

Indonesian Muslim Websites Picturing Australia

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introduction

- Another nation's image in the society's mind depends on several factors, including on how media portrays that nation
- Australia – Indonesia's relation is described as not so friendly neighbor in Indonesian media
- Some of the more controversial aspects of the relationship are exposed: the cattle-slaughter issues (2011), asylum seeker issues (2013), Corby's parole issues (2013), and Australian phone-tapping of the Indonesian President (2013)

Other Nation's Image

- Rivenburgh (1997):
 - other nations images can be placed as cooperative, oppositional or stratified stances on news production
 - Some influential factors are : the professional roles of journalists, organisational routines, and cultural values

Indonesian Muslims

- Indonesia is the largest Muslim society in the world
- which has around 20% of the world's Muslim population,
- 62% of the world's Muslim population inhabits Asia-Pacific, and 30% of that population lives in Indonesia (PEW Forum, 2011)

Indonesian Muslims and Media Issues

- The growth in interest of political Islam after the Suharto era was marked by the emergence of Islamic political parties and militia Muslim groups (Perwita, 2007).
- Through both forms of movements, the Islamic thought has become closely involve in response to certain issues that have been perceived to be against Islamic values.
- For example, the cases of the Lady Gaga concert in 2012 and the Miss World festival in 2013 both provoked controversies among Indonesian society.
- Both issues generated enormous demonstrations held by a variety of Muslim groups and university students in Jakarta and several big cities in Indonesia.
- The result was the cancellation of Lady Gaga's concert (Kompas, May 27th, 2012) and the ban of the bikini session in the Miss World contest

Methodology

- Exploring Australia's image in five Indonesian Muslim websites from 2011 - 2013
 - Arrahmah.com
 - Hizbut tahrir Indonesia (hti.or.id)
 - Dakwatuna.com
 - Nadhatul Ulama online (nu.or.id)
 - Republika (republika.or.id)

Methodology

- News frames in the article can be found in stereotyped images and sentences that provide facts and judgements (Entman, 1993).⁹
- The news themes, news tones and news sources classifications also make significant contribution to analysing news frames and media salience on Australian matters within selected media outlets.
- Accordingly, the focus of militant, moderate and general ideologies media can also be determined.

Table 1.

Number of News Items Mentioning 'Australia' In five Indonesian Muslim online media channels, year 2011 to 2013

| MEDIA | Year | | | Total news items |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------------------|
| | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | |
| <i>Arrahmah</i> | 33 | 37 | 84 | 154 |
| <i>HizbutTahrir Indonesia (HTI)</i> | 11 | 51 | 75 | 182 |
| <i>Dakwatuna</i> | 5 | 8 | 50 | 63 |
| <i>NahdhatulUlama (NU)</i> | 57 | 51 | 33 | 141 |
| <i>Republika</i> | 71 | 67 | 85 | 223 |
| Total news items (annual) | 221 | 239 | 335 | 795 |

Australia term in the media

- The term 'Australia' can refer to the name of the country, its government or its people.
- Considering in-group favouritism, media ideology and national perspectives, this study found that all five media outlets have framed Australia within three contexts:
 - Australia in relation with Islamic issues,
 - Australia's position toward Indonesia, and
 - Australia's image as a developed country.

1st context : Australia on Islamic Issues

- This involves the position of Australia and other Western countries including United States (US).
- Positive frames :
 - Australia is framed as supporting Islamic values : Australia's government launced sharia funds for pensioners (dakwatuna, 2012) and Canberra'a authority (ACT) cancelled the same sex marriage law (NU, 2013).
 - Muslim existence in multicultural country as Australia: Australian Muslim policewomen are allowed to wear *hijab* (Dakwatuna, 2013).

1st context

- Negative frames :
- Australia is framed negatively for conflicted stands of Australia toward Islamic interest.
 - Australia is framed as a country of infidelity (negerakafir) (Arrahmah, 2013),
 - Islamophobia and muslim discrimination in Australia (Republika, 2011),
 - Australia's position as US allies in international relations (Republika, 2012).

2nd Context Australia's role on Indonesia.

- This context related to Australia's role for supporter or opponent for Indonesia
- Positive frame : Australia is a good partner of Indonesia
 - Australia granted \$500 million for upgrading Madrasa (NU online, 2013)
- Negative frames :
 - Australia is 'disrespecting Indonesia' with relation to particular conflicts with Indonesia, such as Corby's parole and the spying scandal.
 - Australia's interferes into some Indonesia's internal matter such as the form of *Densus 88* that is sponsored by Australia's government and targeting Muslim activists for being framed as terrorists (Arrahmah, 2013).

