

Packaging religion through training: Da'wah commodification among middle-class muslim women in Indonesia

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Abstract

Purpose – This article examines the phenomenon of the commodification of da'wah through religious training programs targeted at middle-class Muslim women in contemporary Indonesia, specifically the Spiritual Motherhood and Miracle Women trainings.

Method – The study employs an ethnographic approach, collecting data through participant observation, interviews, and document analysis.

Result – The results showed that distinctive patterns in these da'wah trainings: they are held in prestigious venues, involve speakers and participants predominantly from the middle class—especially women—and maintain ongoing communication networks among alums. The commodification of religion within these trainings is evident in branded material packaging, training fees and discounts, the use of celebrity figures, and book production.

Implication – This study asserts that commodification serves as a means to present and frame Islamic values, reflecting the dynamics of religious adaptation within a society increasingly influenced by consumer culture. These findings encourage critical reflection on the practices and directions of da'wah in the modern era.

Originality/Value – This research is the first study on packaging preaching through paid spiritual training, such as Spiritual Motherhood and Miracle Women.

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Kata kunci:

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Abstrak

Tujuan – Artikel ini mengkaji fenomena komodifikasi da'wah melalui program pelatihan keagamaan yang ditujukan bagi perempuan Muslim kelas menengah di Indonesia kontemporer, khususnya program Spiritual Motherhood dan Miracle Women.

Metode – Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan etnografis, mengumpulkan data melalui observasi partisipan, wawancara, dan analisis dokumen.

Hasil – Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pola khas dalam program-program da'wah ini: diselenggarakan di tempat-tempat prestisius, melibatkan pembicara dan peserta yang sebagian besar berasal dari kelas menengah—terutama perempuan—serta mempertahankan jaringan komunikasi berkelanjutan di antara alumni. Komodifikasi agama dalam program-program ini terlihat jelas melalui kemasan materi bermerk, biaya pelatihan dan diskon, penggunaan figur selebriti, serta produksi buku.

Implikasi – Studi ini menegaskan bahwa komodifikasi berfungsi sebagai sarana untuk menyajikan dan membingkai nilai-nilai Islam, mencerminkan dinamika adaptasi agama dalam masyarakat yang semakin dipengaruhi oleh budaya konsumerisme. Temuan ini mendorong refleksi kritis terhadap praktik dan arah da'wah di era modern.

Orisinalitas/Nilai – Penelitian ini merupakan studi pertama yang mengkaji kemasan dakwah melalui pelatihan spiritual berbayar, seperti Spiritual Motherhood dan Miracle Women.

Introduction

Over the past two decades, religion has experienced profound transformations across diverse global contexts, marked by its growing entanglement with market logics and consumerist lifestyles (Eickelman & Anderson, 2003; Einstein, 2007; Woodhead, 2013). This process is known as the commodification of religion, whereby religious symbols, practices, and values are reproduced and strategically packaged to generate economic profit (Einstein, 2011; Pattana, 2008). Religious commodification extends beyond material goods, such as fashion, music, or digital media, to encompass the domains of religious teaching—commonly known in Islam as "da'wah"—and spiritual cultivation. These dimensions of religion and spirituality are increasingly being packaged, branded, and promoted through formats such as training programs, seminars, and workshops (Bowman, 1999; Hoesterey, 2017; Rudnyckyj, 2009a).

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This phenomenon is part of the global dynamics where religion is part of the market economy (Carrette & King, 2004; Einstein, 2011; Lofton, 2017; McAlexander et al., 2014; Roof, 1999). In various countries such as the United States, Turki, India, and the Middle East, we are witnessing the rise of entrepreneurial models of religion where religious communication is increasingly intertwined with business models and market-oriented strategies (Johnson & Rooe, 2001; Moore, 1994; Roof, 1999; Thomas, 2016; Zencirci, 2020).

This phenomenon has been striking in Indonesia since the Reformation era, when economic liberalisation and democratisation opened up new religious expression and consumption spaces. Islam as an identity is not only ideological but has become an *Islamic lifestyle*, along with the emergence and strengthening of the Muslim middle class, which has become the main agent and market in the flow of religious commodification (Dewi & Fata, 2021; Fealy, 2008; Hasan, 2009; Hefner, 2012). Middle-class Muslims—who generally have higher education, access to technology, and a relatively well-established economy—show a keen interest in forms of religion that suit urban tastes, aspirations for social mobility, and the need for a balance between spirituality and modernity (Fealy, 2008; Hoesterey, 2017; Howell, 2013; Rinaldo, 2008; Komarudin, 2022; Mubarak & Karim, 2022). They consume Islamic products and actively form an aesthetic and modern religious identity (Alam, 2018; Hasan, 2011; Rahman & Hazis, 2018; Rofhani, 2015).

