

The existence of the media market in Indonesia: Study of media economics at *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id* from an Islamic standpoint

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Abstract

Kumparan.com and *Tirto.id* now exist as online news portals that are not only written. But also through videos, images, and infographics. Like other companies, *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id* are profit-oriented in media economics. This research aims to reveal the existence of the media market in Indonesia related to *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id* reviewed from an Islamic economic perspective. This research uses an instrumental case study method that explicitly covers all aspects of the media economy at *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id*. This study finds that in their market role, *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id* make the customer the king (service market), providing full service in the form of customization to clients. As viewed from an Islamic economic perspective, universal values are the foundation for building Islamic economic theory. Such as the prophetic values (*nubuwwah*) that should be emulated by the Prophet Muhammad by business people, especially honesty (*siddiq*), responsibility (*amanah*), intelligence (*fathanah*), marketing (*tabligh*), and government (*khalifah*), then justice (*'adl*) must be implemented at all stages of the economy. A good business is a business that can uphold justice for its perpetrators. This study implies that media business people are prohibited from pursuing personal gain, and other parties are exploited.

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Abstrak

Kumparan.com dan Tirto.id kini hadir sebagai sebuah portal berita online yang tidak hanya berupa tulisan, tetapi juga melalui video, gambar, dan infografik. Dalam ranah ekonomi media sama halnya dengan perusahaan lain, Kumparan.com dan Tirto.id juga berorientasi pada profit. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap eksistensi pasar media di Indonesia terkait Kumparan.com dan Tirto.id ditinjau dalam perspektif ekonomi Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi kasus instrumental yang mencakup semua aspek secara eksplisit dari ekonomi media di Kumparan.com dan Tirto.id. Temuan studi ini adalah bahwa dalam peran pasar, Kumparan.com dan Tirto.id menjadikan konsumen sebagai raja (service market) yaitu memberikan servis penuh dalam bentuk kostumisasi kepada klien. Adapun ditinjau dari perspektif ekonomi Islam, terdapat nilai-nilai universal yang menjadi pondasi untuk membangun teori ekonomi Islam tersebut, seperti nilai kenabian (nubuwwah) yang patut diteladani dari Nabi Muhammad oleh para pelaku bisnis khususnya jujur (siddiq), bertanggung jawab (amanah), cerdas (fathanah), pemasaran (tablig), dan pemerintahan (khalifah), kemudian adil ('adl) yang harus diimplementasikan pada semua tahapan ekonomi. Bisnis yang baik adalah bisnis yang dapat memegang teguh keadilan bagi para pelakunya. Implikasi dari studi nilai ini adalah bahwa pelaku bisnis media tidak dibolehkan untuk mengejar keuntungan pribadi dan adanya unsur eksploitasi kepada pihak lain.

Kata kunci

*Kumparan.com;
Tirto.id; ekonomi;
pasar; Islam*

INTRODUCTION

The development of media convergence is based on technological developments to support better and more efficient communication. Digitalization, internet-related innovations, and convergence processes impact the business models and forms of media organizations producing, distributing, and consuming media (Dogruel, 2015). Since 1988, early Internet users in Indonesia used CIX (UK) and CompuServe (US) to access the Internet and gradually began to experience quite good development. Thanks to the services of several previous names, the first Internet Service Provider (ISP) service in Indonesia was launched under the name *Ipteknet* in 1994. In 2012, Indonesia was ranked eighth in smartphone usage with an estimated 27 million users, which resulted from an increase in growth of 36 percent from the previous year. The direct impact of changes in media consumption patterns is a reduced number of newspapers in circulation (Khadziq, 2016).

Today's increasingly rapid technological advances have encouraged the journalism industry to embrace digitalization with the emergence of the online

journalism phenomenon. In Indonesia, like it or not, journalism is experiencing a fundamental shift, based on a survey report from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) recording the results of internet penetration in Indonesia (Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association, 2022), as seen in Table.1

Table 1. Results of Internet penetration in Indonesia according to APJII

Year	Internet User	Internet Penetration Rate
2019-2020	196,7 million	73,70%
2021	210 million	77,02%
2022-2023	215,63 million	78,19%

Source: APJII di Indonesia Digital Outlook

Kumparan.com and *Tirto.id* are now available as online news portals that are not only in the form of writing but also through videos, images, and infographics. This shows that *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id* are media that have implemented digitalization.