3rd context : Australia as Developed Country

- Australia is positively framed has outstanding education, therefore Australia has become benchmark in many fields.

Beyond the frames

- Differentiation of the Australian frame in militant and moderate media can be examined by looking at the chosen issues and the frames that have been formed by each media organisation.
- Militant media tends to publish issues related to terrorism and anti-terrorism, Muslim discrimination and Islamophobia.
- The moderate media tends to publish items about the co-existence of Islam in Australia and collaborations between Australia and Indonesia.

Militant Media Frames

- *Arrahmah* paid great attention to the terrorism and anti-terrorism issues as well as the US military base in Darwin. In addition, *Arrahmah* also has an interest in Islam in Australia, especially regarding the Australian Muslims who become *Mujahideen* and joined the war in Syria. *Arrahmah* is the only media outlet that conveyed news about the Australian government's banned passports of 20 of its citizens who planned to join the *jihad* in Syria.
- The frame of 'US Ally' is mostly how Australia is presented by *HTI*. *HTI* frequently links Australia and the US within broader subjects, such as spying scandal, terrorism, economic finance and appointment of Tony Abbott as the new Prime Minister.
- **The most important frame of Australia that exist in both *Arrahmah* and *HTI* is that the country 'spreads bad values such as capitalism and liberalism'**

Militant Media Frames

- The frames from *Arrahmah* and *HTI* show the position of both media as ‘insiders’, with complete involvement and interest as Muslims.
- Both media outlets acknowledge Islam in a subjective way, and Amin Abdullah (2013) classifies militant followers of the religion as projecting Islamic teaching as ‘absolute truth with no dialogue’.
- Therefore, both media outlets tend to choose and criticize news from Australian media that show discrepancy between accepting Islam in Australia and the discriminatory attitudes faced by Muslims living there.

Moderate Media Frame

- *Dakwatuna* and *NU* focus more on 'Muslim existence in Multicultural Australia' and other Australia-Indonesia relations.
- *Dakwatuna* frames the multicultural environment of Australian society, which enables various Islamic values to thrive. Two distinctive issues that attracted *Dakwatuna* were: the issue of Australia's abstaining during the vote for Palestinian membership in the United Nations, and the cattle-import issues.
- *Dakwatuna* framed Australia as a multicultural country, that enabled Muslims and Islamic values to exist in the country.

Moderate media Frames

- *NU* has more positive frames of Australia than negative one.
- *NU* positive frames are 'Australia and Indonesia are good partners' and 'Australia respect and support Indonesia'.
- Both frames were shaped by collaborative endeavours between *NU* and Australia news and the Australian ambassador for Indonesia's visit to the graveyard of the late Indonesian fifth president as well the prior leader of *NU*, Gur Dur.
- *NU* also report negative frames, such as Australia as a US ally, Australia as a threat to Indonesia, Australia interfering in internal matters in Indonesia, Australia disrespecting Indonesia, and the media channel has also labelled Australia as an 'enemy' and *kafir*, the number of these negative frames, however, is incomparable to the positive one.
- **Therefore, it can be concluded that *NU and dakwatuna* frames Australia as a good partner but not as a friendly neighbour, since there has been some conflict between Australia and Indonesia.**

General Muslim Media frame

- *Republika* has the widest range of issues and frames in its news, with more general issues, rather than specific issues, about Australia.
- The *ABC* collaboration has enabled *Republika* to gather information that cannot be found in the other four studied media channels.
- Some frames only exist in *Republika*: unclear problem/solution between Australia, and Indonesia and Australia in crisis.
- The number of positive to negative news items in *Republika* is balanced, meaning *Republika* portrays Australia in a 'balance' approach.

conclusion

- Australia is acknowledged as being a developed country with an outstanding education system and an established society. Therefore, all five Muslim media channels admit that Australia is the benchmark in many fields.
- However, the frame of Australia as a US ally cannot be forgotten. The US military base in Darwin is strong evidence of this alliance that bolsters negative opinion.
- Militant media perceive Australia as 'distrustful' neighbour and frames Australia as an 'enemy', a 'threat' and as interrupting Indonesia's internal matters.
- the frames of Australia in moderate media focus on Australia's support of the existence of Muslims in its multicultural society, but also use several negative frames about Australia disrespect and interference in Indonesia's internal matters.

Conclusion

- *Republika*, as a general Muslim media channel, highlights Australia as its role toward Indonesia.
- In a nutshell, Australian frames in moderate and general Muslim online media channels tend to balance positive against negative frames, while in militant media the narratives about Australia are far more negative than positive