

# Jihad Issues in Indonesia Muslim Online Media

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## International Conference on Da'wah and Islamic Management (IC-DAIM 2017)

31 October 2017 - 1 November 2017, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

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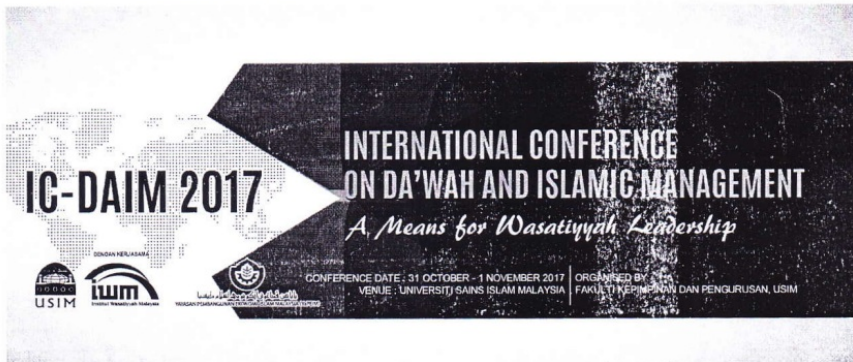
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## **International Conference on Da'wah and Islamic Management (IC-DAIM 2017)**

IC-DAIM 2017 is a continuation of the series of conference which has been organized every two years since 2010. It is a stimulating intellectual platform that gathers international and local scholars, researchers, professionals, executives and practitioners of da'wah, leadership and management. Through this year's theme, 'A Means of Wasatiyyah Leadership', it targets a broader participants from among the scholars, researchers, policy makers, executives, activists, students and all who are interested in the area, to get engaged and connected through the conference.

To help realize and reinforce the desire to achieve the best outcome for Da'wah and Islamic Management program, FKP constantly make efforts to produce top-notch research as well as quality teaching and learning process. IC-DAIM 2014 is part of the determination to catapult the field of Da'wah and Islamic Management onto the international stage.

This conference aims to bring together scholars of Islamic Da'wah and Management from within and outside the country to deliberate and debate on the issues relating to the integration of Islamic knowledge and management field. It hopes to further highlight and strengthen the field of Da'wah and Islamic Management in the international arena.

### **Aim of the Conference**

- **To establish an intellectual forum that brings local and international scholars and practitioners from a range of areas to discuss contemporary issues, progress and findings and scholarly reviews relevant to Da'wah and Islamic Management.**
  - **To integrate contemporary issues that are actively deliberated in the West with Islamic values, particularly on the concept of discussion on critical methodological approaches to Islamic studies.**
  - **To emphasize on scholarly findings and reviews as a potential platform that further enhance the principles and practices of Da'wah and Islamic Management.**
  - **To develop the field of Da'wah and Islamic Management which has been pioneered by USIM by taking into important considerations of interdisciplinary areas such as cross cultural management, comparative religion in religious practices, philosophy and management etc.**
  - **To generate ideas, planning and effective strategies in the field of Da'wah and Islamic Management which aspire to bind the invitees of this conference particularly between members of NGOs and participants of Islamic organization.**
  - **To enhance the implementation of Islamic leadership and management in the light of multifaceted and challenging global economic environment.**
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International Conference on Da'wah and Islamic Management  
(IC-DAIM 2017)

## Jihad Issues in Indonesian Muslim Online Media

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### Abstract

The development of communication and information technologies in recent years has affected to massive information flow which could not always be trusted. Indonesian government had blocked 22 Islamic websites that were suspected as the agent that spread terrorism and radicalism information around mid-March 2016. Even though finally the blocked of those websites had been canceled, another crucial question is raised: how is Jihad issue being framed by those Indonesian Muslim media? This paper analyzes five Indonesian Muslim media with variety ideological backgrounds; such as Arrahmah.com, Hidayatullah.com, HTI.or.id, NU.or.id and republika.or.id. These five different Muslim websites are chosen to discover the distinctive frames of Jihad within those websites. Framing analysis (Entman, 1993) is chosen as the methodology. This method identifies the salient theme, event, chosen words, metaphors of the text in term to grab attention for their audiences. There are five frames of jihad generated from this research, there are: jihad is similar with war, jihad is fight for syari'ah, jihad is a vengeance effort and jihad is for raising society welfare.