Social media's positive influence can be a platform for sharing constructive, inspiring, and educational content. Islam is a religion that has the flexibility to utilize various forms of media to disseminate its message worldwide. The key point is that the media can convey the message of Islam to recipients in every corner and remote location of the world (Bakti, 2011). The positive influence of social media can also significantly contribute to the role of the media market in the sharia economy. Digital social media technology has become an everyday part of human life. Islamic teachings prohibit disseminating information about the misdeeds of an individual or a particular group, termed as backbiting or 'ghibah,' and especially caution against spreading unverified information, known as slander or 'fitnah.' Islam is a faith that urges humanity to embrace goodness and truth and consistently avoid wrongdoing. As a monotheistic and juridical religion, Islam consistently establishes specific values and norms for its adherents, guiding them to conduct themselves by agreed-upon legal principles (Alfarisi & Setiawan, 2023).

“O believers, if an evildoer brings you any news, verify it so you do not harm people unknowingly, becoming regretful for what you have done.” (Al Qur’an, 49:6).

Consequently, we find ourselves distant from Allah and may even invoke the displeasure of Allah SWT. Moreover, it impacts diplomatic practices and the government's efforts to gain the attention of the international public (USC Center on Public Diplomacy). The capabilities offered by social media, especially in providing easy connectivity, not only contribute to international politics and social activities. However, it also includes international efforts to resolve global and interstate governance issues, connecting individuals, states, and non-state actors (Funk, 2013).

Islam is a religion that has perfected the principles of previous religions. Its sharia is unique, as it is comprehensive and universal. It is comprehensive in that it covers all aspects of an individual's life, including both ritualistic practices (worship) and social interactions (*muamalah*), as well as sharia economics. Universal, in the sense that it can be applied anywhere and at any time (Jamaludin & Syafrizal, 2020). "*We have sent you 'O Prophet' only as a mercy for the whole world.*" (Al-Qur'an, 21:107). Since Islam is fundamentally a global religion intended for all humanity, it is vital to utilize the media for its dissemination and outreach. Muslims must employ the media extensively for dawah (preaching or conveying the message of Islam).

In Indonesia, many politicians use social media for campaigns and propaganda. Propaganda is usually carried out by individuals, groups, parties, or countries to achieve their interests (Heryanto et al., 2018). Based on research conducted by Ihya Ulum Al-Din and Ginanjar Arya Wibawa (2021), media economics views the media as an economic entity seeking to profit (Al-Din & Wibawa, 2021). In an economic context, media is a business or economic institution that produces and disseminates information, knowledge, education, and entertainment to target consumers. Previous research conducted by Wildan Hakim in the media industry shows that trust and credibility are crucial and can be achieved through quality journalism. Quality journalism helps combat the spread of fake news and hoaxes and plays a positive role in the media. Online media managers have shared their views on implementing quality journalism as a strategic approach to ensure business continuity (Hakim, 2018).

In addition, collective research conducted by Radita Gora, Munadhil Abdul Muqsih, and Barek Hossain (2022) explained that the media sometimes acts as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it seems to be siding with the people or citizens. However, on the other hand, there are interests behind it, both in terms of economic and political interests (Gora et al., 2022). So far, there has been no focus on media market studies on *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id* from an Islamic perspective. Considering the Islamic variable is essential in this analysis because, in the context of the media market in Indonesia, the majority of the population is Muslim. Mass media such as *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id* have strong relevance to the lives and needs of Muslim communities.

METHODS

This media economics research uses an objective paradigm that assumes that fixed laws govern reality (researchers look for causal relationships in a phenomenon). This research is more suitable to use the instrumental case study method if the researcher wants to understand or emphasize an issue or redefine a theoretical explanation (Yusuf, 2016). This case study is more in-depth and details all aspects and incidents. In qualitative research, the researchers use the data collection techniques of (1) observation by observing the research object through tracking and collecting news and advertising content on *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id* on Instagram; (2) interviews with the key informants and sources, namely the Founder of *Tirto.id*, Atmaji Sapto Anggoro and the Chief Editor of *Kumparan.com*, Wendiyanto Saputro, and (3) documentation through a particular review regarding news and advertising content on *Kumparan.com* and *Tirto.id* Instagram pages, as well as the necessary data.