Numerous studies on Islamic training programs and seminars have identified two particularly influential figures: Abdullah Gymnastiar (popularly known as Aa Gym) and Ary Ginanjar Agustian. Aa Gym pioneered a psycho-religious self-development initiative called *Manajemen Qolbu* (MQ), or "Heart Management" (Hefner, 2012; Hoesterey, 2012; Howell, 2013; Watson, 2005). Meanwhile, Ary Ginanjar Agustian introduced the ESQ Way 165 program, grounded in the concept of Emotional and Spiritual Quotient (ESQ), a model of spiritual engineering aimed at enhancing human productivity and guiding individuals toward a purposeful life (Howell, 2013; A. Muttaqin, 2016; Rudnyckyj, 2011, 2014; Saputra, 2020). In addition to these two prominent figures, several earlier pioneers have also played a significant role in shaping Islamic motivational discourse in Indonesia, including Imaduddin Abdulrahim, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Toto Tasmara, Syafi'i Antonio, and Yusuf Mansur (Dewi & Fata, 2021; Kailani, 2019).

Existing scholarship on popular Islamic *da'wah*, particularly in self-development training, has largely centered on male preachers (*da'i*). However, there has been a growing emergence of female-led *da'wah* initiatives that cater specifically to female participants. Over the past decade, Indonesia

has witnessed a marked increase in the engagement of middle-class Muslim women in various non-formal religious activities, especially those presented as structured training programs.

JID | 48 While the commodification of Islamic *da'wah* in Indonesia has garnered scholarly attention, much of the existing literature remains concentrated on male-led initiatives (Hoesterey, 2017; Howell, 2013; Rudnyckyj, 2009b), mass media platforms such as television and new media preachers (Rakhmani, 2016) (Raya, 2025) (Raya, 2024), and Islamic pop culture (Hidayah, 2021; Nisa, 2018; Rijal, 2022). Limited attention has been given to the gendered dimensions of commodified *da'wah*, particularly how middle-class Muslim women are both targets and agents in the rise of Islamic training-based religiosity. Furthermore, there is a paucity of empirical studies examining how religious values are repackaged using self-help discourse, psychological frameworks, and consumerist aesthetics in training programs tailored to female audiences. This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring how Islamic *da'wah* is commodified and reframed in the context of training programs such as *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women*.

This study aims to examine how Islamic teachings are repackaged and disseminated through training programs for middle-class Muslim women in Indonesia, with a focus on how such programs reflect the commodification of *da'wah*. It also explores how participants engage with these trainings in shaping their religious identities and roles. This article critically explores the commodification of Islamic *da'wah* through self-development training programs targeted at Indonesia's middle-class Muslim women. Particular attention is given to two prominent cases: the "*Spiritual Motherhood*" training developed by the *Pola Pertolongan Allah* (PPA) Institute and the "*Miracle Women*" training by the Emotional Spiritual Quotient (ESQ) Leadership Centre. These initiatives exemplify a genre of Islamic training that integrates motivational discourse, psychological frameworks, and Islamic teachings drawn from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the exemplary lives of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. The content is packaged in a manner that is both aesthetically appealing and practically oriented, often delivered in prestigious venues such as high-end hotels or training centers. Participation in these programs requires formal registration and the payment of training fees, which vary in amount (Uswatusolihah et al., 2023).

The dissemination of Islamic values through paid training packages reflects a shifting pattern in how middle-class Muslim women engage with and consume religious teachings. This shift signals a broader trend toward commodifying religion, wherein religious symbols, messages, and practices are transformed into marketable goods exchanged for profit (Einstein, 2007; Hoesterey, 2017; Jones, 2010; Kitiarsa, 2007). Such developments are emblematic of what Rudnyckyj (2009a) describes as *market religion*—a condition in which religion adapts to the logic of the market and is tailored to the aspirations of a consumer-oriented society. Within this landscape, *da'wah* practitioners increasingly assume the role of *religious entrepreneurs*, strategically branding and distributing religious content to meet the demands of modern, often middle-class, Muslim audiences (Howell, 2013; Raya, 2025; Rudnyckyj, 2009a).

The transformation of *da'wah* practices toward religious commodification presents a compelling development. Traditionally, *da'wah*—as the act of conveying Islamic values to guide others toward salvation and well-being in this life and the hereafter—is regarded as a form of worship that must be carried out with sincere intention solely for the sake of Allah. As such, it is not meant to pursue economic gain (Fakhrurroji, 2020; Rizka Agustina & Nasution, 2023). However, current trends

indicate that many da'wah institutions employ marketing and promotional strategies, which risk reducing the sanctity of da'wah into a more profane, commercially driven activity. Nevertheless, as Hasan argues, commodification should not be equated with mere commercialisation; rather, it reflects efforts to repackage and present Islam in ways that make it more accessible and appealing to broader audiences effort to offer and package Islam so that a wider market can accept it(Hasan, 2009).