*Keywords : Framing Jihad; Muslim Online Media; Media Frames*

## **Introduction**

The fall of Suharto regime in 1997 was a milestone for press freedom in Indonesia. Suharto – the second Indonesian president who had been on that position for 32 years – was renowned in controlling Indonesian press by press regulation that limited the number of newspapers ownerships as well as its circulation. The Suharto's press regulation was called the Press Publication Enterprise Permit or SIUPP had applied since 1982. This regulation enforced all media had to gather two kinds of licenses, a printing permit and a publishing permit (Kakiaiatu, 2007).

However, the SIUPP regulation was canceled by his successor, Habibie, the third Indonesian president. The new law of Indonesian press regulation no 40/1999 has marked a change in to liberal press, that limited the government intervention in press freedom (Saptohadi, 2011). Due to the new regulation, a myriad of new media emerged at that time. The number of new registered media was skyrocketed from 289 in 1997 to 1,687 in 1999.

In line with this era, the internet as the new medium also began to coverage among Indonesians. The growth of news portals as well as institution's websites started to arise ever since. Muslim activists also utilized internet as the medium to share their values and create larger online community. Bergin et.al (2009) reported the number of internet users rise steeply by 900% between 2000 and 2008. Moreover, the number of websites with radical content increased drastically, from 15 in 2007 to 117 within a year.

Chen et.al (2008) highlights the growth of community interest via internet initiated by the nature of anonymity among internet users, that leads them to easily disclose themselves and develop greater feeling among them. Byrne et.al (2013) find that the violent ideological group websites use a variety of media to spread their ideological beliefs and values. These group websites also emphasized certain pictures and issues to create the affective process for indoctrination and maintenance their group members.

Indonesian government accused 22 Islamic websites had spread ISIS (Islamic State for Iraq and Syria), and on March 2015 banned them all. Even though, after intense investigation the prohibition had been canceled a few weeks after, it proved that Indonesian government felt threatened by the content of radicalism within those websites. Therefore, this paper tries to investigate whether jihad term found within several Muslim websites had been framed in different meanings?

## **Media Framing**

The word 'framing' refers to the process of giving some issue salience in people's mind. This term has been used in sociology, politics, linguistics, psychology and fine arts (Kitzinger, 2007). Goffman (1974) defines frames as 'the schemata of interpretation' which enable individuals 'to locate, perceive, identify and label' circumstances of information.

Entman (1993) explains four steps in the framing process: defining problems, diagnosing causes, making a moral judgement and recommending solutions. On the other hand, Scheufelle (1999) describes the framing process as a cycle process involving frame-building, frame-setting, the individual-level effects of framing and journalistic audiences as the links between individual frames and media frames.



News frames can be examined and identified using certain keywords, phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information and sentences that provide facts and judgements (Entman, 1993). Frame analysis can be used to examine the media production process, how journalists convey the information in the media, and how the issue is represented in the newspaper, on television and websites. In addition, audience can be affected by the media frames.

#### *Religious Membership and the Framing Process*

Some researcher has related religious issues and the framing process. As a belief system, religious values give guidance to followers in terms of perceiving, reacting and behaving with regards to certain issues. Such audiences normally follow their religious leader as a reference for their reaction to an issue. Nightingale (2004) explains that a member of a group or community will think and act like others in the group. Meanwhile, those who have less of a bond with their religious groups tend to be more influenced by media frames (Stout & Buddenbaum, 1996).

Amin Abdullah (2013) explains three religious perspectives in understanding Islamic teaching. They are subjective, objective and inter-subjective. The subjective perspective understands religion as dogmatic-theological, which tends to treat religious teaching as a certain, absolute truth with no dialogue. Taufik Abdullah (2013) called this subjective follower as militant Muslims, those who 'intolerant to the plurality of opinions'. Meanwhile, other scholars identify Muslim with militant background as radical Muslim groups (Assyaukanie, 2008) and the emergence of jihadist discourse (Bruinessen, 2002).

The objective perspective Muslims are those who perceive religion as empirical fact, understand religion through scientific methods and see themselves as detached from religious doctrine. Taufik Abdullah (2013) called them as liberal Muslims, because they tend to accept other religion as being equal to Islam. The effort of making 'space' between Islamic symbols and Muslims has created 'the secularization from within' process that promotes the inclusive and pluralist point of view in religious and political issues (Assyaukanie, 2008).

Meanwhile, intersubjective-perspective Muslims are those who tend to carefully separate phenomena surrounding them, which allows for dialogue between religious values and reality. Taufik Abdullah (2013) called Muslims with intersubjective-perspective as moderate Muslims, who try to synchronize both religious values and recent facts into mutual dialogues. Moderate Muslims are aware of dynamic of social interactions and try to adapt Islamic values to the lively world.