The concept used is the media economics concept. According to Picard, economic media talks about production, consumption of resources, and products and choices made to satisfy needs and wants. Individuals and companies are producers and consumers because they consume resources and produce goods and services. Media in the economic system can serve the needs and desires of society and individuals (Picard, 1989). The concept consists of two aspects.

The first is the role of the market (Picard, 1989), which covers several things, namely (1) the media goods/service market. The first market in which the media participates is for goods in the form of media products. These goods, sometimes called content products, are information and entertainment packaged and delivered in printed newspapers, magazines, books, radio or television broadcasts, cable services, films, or video productions. This product is marketed to media consumers; (2) the geographic market. Media units operate in specific geographic markets and are closely connected to those markets through the product content and advertising services they provide; (3) issues involving the market. Understanding and defining the concept and role of markets is very important for media managers and those who make public policy; (4) intermedia competition. In a broad sense, all media compete in the content product market by providing information and entertainment; (4) intermedia competition. Competition for readers and advertisers occurs within and between layers, but there are significant differences in the level of competition. However, regarding providing local information and advertising, local daily newspapers can be replaced only by weekly newspapers or other non-daily newspapers, which also provide local, non-national, and international information.

Second is media consumer patterns (Picard, 1989) that consist of (1) traditional decision-making is based on repeating previous decisions or media passed down from generation to generation; (2) market decision-making, where the amount of consumer supply and demand determines prices, affects production and determines who can receive goods and services or consumers who consume because it is trending in the market; (3) centralized decision-making, where the authorities and the Planning Board make choices; (4) mixed decision-making, which combines market elements and centralized decision-making.

Therefore, through the concept of the Islamic economic system, it is hoped that we can take advantage of it at once to eliminate the weaknesses of the capitalist system. The Islamic economic system is built upon five universal values (Jamaludin & Syafrizal, 2020), namely:

1. Monotheism (*tawheed*) is the foundation of Islamic teachings, based on the belief in the oneness of Allah
2. Justice (*'adl*). Allah is believed to be the creator of everything, with one of His attributes being justice. This also applies to the economic sphere, where economic actors are prohibited from pursuing personal gain if it harms others or damages nature
3. Prophecy (*nubuwwah*). The main characteristics of Muhammad SAW that must be emulated by people in general and business people specifically are (a) true, honest (*siddiq*); (b) responsibility, trust, credibility (*amanah*); (c) ingenuity, wisdom, intellect (*fathanah*); (d) communication, openness, marketing (*tablig*); (e) government (*khalifah*).
4. Results (*ma'ad*). This implication holds significant value in economic and business domains.

A fundamental principle in buying and selling is like and like (*al-taradī*), which is realized as a contract. *"O believers! Do not devour one another's wealth illegally, but rather a trade by mutual consent. And do not kill each other or yourselves. Surely Allah is ever Merciful to you."* (Al-Qur'an, 4:29). Islam has provided clear guidelines for transactions to produce halal and *tayyib* transactions:

1. Islam encourages its followers to avoid transactions involving unclean items. This emphasizes the importance of cleanliness and health in all aspects of life, including the economy.
2. Transactions in Islam are expected to involve beneficial items that reflect balance and fairness and provide tangible benefits for all parties involved.
3. Islam prohibits transactions with interest (*riba*), excessive uncertainty (*gharar*), and gambling.