This study contributes to Islamic da'wah studies in Indonesia by offering a gender-aware perspective on the commodification of da'wah, demonstrating how religious messages are reframed through market-oriented training. It enriches the discourse on Islamic consumerism by revealing the intersections between da'wah, neoliberal ideals of self-improvement, and lifestyle branding. It also broadens the conceptual scope of da'wah beyond conventional preaching to include training strategies rooted in commodified religious practice. Practically, the study provides valuable insights for da'wah practitioners on engaging urban middle-class Muslim women through culturally relevant and commercially appealing approaches. It offers a critical lens on how these practices shape women's religious identities and participation in the Islamic public sphere.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design with an ethnographic approach to explore how Islamic da'wah is commodified and packaged through *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women* training aimed at middle-class Muslim women in Indonesia. Ethnography was chosen as it allows for a contextual and in-depth understanding of social practices, meanings, and interactions within specific cultural and natural settings(J. Creswell & Creswell, 2019; J. W. Creswell & Poth, 2016; Spradley, 1979; Sugiyono, 2017). The research seeks to uncover the everyday religious experiences of women who engage in training-based da'wah and the symbolic, aesthetic, and economic dimensions of such practices.

Data was collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis(Miles et al., 2014). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with several informants: active training participants, alums, institutional organizers, and trainers. The selection of informants was based on purposive sampling. To strengthen data validity, participant observation was conducted during the training sessions held in 2024(J. Creswell & Creswell, 2019; Miles et al., 2014). The researcher took part as an observer-participant, enabling direct access to the dynamics of the training environment, including rituals, motivational activities, interactions among participants, and religious-symbolic language. Particular attention was paid to how religious discourse was framed and commodified in the training content and delivery.

In addition to field-based data, document analysis provided institutional context and triangulated findings. Relevant documents included organizational profiles, annual reports, promotional materials (e.g., brochures, event posters), training modules, photographs, and digital content sourced from the institutions' official websites and social media platforms (Miles et al., 2014).

Results and Discussion

The Shift in Da'wah in Indonesia

JID | 50 *Da'wah* is a fundamental element of the Islamic tradition that plays an important role in shaping Muslim communities (Arnold, 1913; Gharaibeh, 2024; Zabidi, 2020). *Da'wah* is a religious activity that aims to convey the teachings of Islam to its followers and humanity as a whole (Basit, 2023; Gaffney, 1991; Howell, 2014; Watson, 2005). *Da'wah* is a means of communication intended to encourage others to cultivate piety, so that humans can achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter (Millie, 2017). *Da'wah* can be done through various methods and strategies (Millie et al., 2023; J. Muttaqin, 2021). The implementation of Islamic *da'wah* has changed (Kailani, 2011; Meuleman, 2011).

In the contemporary era, *da'wah* in Indonesia has changed due to the influence of globalization, the development of communication and information technology, and the socio-political dynamics of Indonesia (Fealy, 2008; Meuleman, 2011). The success of economic development and the accommodating political attitude of the New Order government towards Muslims since the 1990s has given birth to a group of people known as the Muslim middle class (*Muslim middle-class*). The middle-class Muslims have high education, more work and income, leisure time, and a modern lifestyle (Hasan, 2011; Hefner, 1993; Millie & Baulch, 2024; Robison, 1996). They also have a high enthusiasm for religious life and are more daring to express their Islamic identity publicly. This phenomenon can be seen from the rampant use of hijab, *hijrah* movements, and *halal lifestyle movements* (Alam, 2018; Rofhani, 2013; Wildan & Witriani, 2021). Millie identifies five key aspects of religiosity among Indonesia's Muslim middle class: (1) a personalized approach to faith and worship; (2) concerns over the moral and spiritual risks of affluence; (3) public displays of piety that signal social status, often through material symbols shared via digital media; (4) the use of online platforms to craft religious self-images; and (5) the adoption of non-Islamic cultural forms, such as motivational speaking and personal development, in *da'wah* practices (Baulch & Pramiyanti, 2018; Millie & Baulch, 2024; Noor, 2015). Middle-class Muslims prefer more modern religious delivery styles—such as blackboards and modern management terms—than traditional styles (Hoesterey, 2017; Howell, 2013; Rudnyckyj, 2011, 2014).

The emergence of an urban Muslim middle class has created a demand for Islamic knowledge that aligns with their contemporary lifestyles and material-spiritual aspirations (Burhani, 2020; Hoesterey, 2020; Howell, 2007; Kitiarsa, 2007; Watson, 2005). Consequently, they gravitate toward preachers—often celebrities, practitioners, psychologists, and therapists—who offer practical and lifestyle-relevant religious guidance (Mandaville, 2007; Raya, 2025). This has led to new models of Islamic transmission and *da'wah*, distinct from traditional forms, including training-based approaches to self-development and management. Such figures increasingly function as new religious authorities, reflecting a broader trend of individualized and consumer-oriented Islamic practice in contemporary Indonesia (Hoesterey, 2012; Howell, 2013, 2017; Rudnyckyj, 2009b, 2011; Watson, 2005).

Commodification of Religion in Da'wah in Indonesia

The growing prevalence of Islamic training packages reflects the commodification of religion in Indonesia. Commodification refers to the commercialization of non-commercial activities.