#### **Methodology**

The term 'framing' can be used in both theory and methodology to analyze the prominence of issues framed by the media and perceived by audiences (Li & Chitty, 2009). The frames can be determined using two approaches: the inductive and deductive approaches. The inductive approach applies when the frames are analyzed with an open view to discover as many frames as possible (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). On the other hand, in the inductive approach the frame topics are defined before classifying the frames. This research applied the inductive approach to obtain a wider range of frames in the media text.

This study investigated media frames from Indonesian Muslim websites belonging to militant & moderate Muslim organizations, as well as from general Muslim commercial media online. Two militant Muslim websites are *Arrahmah.com* and *hizbuttahrir indonesia (hti.or.id)*, in which *hti.or.id* is not last since July 2017 when Indonesian government banned the existence of HTI in Indonesia. While NU Online (*nu.or.id*) and *Hidayatullah.com* are two moderate Muslim websites, administered by both moderate Muslim groups, Nahdhatul Ulama and Hidayatullah pesantren (traditional Islamic boarding school). *Republika (republika.or.id)* is chosen as the commercial media that segmented Muslim readers.

The data is taken from all news that mentioned 'jihad' from five Muslim online media from Januari 2015 to June 2016. The time length for 18 months is meant to get comprehensive description about Jihad issues within five different media with variety ideological backgrounds. The news text is examined based on the external and internal characteristics of media salient defined by Kiousis (2004). The external characteristic include visibility, that count the number of jihad issues published within each media outlet. While internal characteristic involves classified it based on the themes and the news tones. News frames in an article can be found in stereotyped images and in sentences that provide facts and judgement (Entman, 1993).

#### **Jihad Issues in Indonesian Muslim Online Media during January 2015 to June 2016**

Several incidents had become focus in Jihad issues within Indonesian Muslim websites during January 2015 to June 2016. Some international events were the establishment Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the mujahedeen conflict against the US peacebuilding troops in Aljazair & Afghanistan, and the catastrophe of Paris bombings within several places in Paris on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Besides that, there were also several occasions within Indonesia that lead to speak about Jihad such as the 6<sup>th</sup> Indonesian Islamic Ummah congress on March 2015, Indonesian government banned 22 Islamic websites on April 2015, also the suicide bombing at Jakarta on early 2016.

Specifically, *Arrahmah* focused the news on the Mujahedeen activities in Afghanistan, Algeria and Pakistan. The activity of Mujahedeen was included the success story for releasing several places from their enemies, the involvement of Indonesian mujahedeen who died during his jihad in Afghanistan, also the death of the mujahedeen's leader and who was appointed as the new leader. In addition, *Arrahmah* also published the effort of Mujahedeen against ISIS in Syria. *Arrahmah* continuously shares the news about the Mujahedeen activities in Afghanistan and Syria, while other Muslim websites investigated in this study are focus on local events and activities of Muslims in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, NU Online released the history of Nahdhatul Ulama founder, KH Hasyim Ashari, who proclaimed Jihad Resolution on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1945. This resolution is the statement for all Muslims for defending their homeland was an obligation for all Muslims, and it was part of jihad too. This resolution had inspired the local defenders to chase away the Dutch and Britain troops which had docked at Surabaya's port. This event was remembered as Hari Pahlawan Nasional (National's Hero Day), which is celebrated every November 10<sup>th</sup> each year. Therefore, Nahdhatul Ulama recommended the day of 'Jihad Resolution' first time being announced as 'Hari Santri Nasional' (The National Muslim Students day) that will be reminisced on October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The number of news about Jihad within five Muslim online media during January 2015 to June 2016 is 711 news. Detailed number of each media as in Table 1.

Table 1. Numbers of News about Jihad within five Muslim Online Media During January 2015 to June 2016

No	Online Media	News during 2015	News up to June 2016	Total number
1.	Arrahmah	194	76	270
2.	HTI	5	1	6
3.	NU Online	298	163	461
4.	Hidayatullah	22	5	27
5.	Republika Online	20	27	47
		539	272	711

### Framing Jihad in Indonesian Muslim Online Media

The frame jihad embedded in the news extracted from the chosen words, phrases, illustration and stereotyped images that lead to certain facts and judgements. Therefore, the frames of Jihad could have several meanings within 711 news being examined. Jihad's frames can be classified into 5 clusters; from Jihad is fighting, jihad for constructing a better society, jihad is an obligation to uphold Islamic law, jihad is hardworking, doing the best, and jihad against unjust authority.

#### *Jihad is Fighting*

The most frequent framing of Jihad that showed within five investigated online media is the frame 'Jihad is fighting'. This frame is in accordance with Al Qur'an surah Hajj verse 39 that states, "*Permission (to fight) has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory*". The framing of fighting is spread against colonialist, unbelievers, and other enemies such as ISIS.