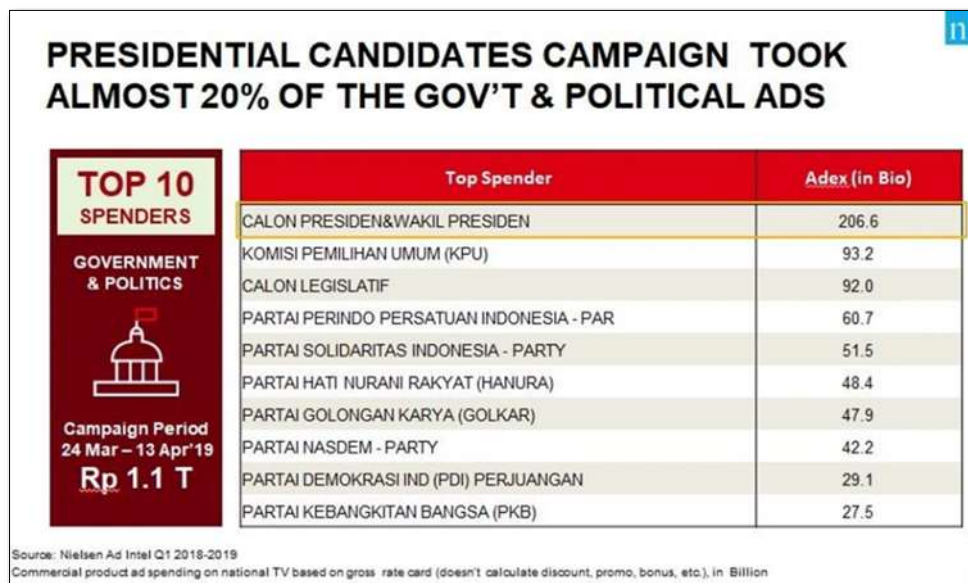
4. Islam prohibits fraud and emphasizes integrity, honesty, and fairness in economic transactions.
5. Hoarding goods or commodities to regulate supply and prices is prohibited to prevent market instability and ensure the availability of essential goods.

The abovementioned principles lay the groundwork for an Islamic economy that prioritizes fairness, sustainability, and the betterment of society. Furthermore, this guide emphasizes the importance of conducting transactions by Islamic teachings that uphold the values of justice, honesty, and mutual prosperity (Jamaludin & Syafrizal, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Nielsen Advertising Intelligence (Ad Intel) released by Nielsen Media Indonesia, advertising spending in 2019 grew 10 percent compared to 2018. Total advertising spending on television, radio, and print media reached IDR 168 trillion based on the gross rate card. Television still dominates with a portion of advertising spending of 85 percent and total advertising spending of more than IDR 143 trillion, growing more than 14 percent compared to the same period in 2018. Meanwhile, print media advertising spending reached more than IDR 22 trillion, and radio advertising spending reached IDR 1.7 trillion. In 2019, the online services category was the largest spender, with total advertising spending of IDR 10.3 trillion, with a two percent growth. The hair care category is in second place with growth of 17 percent and total advertising spending of 9.2 trillion.

Of the total advertising expenditure by governments and political organizations during the election campaign period, the most significant advertising contributors were presidential and vice presidential candidates, with a total advertising expenditure of IDR 206.6 billion, as seen in Figure 1 and followed by the General Election Commission (KPU) with a total advertising spending of IDR 93.2 billion. The third largest advertisers were legislative candidates, with a total advertising expenditure of IDR 92 billion. Meanwhile, in the fourth and fifth positions are the Indonesian Unity Party, IDR 60.7 billion, and the Indonesian Solidarity Party, IDR 51.5 billion (Nielsen, 2020).



Source: Nielsen Digital Ad Intel (2019)
Figure 1. Campaign advertising contributes almost 20% of total government and political advertising spending from Nielsen Ad Intel

Kumparan.com

In the leading theory of media economics, one of them is stated to be audience media. Based on the results of interviews with researchers and the Chief of KumparanBisnis, Wendiyanto Saputro, *Kumparan.com* is a digital media platform that collaborates content from the internal *Kumparan.com* editorial team and external. These people have accounts and actively write according to their expertise (user-generated content). The external content comes from 16 regional media partners collaborating with *Kumparan.com*. They have an account on *Kumparan.com*, so their content can be read on their online media and *Kumparan.com*. Then, the leading theory of media economics includes advertisers. In this case, the advertising target for 2019 is IDR 250 billion, and the audience is 70 million monthly active users, the majority (82%) in the 18-44 year age group, 55% women and 45% men. 93% of cellular users are distributed in big cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Semarang, and Makassar.