Commodification is a mutually affecting relationship between the market and religion. This relationship gives rise to commercialisation or buying and selling activities. Commodification is the practice of commercialising an activity that is not essentially commercial. (A. S. Hornby, 1995; Hoesterey, 2017; Jones, 2010; Kitiarsa, 2007). Einstein notes, religious commodification involves efforts to package religion for consumption in the marketplace, where religion is transformed into a marketable product without altering its essence (Baudrillard, 1998; Einstein, 2011; McAlexander et al., 2014). Einstein also emphasised that the commoditization of religion refers to the effort to transform religion into a marketable product (Baudrillard, 1998; Einstein, 2011; McAlexander et al., 2014). The commodification of religion will bring religion to what is included in the space called by Rudnyckyj with the term *market religion*, where da'wah actors currently play the role of *religious entrepreneurs* (Abaza, 2004; McAlexander et al., 2014; Rudnyckyj, 2009a). *Market religion* refers to religious actors who supply religion in the form of the desires of modern society. In this regard, Fealy highlighted the interconnected and interdependent relationship between the religious and business sectors. Experts in the social and cultural sciences agree that religion greatly impacts business growth. The relationship is associated with commodifying religion in business activities (Fealy, 2008).

The commodification of religion and the rise of market religion are not exclusive to the Islamic context but are increasingly evident across various religious traditions worldwide. For example, the *prosperity gospel* within the Evangelical Christianity phenomenon in the United States illustrates how religious teachings are intertwined with capitalist values. Megachurches offer spiritual experiences through membership systems, branded merchandise, religious concerts, and even private spiritual consultations for a fee (Einstein, 2007; Howell, 2014; Khelfa, 2023; Lofton, 2017; McAlexander et al., 2014). Teachings on faith and success are often presented through motivational narratives that appeal to the middle class, positioning religion as a means of social mobility and individual empowerment within a neoliberal framework (Finke & Stark, 1988) (Moore, 1994) (Roof, 1999) (Johnson & Rooe, 2001).

Similar patterns can be observed in modern forms of Buddhism in both Western and East Asian societies, where meditation and mindfulness practices are detached from their theological roots and repackaged as tools for stress management and productivity enhancement (Carrette & King, 2004; Coskuner-Balli & Ertimur, 2017; Kitiarsa, 2007). In India, formerly localized Hindu religious festivals have been commercialized as spiritual tourism destinations and appropriated for political and corporate branding. Across these diverse contexts, religion is increasingly caught in the tension between its spiritual essence and market logic. While commodification enables religion to adapt to consumer preferences, it also risks diluting the sacred core of religious traditions. These developments underscore how *market religion* is becoming an integral aspect of religious globalization in the era of advanced capitalism (Carrette & King, 2004; Kitiarsa, 2007; Einstein, 2007).

Lukens-Bull explains religious commodification through two processes: the religification of commodities and the materialization of religious expression. In the first, capitalist agents embed religious meanings into selected products, transforming them into tools for material consumption and spiritual expression. Second, commodification begins with religious meaning and is then expressed through material forms, as producers respond to public sentiment to market religion-

oriented goods (Kitiarsa, 2007). The theory of religious commodification reflects how religion, traditionally seen as sacred and beyond economic logic, is now part of modern market dynamics. In this context, there is a reciprocal process: on the one hand, the market considers religion as a commodity, and on the other hand, religious institutions and figures take part in the market and the culture of consumption.

This phenomenon reflects the rise of consumerism, where consumption extends beyond basic needs to function as a marker of identity and social status. As Baudrillard notes, in the postmodern era, use and exchange values are overshadowed by symbolic value, rendering consumption non-utilitarian. This shift is deeply tied to the global dominance of capitalism. In the Islamic context, commodification is evident in the growing production of religion-branded goods and services—such as cosmetics, clothing, medicine, transportation, and tourism—fueled by the rising purchasing power of Muslim consumers (Baudrillard, 1998). According to Azra, as in the economic world, the balance between supply and demand also applies in the commodification of Islam (Azra, 2008, 2019).

Fealy views religious commodification as a response to globalization and global economic dynamics, framing it as an effort to repackage Islam for broader market appeal and da'wah outreach (Fealy, 2008; Raya, 2025). Similarly, Azra argues that commodification is not inherently negative and can reflect the growing Islamic consciousness among Muslims. Mediating through modern platforms may enhance the dissemination of Islamic teachings and expand public access to spiritual experiences (Azra, 2008).

Overview of Spiritual Motherhood and Miracle Women's Spiritual Training

The *Spiritual Motherhood* (SM) training is a specialized program designed for women and conducted offline and online. The offline training consists of a full-day session held at a hotel. In contrast, the online training is delivered via Zoom over two consecutive days, each running from 08:00 to 12:00. As of 2024, the SM training has been conducted 166 times in both online and offline formats.

The *Spiritual Motherhood* training program is specifically designed for Muslim women and is facilitated by female instructors. Most participants are young mothers from the educated urban Muslim middle class, comprising both homemakers and working women. Most of the speakers in this training are also women. Among the regular and well-known speakers are Dwi Fitria Ambarina, M.Pd.Ct.CHt., a family counseling practitioner popularly known as Bunda Ambar; Raudlatul Aniq, S.Psi., CH.CHt. is called Bunda Anik, Michelle Ronida, or Bunda Michelle.