Regarding to this frame, NU Online and *Arrahmah* framed 'jihad to fight against colonialists'. However, the meaning of colonialists is not similar between both media. NU Online means colonialists as the Dutch imperialism who had invaded Indonesia for around 350 years. Therefore, the jihad is needed for Indonesians, especially for Muslims, to defend their homeland for their freedom. On the other hand, *Arrahmah* means colonialists are 'the enemy of Islam' who seized Muslim's land such as Afghanistan, Algeria, and Palestine.

*Arrahmah*, *Republika* and *Hidayatullah* also framed jihad as fighting against the 'enemy' as 'kafir (infidel)' that is close meaning to US and Israel. US and Israel are symbols of Islamic enemies that is believed have contributed into conflicts within Muslim countries in Middle east. This discourse is based on Al Qur'an surah Al Baqarah verse 120, with the meaning :

*And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion. Say, "Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance." If you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have against Allah no protector or helper. (Al Baqarah verse 120)*



Arrahmah framed jihad as fight against ISIS in Syria. Only Arrahmah that detailed shared the conflict between mujahedeen *Jabnah Nushrah* with Syrian' ditactor. Besides that, Arrahmah also accused ISIS had disrupted and slandered among jihadist groups in Syria. Arrahmah framed ISIS as *shia*, which also being framed as Muslim 'enemy'. Not only ISIS, Arrahmah also framed Jihad is fighting as the obligation for Muslims to release other Muslim's lands from colonialization or intervention of other western countries, especially US. Within this frame, as seen in tabel 2, Arrahmah has the highest number of news (131 news), followed by Republika (15 news) and NU Online (12 news). This contrasting number of news frames shows that Arrahmah focuses on the frame 'jihad is fighting'.

#### *Jihad for constructing a better society*

The term of Jihad also framed as all effort to construct a better society and actualize their welfare. NU online (100 news) and Republika (29 news) have great number of news that framed this topic. NU Online and Republika frequently framed jihad is similar with 'bela negara' (defend the country). NU Online continuously accentuated jihad resolution not only fight against colonialization, but also an obligation for Muslims to protect their motherland. Meanwhile Republika highlighted the statement of Indonesian Da'I association leader that said defending our country is *jihad fi sabilillah*.

Constructing a better society needs a clean governance and bureaucrats, therefore fight against corruption is jihad too. Corrupted government has ruin system that affected to achieve the society welfare. However, to eradicate corruption is never been easy, since corrupted bureaucrat has spread in every level government administrations. Hidayatullah focused on the event of Jihad for anti-corruption among NU's followers.

Related to this frame, Republika framed all effort to fight against poverty, ignorance and disobedience is jihad too. Republika cited the statement of Amin Rais, the former leader of Muhammadiyah – the largest Muslim organization. Amin Rais said Muhammadiyah's followers would do *jihad* like what KH Ahmad Dahlan, the Muhammadiyah founder, to fight against poverty and empowering the society. While NU Online cited Bambang Pranowo, the professor from UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, that gave another definition of Jihad after colonization has over. He said the meaning of jihad now is freeing ourselves from foreign countries influences, free from poverty and ignorance, therefore Indonesia would become a wealthy country.

Republika also cited other scholars that give other meaning of jihad in terms of constructing a better society. Prof Rosyada stated that Islam is a religion of love, peace and tolerate, therefore constructing peacefulness and great harmony within the society called jihad too. Jihad also has other meaning as jihad for humanitarian, jihad for constitution, jihad for protecting the nature environment. Prof Satori, cited by Republika, highlighted that jihad followed by violence is not needed now; otherwise, supporting all struggle for a better society like giving better education, better economic system is part of jihad too.

#### *Jihad is an obligation to uphold Allah's Sharia*

Within this frame, Arrahmah has the highest number of news (55 news). This frame of Jihad is based on Al Qur'an surah Al Imran verse 169, that states as follow: '*And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision*'. Allah will grant provision for those who did jihad, sacrificing their wealth and live to uphold Allah's order and to protect ummah. Arrahmah highlighted



the heaven as huge provision, will be granted for those you died during jihad against Muslim's enemies.

Jihad for upholding Allah's Sharia can be interpreted into several frames. Arrahmah and NU Online framed jihad against anti-Islamic ideology, such as liberalism and communism. NU Online especially emphasized the story of NU's ancestors fighting versus communism that ever grew in Indonesia before 1965. Arrahmah added 'Islam Nusantara' as an ideology that mixed up the Islamic teaching with local culture, which is against the purification of Islamic teaching. Arrahmah also framed those who left and ignored jihad will cause humiliation and lowness of all Muslims.