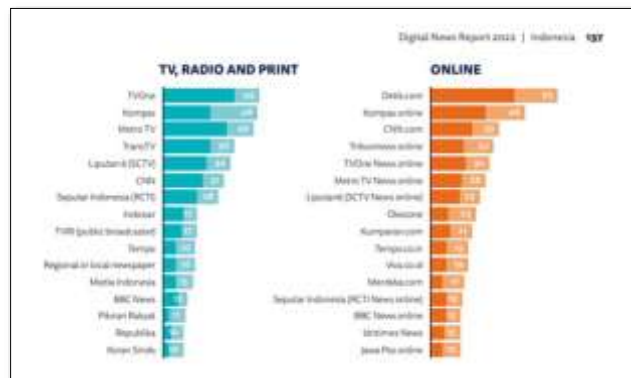
In this case, specifically for political advertisements and candidates, not only on *Kumparan.com* but almost all media apply for payment before broadcast (PBB). Because in politics, you can win or lose. Candidates who win do not necessarily pay because they feel they are powerful. If they lose, it is more about securing the contract. In the context of the 2019 election, the PBB scheme regarding profit or loss is applied at *Kumparan.com* because the package offered during collaboration includes production costs, operating

costs, and the Consumer Price Index. *Kumparan.com*, in this case, will make a profit (Personal interview with Saputro, 2023).

Role of the market

1. Intermedia competition

In the media economy, one of them is mentioned, namely, the element of intermedia competition, which explains that all media compete in the content product market by providing information and entertainment. *Kumparan.com* is also included in the category of fighting outside the group (intermedia competition). Regarding product competition, several online media are competitors to *Kumparan.com*, namely *Detik.com*, *Kompas.com*, and *Liputan6.com*. In the digital media industry, rankings are based on the number of readers. *Kumparan.com*, with a total of 21 readers, is below *Detik.com* with 65, *Kompas.com* with 48, and *Liputan6.com* with 25 (University of Oxford & Reuters Institute, 2022), as seen in Figure 2. Intermedia competition often takes the form of coverage, with journalists reporting on changes at competing media companies (Zion et al., 2023). These three media also adopt the same content as *Kumparan.com*.



Source: Reuters Institute Digital News Report (2022)

Figure 2. Digital media ranking based on the number of readers

2. Issues involving the market

According to Wendiyanto Saputro, *Kumparan.com* cannot map the influence of election trend content regarding the election context. That is social media content; there is content about elections, but that is not the only variable that causes the number of *Kumparan.com* readers to increase. The most essential thing for creating an audience or readers in the media industry is building relevance. So, to what extent is the content that *Kumparan.com* creates relevant to the needs of its audience? Another determining

variable is developing content relevant to trends in society. It imitates this relevance to increase its audience.

3. The media goods/service market

Kumparan.com management meets with clients from banks, ministries, institutions, or BUMN. *Kumparan.com* always starts with discussing their complaints or whether the ministry has just launched the Job Creation Law, but the narrative that emerges in society is very harmful. What is the target for socializing the Job Creation Law from this discussion? Then, it submits a collaboration proposal to the client through content such as releases, articles, and social media content, or we offer activation such as creating webinars, seminars, and online or offline quizzes. It depends on the problem, the goals, and the budget that the client that *Kumparan.com* is running. So, almost all forms of advertising or commercial collaboration between clients and *Kumparan.com* take the form of programs specially designed and tailored to the client's needs.

In this case, *Kumparan.com*, as a social media agency, provides complete services to clients by doing things related to advertising and promotions (Alexander et al., 2004). Advertising is often discussed in media studies because it supports commercial values in the media. The revenue it generates supports all media. Advertising does not hesitate to persuade the audience to affect us (Burton, 2002). The value of justice holds great importance in Islam, encompassing social, economic, and political aspects. Equity in the economic domain entails a circumstance in which each individual receives what is rightfully theirs.

Fairness (*adl*) is fundamental for actualizing Islamic economic principles. It is imperative to incorporate justice across all facets of the economic process. Achieving social justice contributes to fostering favorable conditions for sustained business operations. Conversely, widespread injustice may lead to social unrest, disrupting the endeavors of business individuals. A successful business upholds justice for its participants and proves profitable for those engaged in it. In the realm of just business dealings, it is characterized as "avoiding oppression or being unjust." (Syantoso et al., 2018).

Regarding the economic consequences of values, individuals involved in economic activities should refrain from seeking personal benefits if they harm others or have inherently destructive consequences.