The training was initiated by a therapist named Aniq Al-Faqirah, a Pola Pertolongan Allah (PPA) Institute trainer. PPA is an Islamic-based self-development training institution that aims to promote *tauhid* (the oneness of God) as a foundation for life solutions and to inspire urban Muslims through stories of prophets and Islamic scholars. The institution was founded in 2013 by Rezha Rendy and Sonny Abi Kim. PPA originated from Rezha's journey in seeking out books, training sessions, religious studies, and personal testimonies from individuals who claimed to have experienced divine assistance (*pertolongan Allah* or miracles). Through this process, he identified a consistent pattern involving emotions, logic, and actions, which was later conceptualized as the 'Pattern of Divine Assistance'.

PPA's vision is to foster a *tauhid*-centered society. As of March 2021, PPA has conducted over 2,300 training sessions regularly in 140 cities across Indonesia, with more than 120,000 active alums. Additionally, PPA continues to develop various training programs tailored to the needs and demands of the community.

The *Miracle Women* (MW) training is a specialized spiritual development program for women. It was first launched in 2019, with an initial cohort of 24 participants from various cities across Indonesia and Malaysia. The inaugural training session was held at Ruang Mina, 2nd floor of Tower 165, Jakarta, over the weekend of September 7–8, 2019. The program is led by head trainer Nia Fiani, a protégé of Ary Ginanjar, born in Jakarta on September 21, 1984. The *Miracle Women* training carries the motto "Calm women are bound to win" and the slogan "Liberating the soul of women." Since its inception, the program has produced over 7,000 alums from cities across Indonesia and Malaysia.

The *Miracle Women* is one of the flagship training programs of the ESQ Leadership Center, a human resource development institution founded in 2000 by Ary Ginanjar Agustian. The ESQ Leadership Center (ESQ LC) has produced over 2.1 million alumni worldwide.

Characteristics of Spiritual Training for Women

In general, the two trainings have almost the same characteristics, namely:

1. Prestigious training room

The training sessions for both *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women* are typically held in comfortable, well-equipped venues such as buildings or hotels. *Spiritual Motherhood* trainings are commonly conducted in hotels in various cities across Indonesia. Some of the frequently used venues include Hotel Ibis Tidar in Surabaya, Astel Hotel in Karawang, Harris Hotel in Samarinda, Santika Hotel in Sukabumi, Surya Yudha Hotel in Purwokerto, and Harris Hotel in Bandung, among others. In contrast, *Miracle Women* training sessions are usually held at Menara 165, a building owned by the ESQ Leadership Centre.

The choice of such venues represents a departure from more traditional Islamic preaching (*da'wah*) settings, which have typically taken place in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), mosques, or local religious study circles (*majelis taklim*) (Hasan, 2009; Wildan & Witriani, 2021). This shift in venue selection aims to provide participants with a sense of comfort while also creating a distinctive and impactful atmosphere. Hotel venues also serve as compensation for the fees paid by participants. Training rooms are often selected for their soundproofing features, ensuring that activities conducted inside remain private and undisturbed by external noise. These rooms are also carefully arranged to support the delivery of training content through acoustics and sound effects that enhance the overall learning experience.

2. Training participants and resource persons

The *Miracle Women* and *Spiritual Motherhood* training program participants are middle-class Muslim women. Many are working professionals, including civil servants, private-sector employees, entrepreneurs, and homemakers. Most participants hold undergraduate (Bachelor's) degrees, and some have completed postgraduate (Master's) education.

The trainers and facilitators of these programs are also women, many of whom come from general academic backgrounds rather than formal Islamic education or pesantren (Islamic boarding schools). This marks a significant departure from traditional *da'i* (Islamic preachers), who typically possess formal Islamic education, often grounded in pesantren traditions with a strong foundation in classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) (Burhani, 2020; Lyansari, 2022; Mandaville, 2007; Muzakki, 2012a).

The *Spiritual Motherhood* class integrates da'wah, training, self-reflection (*muhasabah*), and healing into a single session. Each event is accompanied by music to create an atmosphere conducive to discussion and emotional healing. However, it is uncommon for speakers to cite Qur'anic verses or hadiths in full during their presentations. Instead, they convey the essence and values derived from the Qur'an and hadith without direct textual references.

This approach differs significantly from conventional methods of da'wah commonly employed by traditional *da'i* or preachers when engaging with broader segments of the Muslim community. Perhaps for this reason, the facilitators in the *Spiritual Motherhood* program are not referred to as "ustadzah," "da'i," or "muballighah." Instead, trainers in the *Spiritual Motherhood* training are addressed as "Bunda" (Mother), while those in the *Miracle Women* program are called "Coach."

3. Training materials on women's issues

The *Spiritual Motherhood* (SM) training curriculum encompasses a comprehensive range of topics pertinent to women's lives, including family dynamics, strategies for healing emotional wounds, effective parenting techniques, and spiritual purification (*tazkiyyatun nafs*). This program integrates Islamic spiritual values with contemporary psychological frameworks, aiming to empower urban women in fulfilling their maternal roles more effectively. Central to the program is the concept of motherhood, which is explored through both internal dimensions—such as emotional and spiritual development—and external aspects, particularly parenting practices. Each training session is structured around key thematic modules, including "*Berdamai dengan Situasi*" (Making Peace with Circumstances), "*Menjadi Ibu yang Dewasa*" (Becoming a Mature Mother), "*Menjadi Ibu yang Lebih Baik*" (Becoming a Better Mother), and "*Berdamai dengan Kesalahan*" (Making Peace with Mistakes). Furthermore, the training addresses critical issues such as toxic parenting, self-awareness, mindfulness, emotional healing, and the pursuit of meaningful happiness.