***Jihad is hardworking in every deed***

This frame refers to the meaning of original word of jihad, that is 'jahada' which means with a thoughtful doing the best. The thoughtful means every Muslim should vengeance to fight against their own desires, and the real 'fight' against selves is to put every will in line with Allah's will, which is harder than physical war.

Jihad within this frame can be interpreted as looking for knowledge and technology advancement. NU Online cited KH Hamam Ghazali that stated all Muslim students should have unlimited knowledge, to maximize their contribution to the society. On the other hand, NU Online also cited GP Anshor leader statement that advancing technology is part of jihad. In addition, Republika cited Prof Satori about jihad with welfare is also important, to minimize poverty.

NU Online has the highest number of this frame, followed by Republika. While none of HTI news framed jihad as struggling against selves.

***Jihad is against the Unjust Authority***

The frame of jihad is to uphold justice and cast out the tyranny. Syaikh Abdul Azzam, cited by Arrahmah, defines jihad as Allah's provision to release any oppression and slavery from all over the world. Arrahmah outlined jihad as the effort to create Islamic state in Afghanistan that has the Muslim majority population that still under the tyranny.

Shawqi Allam, the great mufti of Egypt cited by Republika, outlines jihad to protect nation and religion when it is under attack. Meanwhile, HTI framed jihad as the courage to convey the truth to the tyranny is the best jihad.

Within this frame, Arrahmah and HTI have similar number of news. Both media agreed that the frame of jihad is against the unjust authority. However, both media have different focus in exploring 'who' is the meaning of the unjust authority. Arrahmah pointed the invaders of Algeria, Afghanistan, Syria and other middle east countries as the unjust authority. Meanwhile, HTI has different meaning to define the tyranny. HTI meant Indonesian government as the tyranny.

Tabel 2. The resume of Jihad frames of five Muslim Online Media

No	Frame	Online Media					Total number
		Arrahmah	Hidayatullah	HTI	NU Online	Republika	
1.	Jihad is fighting	131	9	2	12	15	169
2.	Jihad is constructing a better society	0	2	0	100	29	131
3.	Jihad is an obligation to uphold Allah's Sharia	55	3	0	16	6	80
4.	Jihad is hardworking in every deed	1	7	0	47	23	80
5.	Jihad is against the Unjust Authority	3	0	3	0	1	7
	total	190	21	5	175	74	

Table 2 shows the highest number of jihad frame is 'jihad is fighting' with all media also framed. The second frame that frequently mentioned within the media is 'jihad is constructing a better society', with NU Online as the most media framed. However, none of Arrahmah frames is mentioning the role of jihad in construction a better society. The third frame 'jihad is hardworking in every deed', NU Online placed the most frequent frame compare to Republika and other media. It is interesting to find that even though the forth frame of jihad (jihad is hardworking in every deed) is frequently published in NU Online and Republika, however, HTI and Arrahmah nearly none of this frame is existed.

Both Hidayatullah and NU Online do not framed jihad against the unjust authority. Both organization have become good partner with the government. Hidayatullah movement focuses on supporting and empowering the society to make them independent. To do so, Hidayatullah needs to collaborate with the government to achieve its goal. On the other hand, NU Online also has no frame against the unjust authority. NU is already well-known as the government partner. Therefore, the frame that cornering the authority is rarely happen.

HTI has the least number of news about jihad, and only had two frames of jihad: jihad is fighting and against unjust authority. Even though the number is limited, it can be seen from the tabel 2, that HTI frames of jihad is focus on criticize the ruling authority. And since mid July 2017, the Indonesian government banned this Islamic organization (HTI).

Republika, as the general Muslim media, dominated the frame of jihad as constructing a better society and hardworking for a good deed. It shows the positioning of Republika, that tries to remain 'neutral' among Muslim groups in Indonesia.

## Conclusion

The term of Jihad is framed differently among five investigated Muslim online media. Each media has its own interest and focus to salient certain event or issues. This difference occurred from the choice of event, the frequent of news, and the highlight of diction, example and illustration. Arrahmah has the highest number of jihad news, and shows Arrahmah interest in mujahedeen and their struggle against the authority. While NU Online most frames highlighted the Jihad Resolution announced by KH Hasyim Ashari the founder of NU.

As result, none of Jihad frames provoked the audience with radical issues. The term of Jihad also has many frames, not only about fighting and hardworking, but also constructing a better society, obligation to uphold Islamic sharia, and against the unjust authority.

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