"Indeed, Allah commands you to return trusts to their rightful owners, and when you judge between people, judge with fairness. What a noble commandment from Allah to you! Surely Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing." (Al-Qur'an, 4:58).

In a capitalist economy, each person has the right to receive compensation in proportion to their performance. The principle of fairness in business transactions does not favor one party, but both are in an equal position. Fair business transactions are not harmful to others or oneself (*laa dharara wa laa dhiraara*) or do not commit acts that harm oneself or others (*laa tadzlimuuna wa laa tudzlamuun*). Pay attention to individual rights and provide those rights to each owner.

Media consumer patterns

1. Market decision making

In general, in the media industry, political years such as presidential and legislative elections always provide the potential for additional economic turnover of around three percent based on macroeconomic data. Usually, economic growth in average years is around five percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Regarding advertising and audience growth on *Kumparan.com* in 2023, monthly active users until the first quarter of 2023 have increased fivefold compared to the first quarter of 2022. This statement is coherent with the media consumer pattern: people consume media because it is trending in the market.



Source: Instagram @kumparancom

Figure 3. Instagram profile of Kumparan.com

According to management evaluation, *Kumparan.com* optimizes content on social media, as seen in Figure 3. Data from Google, in line with its content marketing research data *Kumparan.com*, shows that 80 percent of the audience consumes content on social media, especially the millennial generation. Almost every day, people access Instagram, *TikTok*, and *Twitter* but do not necessarily access websites. Based on this trend, in the fourth quarter of 2022, *Kumparan.com* will increase social media content, contributing to

the number of readers (Personal Interview with Saputro, 2023). Product policy involves the strategies used by companies in deciding how to position their products in the market and how they will be marketed (Picard, 1989). Researchers quoted data from a British media company, *We Are Social*, regarding internet and social media consumption, which has increased yearly, as seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Internet consumption in Indonesia

Year	Internet Users	Active Social Media Users	Internet Consumption Growth	Social Media Consumption Growth
2019	150 million	150 million	13%	15%
2020	175,4 million	160 million	17%	8,1%
2021	202,6 million	170 million	16%	6,3%
2022	204,7 million	191,4 million	1%	12,6%
2023	212,9 million	167 million	5,2%	3%

Source: *We Are Social* Digital 2023 Global Overview Report (We Are Social UK, 2023)

Wendiyanto Saputro added that since the fourth quarter of 2022, *Kumparan.com* has optimized its social media accounts. Reporters create not only article material but also material for content on social media. They only cover interview recordings and then process them into text. They also make video recordings and take photos, which are then processed into content on social media such as TikTok, Instagram video reels, and Instagram feeds like content creators. In this case, reporters in media economic theory take part in media employment. Media market practices that comply with Islamic media market principles can create relevant relationships and align with Islamic values. For example, a journalist must communicate information grounded in actual events, avoiding disseminating fake news.

The Quran instructs us to speak the truth and discourages the distortion of facts, emphasizing the importance of revealing the unaltered truth (Aksin & Baedowi, 2020).

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ٤٢

“Do not mix truth with falsehood or hide the truth knowingly.” (Al Qur’an, 2:42).

Within Islam, the communication processes and the spread of information are required to adhere to ethical standards that are upright and accurate. It is essential to avoid exaggeration, understatement, or contradiction of facts. These actions should align with the principle of honesty (*shiddiq*), which according to *shaddaqa* language means authentic, honest trustworthy, sincere, and genuine (Maghfiroh & Abbas, 2020).

In terms of economic structure, there is injustice and even threats; Google and Facebook, as well as other platform accounts, get money from the work, sweat, and costs we incur to pay reporters. They get money by commercializing all *Kumparan.com* content, but they do not share or even give a fee to *Kumparan.com* as the content owner. OTT platforms such as Google, Facebook, TikTok, and others enjoy the most significant portion of revenue from the media business in general in Indonesia. People and media create content and plug it into their search engines. People search for *Kumparan.com* on Google Search and then get a link, which Google commercializes by placing advertisements there and getting money from its clients.