The *Miracle Women* training program incorporates additional content focused on pursuing and realizing personal "miracles"—primarily as achieving one's dreams and aspirations. The program seeks to instill in participants the belief that they are both worthy of and capable of attaining these miracles, provided they adhere to the guiding principles outlined within the training. These principles are presented as pathways toward actualising personal goals and spiritual fulfilment. A summary of the training materials is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Materials in the *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women* training

<i>Spiritual Motherhood</i>	<i>Miracle Women</i>
<i>Menyelami diri</i> (dive in)	<i>Metafora kepompong dan kupu-kupu</i> (The metaphor of the cocoon and the butterfly)
<i>Mom, apa kabar?</i> (Mom, how are you?)	<i>Pertemuan suci</i> (Sacred meeting)
Human doing vs human being	<i>Peran wanita</i> (Women's roles)
<i>Namakan dan beri ruang atas segala rasa</i> (Name and give space to all tastes)	Wake-up call
Mental health awareness	Sering session
Our deepest pain and highest happiness always come from home	<i>Kisah wanita surga</i> (The story of the woman of heaven)
<i>Hakikat sumber kebahagiaan</i> (The Essence of the Source of Happiness)	<i>Cermin Jiwa</i> (Mirror of the soul)
<i>Menjadi manusia (Human being)</i>	Grateful things
Toxic mom, toxic parenthood, toxic kids	Coaching session
Reality is always in constant flux.	Miracle formulas
The Mindful Mom	Miracle exercise
<i>Merangkul luka dan menggapai Zona pertolongan Allah</i> (Embrace the wound and reach the Zone of God's help)	Why women failed

The table above illustrates that, although there are differences in the training materials of both programs, they share a common underlying theme. Both employ a stimulating blend of elements such as Qur'anic recitations, *shalawat* (praises upon the Prophet), chants of the *Asmaul Husna* (the 99 Names of Allah), Islamic history, and popular psychology. Each program conveys teachings on becoming a good and pious woman who benefits others and receives Allah SWT's grace and protection.

Regarding language use, both trainings frequently employ English to name their events or sessions. This contrasts with conventional Islamic education or da'wah, where materials are delivered according to specific Islamic themes and predominantly utilise Arabic.

4. Interesting delivery methods

The *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women* training programs employ engaging and dynamic delivery methods. The trainers utilise technology to achieve the desired effects. Training sessions use Microsoft PowerPoint presentations, including standard slides featuring graphics, charts, tables, key points, integrated film clips, color photographs, and popular music. The sessions are primarily conducted as interactive lectures.

In addition to lectures, assistant trainers occasionally perform dramatizations to illustrate the main points of the training. Interactive games and participatory role-playing activities—such as mutual questioning among participants, offering support, hugs, and encouragement—alleviate the monotony of sitting and listening. The physical environment during the training is carefully

calibrated to evoke specific emotional responses. Volume and intonation are modulated, while lighting is adjusted strategically to maximize the points' dramatic effect.

5. Caring for alumni

JID | 56 The *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women* training programs have established thousands of alums. These alumni are maintained and nurtured by forming groups on WhatsApp's social media platform. *Spiritual motherhood* creates alum groups in each city, such as *Spiritual Motherhood Alumni Purwokerto*, *Spiritual Motherhood Alumni Jakarta*, etc. Meanwhile, the *Miracle Women* training maintains an alumni group called the *Miracle Women Community*.

These alum groups serve as platforms for interaction and communication and channels for promoting training packages offered by the program organizers. *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women* coordinators frequently conduct additional training for alums. These sessions typically last between two to three hours and are held online. The organizers utilize the alumni groups to facilitate promotion and socialization to broader audiences.

Alumni groups, typically managed by designated WhatsApp “admins,” regulate content and participation to maintain group norms. These communities, formed through spiritual training programs like *Miracle Women*, offer emotional support, moral encouragement, and a sense of belonging. Participants share advice, pray for one another, and reinforce virtuous behavior, fostering sustained spiritual growth and collective religious commitment.

Commodification in Spiritual Motherhood and Miracle Women training packages

1. Packaging and Branding Training

In this context, the organisers offer well-designed training packages. The titles *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women* indicate that the programs specifically target a modern, middle-class audience. The trainings are offered in two formats: online and offline, and are generally structured as short sessions lasting one to two days. Additionally, the organizers conduct even shorter sessions, usually as introductory events or promotional platforms for the main training programs.



Figure 1. Poster of Training

Promotions and training program offers are disseminated through various media channels. The organizers design visually appealing posters or flyers distributed via platforms such as WhatsApp alumni groups, Instagram, Facebook, and Telegram. Offline promotion is also conducted through word-of-mouth, with alumni who have previously participated encouraged to invite others to join the training. Alumni who bring in more than three new participants are typically given rewards.

