IEEE*

International Conference on Technologies for Practical Robot Applications, TePRA, 2008.

Dhofier, Zamakhsyari, "Kinship and Marriage among the Javanese Kiai", *Indonesia*, Vol. 29, 1980.

———, "The Pesantren Tradition: A Study of the Role of the Kiai in the Maintenance of the Traditional Ideology of Islam in Java", *Australian National University*, 2014.

Dwyer, Dan, Kathy Barbieri, and Helen M Doerr, "Creating a Virtual Classroom for Interactive Education on the Web", *Computer Networks and ISDN Systems*, Vol. 27, No. 6, 1995.

Elam, Carol, Terry Stratton, and Denise D Gibson, "Welcoming a New Generation to College: The Millennial Students", *Journal of College Admission*, 2007.

Falola, Toyin, and Fallou Ngom, *Facts, Fiction, and African Creative Imaginations,* New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2009.

Geertz, Clifford, *The Religion of Java,* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960.

Hossain, Abdullah Abraham, Mazlin Bin Mokhtar, and Mohd Ekhwan Hj. Toriman, "Social Learning in Facing Challenges of Sustainable Development : A Case of Langat River Basin, Malaysia", *Research Journal of Applied Sciences*, Vol. 5, No. 6, 2010.

Isti'anah, Nur Sholihah Zahro'ul, and Zaenatul Hakamah, "Rekonstruksi Pemahaman Konsep I'jaz Al-Qur'an Perspektif *Gus* Baha'", *QOF*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2019.

Kendra Cherry, "How Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory Works", 2019, *https://www.verywellmind.com/social-learning-theory-2795074*, accessed 17 May 2020.

Khasanah, Faizatun, "Communication Ethic in Social Media: Analitical Study of Surah Al-Hujarât", *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 2019.

Makmun, Muh. Ngali Zainal, Masrurotul Mahmudah, and Muhamad Agus Mushodiq, "Internalisasi Etika Bermedia Sosial Nahdlatul Ulama Dalam Pendekatan Saintifik", *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2019.

Naseem, M. Ayaz, "Reimagining Peace, Reimagining Education: Peace Educational Potential of Social Media", *TARBIYA: Journal of Education in Muslim Society*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2015.

O'Keeffe, Gwenn Schurgin, and Kathleen Clarke-Pearson, "Clinical Report-The Impact of Social Media on Children, Adolescents, and Families", *Pediatrics*, Vol. 127, No. 4, 2011.

Pastorelli, Concetta, Gian Vittorio Caprara, Claudio Barbaranelli, Jarek Rola, Sandor Rozsa, and Albert Bandura, "The Structure of Children's Perceived Self-Efficacy: A Cross-National Study", *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2001.

Ricardo, Francisco J., *Cyberculture and New Media*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009.

Steenbrink, Karel A, *Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah ; Pendidikan Islam dalam Kurun Moderen*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 1986.

Syahputra, Iswandi, "Penggunaan Media Sosial dan Kemarahan Religius Dalam Kasus Pembakaran Vihara di Kota Tanjung Balai, Indonesia", *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2018.

Tim Redaksi, "*Youtube*, Medsos No. 1 di Indonesia", *Katadata.co.id*, 2019, *https://katadata.co.id/infografik/2019/03/06/Youtube-medsos-no-1-di-indonesia*, accessed 16 May 2020.

Walidah, Iffah Al, "Tabayyun di Era Generasi Millenial", *Jurnal Living Hadis*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2017.

Zaman, Muhammad Qasim, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002.