Tirta.id

The name *Tirta* itself means flowing, clear, and enlightening water. Since the beginning, *Tirta.id* has presented news in long form. In contrast to other online media, *Tirta.id* avoids presenting long news and divides it into several pages to increase clicks (Anggoro, 2023). Another characteristic of *Tirta.id* is the presence of national and international news infographics and analysis based on facts and data to attract readers' attention and support in-depth news. This statement is coherent with the leading media economics theory, namely audience media. As a new media, *Tirta.id* only focuses on creating good content. Because the income problem is an effect or consequence, but the product is the main thing. *Tirta.id* has four products, which include (1) in-depth news that discusses information in-depth and (2) mild reports. Mild report-type news is a news topic only discussed from one perspective and combined with infographics as a distinctive marker for all reports *Tirta* presents. *Id*; (4) hard news. *Tirta.id* uses the concept of precision journalism; the news is discussed in depth so that one news article is long; and (5) current Issue.

Role of the market

1. Intermedia competition

Tirta.id is also included in the category of fighting outside the group. Regarding product competition, several online media are *Tirta.id*'s competitors, namely *Tempo.co* and *katadata.co.id*. Referring to data from the Reuters Institute Digital News Report

(2022) in the digital media industry, there is a ranking based on the number of readers, as seen in Figure 4. *Tempo.Co* is superior to *Tirto.id* with a total of 19 readers. Regarding brand trust scores, based on percentages, *Tirto.id* achieved 41 percent trust and 12 percent distrust (University of Oxford & Reuters Institute, 2022).



Source: Reuters Institute Digital News Report (2022)

Figure 4. Digital media ranking based on the number of readers

2. The media goods/service market

In maintaining its business existence, *Tirto.id* seeks to strengthen branding with credibility and provide recipients with customization to advertisers without destroying the principles of independence and firewall (Anggoro, 2023). Satisfied customers are more likely to repeat transactions and share positive experiences, which requires aligning their expectations with the company's performance (Kotler et al., 1999). From the Islamic economic perspective, providing services should be grounded in Sharia values to demonstrate devotion, prove the consistency of faith, and implement Islamic law (Adimah et al., 2020). Professionalism and skillfulness in providing services to consumers are essential for each individual. When people work to the best of their ability, they can achieve optimal results (Nurhadi, 2020).

“Say, ‘O Prophet,’ ‘Everyone acts in their way. However, your Lord knows best whose way is rightly guided.’ (Al Qur’an, 17:84).

Service characteristics are based on the Islamic economic system, built on prophetic values of honesty (*siddiq*), an attitude that does not lie, deceive, contradict facts, betray, and never break promises. Apart from that, it is responsible and trustworthy (*amanah*).

“Give full measure, and cause no loss to others. Weigh with an even balance.”
(*Al-Qur’an*, 26:181-182)

Media consumer patterns

1. Market decision making

According to an interview with Atmaji Sapto Anggoro, during the 2019 election campaign, as seen in Figure 5, *Tirto.id*'s payment before broadcast (PBB) revenue only reached 10 percent except for prominent media such as *Detikcom* and *Kompas*. Regarding the volume of audience development, optimizing *Tirto.id*'s readership growth does not only focus on the website but also social media platforms. Utilization of social media in the form of Facebook and Instagram is a tactic that must be carried out. *Tirto. id*, to attract young people, is optimizing via Instagram. Within 1.5 years since its launch, *Tirto.id*'s followers reached 1 million (Personal interview with Anggoro, 2023).



Source: Instagram @tirtoid

Figure 5. Tirto.id infographics regarding the 2019 Election

Once Instagram numbers are above 500,000, there is potential to monetize. So, Instagram of *Tirto.id* is probably the most expensive in Indonesia for the advertising or advertorial category. It can reach IDR 70 million per gross submission, and the price is high on purpose, so the readability level is good, and there are not many other advertisements. *Tirto.id* limits the maximum per week to only two advertorials at that time, as seen in Figure 6. So, readers find it difficult to differentiate between content and advertorials (Personal Interview with Anggoro, 2023). All types of media become stronger with commercial aspects because of their ability to obtain more significant income from advertising (Albarran et al., 2006). Advertorials are a cross between advertising and editorial copy. It is designed to deliver advertising directly (Branston & Stafford, 2003). *Tirto.id* at that time, 60 percent of the readership growth came from social media. For us, it does not matter if there are many users; social media can also be monetized. The increase in website readers is at most 20 percent, while social media, especially Instagram, is up to 150% monthly (Personal interview with Anggoro, 2023).