Branding demonstrates creativity in understanding and responding to the demands of the Islamic market. It emphasizes a product's unique characteristics, thereby making it more attractive and accessible to the public amid numerous available choices. Essentially, this branding strategy represents a form of the commodification of religion.

2. Training Fees and Discounts

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The organizers use "investment" instead of "ticket price" to frame the training fees. Each training package carries a different "investment cost." The online *Spiritual Motherhood* training investment is IDR 450,000, while the offline version ranges from IDR 750,000 to 800,000. Meanwhile, the *Miracle Women* training requires an investment of IDR 2,000,000 for the online program and IDR 4,000,000 for the offline version. According to the organizers, the difference in cost between the offline and online formats is intended to cover expenses such as venue rental and participant catering.

The fee covers training materials, lunch, snacks, and access to a self-development community. Participants who complete the course are recognized as "alumni" and become community members. Members are entitled to discounts when enrolling in future spiritual classes. The organizers offer a 100% money-back guarantee if participants are not satisfied. The stated fee applies to offline classes, although it does not include snacks and lunch.

Offline sessions typically accommodate 80 to 100 participants, while online sessions are usually attended by 300 to 500 participants. Organizers frequently offer special pricing or discounts. For alumni wishing to retake the training, discounted rates are provided. In the *Spiritual Motherhood* program, returning alumni pay only IDR 100,000 for online classes and IDR 150,000 for offline sessions. Promotional pricing is also offered during special events.



Figure 2. Price flyer and discount

Regarding the investment cost that must be paid, the training organizers stated that such a cost is reasonable for the type of training provided. Participants gain knowledge and experience that cannot be obtained through other training programs. The fee is a long-term investment, as the benefits are not immediately visible. It is viewed as an investment for both this world and the

hereafter. The organizers also believe that requiring a payment encourages participants to be committed and serious in following the training.

Another informant stated that the fees paid by participants are considered reasonable, as the trainers and coaches have shared valuable knowledge that they acquired through costly means. From the participants' perspective, several expressed no objection to the fees required, as they felt satisfied with the insights and experiences gained from the training. Some even reported attending the training multiple times, driven by a longing for the atmosphere and a desire to revisit and reinforce the material previously delivered.

Some participants admitted that it was normal for me to pay fees. A participant from *the Spiritual Motherhood* training city said: "*Saya sering mendengar nasihat-nasihat tentang Ikhlas, tentang sabar dari pengajian-pengajian di mushola dan masjid dekat rumah..tapi kenapa ya rasanya biasa saja...tetapi di pelatihan ini pesan-pesan tentang sabar dan Ikhlas itu begitu mendalam dan mudah diterima...*" (I often hear advice about sincerity, about patience from studies in mosques and mosques near home. Why does it feel so normal... but in this training, the messages about patience and sincerity are so profound and easy to accept...)" (Uswatusolihah, 2024)

3. Leveraging celebrity fame to market products

The *Miracle Women* and *Spiritual Motherhood* training programs utilize the popularity of celebrities to build a positive public image and attract wider attention. These celebrities had previously participated in the training and were later invited to provide testimonials supporting the programs. Among the celebrities involved are Irish Bella, Nabila Ishma, and Riri Fairuz.



Figure 3. Photo of Iris Bella and Mother Aniq (left), photo of Iris Bella and Coach Nia (right)

The two photos were circulated widely across various social media platforms associated with the *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women* training programs. In marketing, leveraging celebrity fame—commonly referred to as *celebrity endorsement*—is recognized as an effective strategy to build a positive brand image, enhance public trust, and capture the attention of a broad audience. Using celebrity figures strengthens public credibility, expands audience reach, and fosters emotional connections. Celebrities who share personal experiences of participating in the training create a narrative that resonates with their followers. This, in turn, inspires and motivates the audience to emulate their journey, particularly when the training is perceived to have brought about positive transformations in the celebrities' personal lives.

The use of well-known public figures in promoting spiritual training illustrates a form of religious commodification, in which spiritual values are transformed into products that can be marketed to the masses. On one hand, this reflects a creative approach to disseminating da'wah; conversely, it reveals how religion increasingly conforms to market logic.

4. Processing of material into commercial books

The *Spiritual Motherhood* and *Miracle Women* training programs compile their training materials into books, which are subsequently marketed to participants and alumni. These books are also promoted at various events and activities and through online platforms. Notable publications include *Spiritual Motherhood*, authored by Mother Aniq, and *Well-being Parent for Mom*, written by Mother Ambar.



Figure 4. Promotion of Spiritual Books on Motherhood and Well-Being for Parents

Both books were marketed to participants during the training sessions and made available through various online marketplaces. The transformation of training materials into commercial books represents a shift from orally delivered or informal knowledge to structured, written works intended for broader dissemination. In this context, the process involves writing and editing, aesthetic considerations, audience segmentation, and publishing and distribution strategies tailored to market demands.

In the context of da'wah, religious materials traditionally delivered through lectures, recitations, or digital content are now being transformed into books. This shift aims to broaden the reach of da'wah while responding to the dynamics of spiritual consumption in contemporary society, particularly among the middle class. Books are an alternative medium that is more enduring, accessible anytime, and possesses added value as a marketable cultural product.

The transformation of da'wah training materials into commercial book products exemplifies the commodification of religion, wherein Islamic teachings—originally rooted in spiritual and transcendental dimensions—are repackaged into marketable commodities. Theoretically, this phenomenon aligns closely with "religion in the marketplace," where religious practices compete within consumer culture much like other commercial goods (Einstein, 2007, 2011; Moore, 1994). Content that was once shared within intimate, relational, and interactive spaces is now reformulated into books or modules designed for wider public consumption. This shift marks a transition from traditional da'wah relationships toward the mass production of religious content, which can be accessed personally, individually, and flexibly.

From the perspective of commodification, these religious publications serve a dual function: first, as tools for spiritual education, and second, as economic products with exchange value. Consequently, religious experiences become increasingly differentiated and tailored to market preferences, particularly those of the Muslim middle class, who seek accessible, practical, and socially resonant forms of spirituality. In this way, such publications extend the market logic into the realm of da'wah, negotiating between spiritual aspirations and economic value.

The resulting commercial publications are not solely intended to communicate religious messages; market-oriented considerations also shape them. As such, developing these materials involves attention to communicative language styles, appealing visual design, and content that aligns with the needs and aspirations of the target audience. In this process, da'wah undergoes commodification, wherein spiritual values are repackaged into tradable products, though this transformation does not necessarily negate the essence of the religious message.

In this context, Einstein argued that religion undergoes adjustments or transformations when marketed amid increasingly intense market competition. These changes involve not only quality but also quantity. Qualitative changes require redesigning religious "products" to align with market demands, while quantitative changes necessitate ongoing research into consumer needs. Within spiritual training, such adjustments have positioned religious messages as commodities. While religion, as a doctrine, remains sacred, how religious messages are communicated and packaged in society becomes part of religious practice. When these practices are transformed into products, they risk gradually losing their spiritual essence to adapt to contemporary demands. In this process, religion is increasingly shaped to accommodate market expectations, situational shifts, and competition dynamics (Einstein, 2007, 2011).

The commodification of da'wah through professional, exclusive, and fee-based religious training has reshaped how the public interprets Islam (Alam et al., 2023; Fealy, 2008; Hefner, 2012; Raya, 2024). When religious teachings are packaged in the form of motivational seminars, spiritual workshops, or self-development training, Islam is increasingly perceived not merely as a system of values and worship but as a lifestyle product and tool for personal growth. In this context, religion becomes part of the symbolic consumption of the middle class, where Islamic identity is performed through consumer choices, such as attending elite religious programs, adopting particular styles of Islamic dress, or sharing da'wah content on social media. As a result, the meaning of Islamic spirituality shifts from deep, internalised faith to curated visual and emotional performance (Alam et al., 2023; Hefner, 2010; Rinaldo, 2013).

This phenomenon also has significant implications for Indonesia's Islamic authority and religious leadership. Traditional sources of religious authority, grounded in scholarly credentials and institutional legitimacy (such as *pesantren* or Islamic mass organisations), are increasingly challenged by emerging religious figures who gain recognition through market-driven popularity and their ability to commodify spiritual narratives (Burhani, 2020; Muzakki, 2012b). Consequently, religious leadership becomes fragmented and more vulnerable to the logic of capitalism, where charisma supposes expertise, and theological truth is subordinated to audience preferences. Over time, this can undermine social control over religious interpretation, exacerbate inequalities in access to Islamic knowledge, and trigger a crisis of confidence in formal religious institutions perceived as outdated or unresponsive to contemporary societal shifts (Hefner, 2012; Raya, 2025).

Conclusion

This article demonstrates that the commodification of da'wah in the form of religious training programs such as *Miracle Women* and *Spiritual Motherhood* reflects a new mode of religious mediation within the context of middle-class Muslim society in Indonesia. Da'wah is no longer conveyed solely through conventional sermons but has been packaged as paid spiritual training that integrates religious values with modern marketing strategies. The involvement of celebrities, the development of training materials into commercial books, and the utilization of social and digital media represent adaptations of da'wah to market logic.

Although this phenomenon can be seen as a creative approach to disseminating religious messages, it simultaneously risks diminishing spiritual values when da'wah messages are packaged as marketable products. This commodification indicates that religious practices are now inseparable from the dynamics of consumption, image-building, and market segmentation characteristic of modern society. For middle-class Muslim women, these training programs serve as a space to deepen religious knowledge and construct social identity, strengthen networks, and fulfill spiritual needs in a format that aligns with an urban lifestyle.

Thus, the commodification of da'wah through spiritual training reflects how religion transforms within the contemporary social arena: it remains a source of meaning while simultaneously operating within a market framework. This situation challenges both da'wah practitioners and scholars to continuously reflect on da'wah's meaning, methods, and direction within an increasingly complex socio-religious landscape.

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