Source: Instagram @tirtoid

Figure 6. Advertorial at Instagram of *Tirto.id*

Based on experience in Australia, the government established a particular unit within the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission or ACCC regarding digital platform investigations that proactively enforces, monitors, and investigates competition and consumer protection in digital markets. Call on the ACCC to create a mandatory code of conduct to regulate commercial relationships between digital

platforms and media companies (GOV.UK, 2020). Small publishers must cooperate for business alliances to benefit from Google's remuneration. Because of this, Australia issued the News Media Bargaining Code, a new law forcing technology companies such as Google and Facebook to pay for every news content. This law was adopted by the media in Australia in 2019 (CNN Indonesia, 2021). Then, this law was adopted by the Press Council by proposing regulations related to the Sustainability of the Media Working Group (Task Force Media Sustainability). This group will identify media sustainability problems currently faced by the national press related to digital developments.

As an essential digital platform, Google certainly does not want to spend more money than it currently has. So Google hides behind algorithms; for example, only media with authoritative content are paid so that content that cheats does not receive remuneration. Every individual possesses equal rights without any discrimination. In Islam, guiding economic endeavors is grounded in the ethical principles of (*al-karimah*), emphasizing attaining freedom and justice. Engaging in economic activities without ethical considerations can result in monopolistic practices (*ihthikar*), hoarding (*ikhtinaz*), the collection of interest, and other behaviors that may contribute to an unjust distribution of income (*tauzi' al-dakhl*). Its principles implemented by the capitalist system ultimately led to the realization that the actual controllers are the capitalists.

A component of distributive justice involves procedural economics, such as the income generated for the party conducting the trade using a *mudarabah* mechanism or the sharing of profits for capital funds through a *musyarakah* mechanism (Kalsum, 2018).

“Surely your Lord knows that you ‘O, Prophet’ stand ‘in prayer’ for nearly two-thirds of the night, or sometimes half of it, or a third, as do some of those with you. Allah alone keeps a ‘precise’ measure of the day and night. He knows that you, ‘believers’, are unable to endure this and has turned to you in mercy.¹ So recite ‘in prayer’ whatever you can from the Quran. He knows that some of you will be sick, some will be traveling throughout the land seeking Allah’s bounty, and some will be fighting for the cause of Allah. So recite whatever you can from it. Moreover, continue to perform regular prayers, pay alms-tax, and lend to Allah a good loan.² Whatever good you send forth for yourselves, you will find it far better and more rewarding with Allah. Moreover, seek Allah’s forgiveness. Surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Al Qur’an, 73:20).

Sooner or later, there will be changes in the digital media ecosystem in Indonesia. Those who can adapt to new algorithmic patterns and business models will have the opportunity to advance. However, a classic business model is currently happening: collaboration with the regional government or agencies to generate income. This is not good in terms of the environment and digital media ecosystem in the future because it does not create media independence. So, if the Presidential Decree runs smoothly and the remuneration is fair, it can create media independence in social control (Personal Interview with Anggoro, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The lengthy discussion above can conclude several main points, namely *first*, that da'wah activities are the same as the teaching of the Quran and hadith, even though they are carried out in an informal form. This can be understood from the relationship between da'wah and the Al-Quran Hadith as a unity that cannot be separated. *Second*, Gus Miftah taught the Al-Quran Hadith by raising social issues with the goals of the da'wah itself to create a peaceful and prosperous society, as stated in the Al-Quran and Hadith. *Third*, Gus Miftah's da'wah activities cannot be separated from his background and Islamic affiliation as a traditional Muslim. This can be seen from several arguments and appearances shown when delivering da'wah.

This research contributes to enriching the literature on the relationship between da'wah and contextualization of the Quran and Hadith in Indonesia, giving rise to the uniqueness of Indonesian Islam. On the other hand, this study shows that new media, such as YouTube, can become an important platform for spreading moderate Islamic values. Of course, the interpretation of the Quran and Hadith conveyed through new media must be by the characteristics of new media technology that is open, inclusive, and democratic.

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