



Connecting to Young Muslims; Strengthening The Da'wah Community of Santrendelik Through Public Relations

Ayu Surita Jannah^{1*}, Nadiatus Salama², Asep Dadang Abdullah³

^{1*}Walisongo State Islamic University Semarang, Indonesia. email: ayusuritajannah2001026104@walisongo.ac.id

²Walisongo State Islamic University Semarang, Indonesia. email: nadiawalisongo.ac.id

³Walisongo State Islamic University Semarang, Indonesia. email: dadang_abdullah@walisongo.ac.id

Abstract

The development of digital technology has led to a significant shift in *da'wah* practices, where young people tend to access their spiritual needs through online media. This condition poses a challenge for traditional *da'wah majlis* in attracting the younger generation. This research examines the public relations strategy of *da'wah* community in creating an attractive, responsive forum that understands the spiritual characteristics of contemporary youth. The research explores the Santrendelik *da'wah* community's strategy in attracting young audiences. A descriptive qualitative method was used to comprehensively describe social reality, focusing on extracting meaning from individual experiences regarding the community's public relations strategies. The data was collected through interviews, and analysis followed the Milles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results show a systematic mechanism of youth development through four stages: (1) research and listening, identifying the needs of the millennial generation; (2) planning and decision making, designing innovative religious social interventions; (3) communication actions, implementing the "nongkrong tobat" program; and (4) evaluation, measuring the effectiveness of the intervention.

Keywords: *Da'wah, Public Relations, Young Generation, Communication Strategy*

Abstrak

Perkembangan teknologi digital telah menyebabkan pergeseran yang signifikan dalam praktik dakwah, di mana generasi muda cenderung mengakses kebutuhan spiritual mereka melalui media online. Kondisi ini menjadi tantangan tersendiri bagi majelis dakwah tradisional dalam menarik minat generasi muda. Penelitian ini mengkaji strategi hubungan masyarakat dari komunitas dakwah dalam menciptakan forum yang menarik, responsif, dan memahami karakteristik spiritual anak muda kontemporer. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi strategi komunitas dakwah Santrendelik dalam menarik audiens muda. Metode kualitatif deskriptif digunakan untuk menggambarkan realitas sosial secara komprehensif, dengan fokus pada penggalan makna dari pengalaman individu mengenai strategi hubungan masyarakat komunitas tersebut. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, dan analisis mengikuti model Milles dan Huberman, yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan mekanisme

sistematis pembinaan remaja melalui empat tahap: (1) riset dan mendengar, mengidentifikasi kebutuhan generasi milenial; (2) perencanaan dan pengambilan keputusan, merancang intervensi sosial keagamaan yang inovatif; (3) aksi komunikasi, mengimplementasikan program “nongkrong tobat”; dan (4) evaluasi, mengukur efektifitas intervensi.

Keywords: *Dakwah, Hubungan Masyarakat, Generasi Muda, Strategi Komunikasi*

INTRODUCTION

The landscape of *da'wah* (Islamic outreach) is undergoing a profound transformation, characterized by a dynamic shift from traditional methodological approaches to increasingly digitalized communication strategies (Abrori & Alnashr, 2023). This paradigmatic change emerges against the backdrop of unprecedented technological proliferation and evolving youth engagement patterns in religious discourse. Despite the digital revolution, face-to-face religious studies remain relevant, particularly in rural communities where traditional interpersonal learning modalities resonate more deeply than digital alternatives (Abrori & Alnashr, 2023).

The contemporary religious communication ecosystem in Indonesia presents a compelling narrative of digital engagement. Global Religious Future data for 2020 reveals Indonesia as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, with approximately 229.62 million Muslims representing 87 percent of the national population. Notably, 175.4 million are internet users, and 160 million are active social media participants (Mardiana, 2020). This digital saturation has catalyzed a fundamental reconfiguration of religious communication strategies, exemplified by the remarkable success of digital religious content creators such as Gus Baha', whose Instagram account attracts over 37,000 viewers per content piece (Qudsy & Muzakky, 2021). There are also some da'i who spread scientific information through Instagram, where da'wah content can be presented using images, making religious messages more engaging and accessible to a wider audience (Majid, 2024).

The digitalization of *da'wah* transcends social media platforms, penetrating mainstream media channels including television. Strategic media selections like TVRI's "Serambi Islam" program demonstrate the potential for broad societal reach, particularly in remote regions (Jalil, 2021). Contemporary religious communicators such as Ustadz Hanan Attaki have strategically leveraged Instagram to engage younger demographics (Parhan M. et al., 2020), while platforms like YouTube have emerged as critical spaces for religious education, as evidenced by channels

like Ustadz Adi Hidayat's, which boasts over 3,000 subscribers and 1,100 video uploads (Sayyidah et al., 2023).

Empirical research substantiates the digital preference among younger generations. Surveys indicate that approximately 72.6 percent of teenagers prefer consuming religious content via YouTube (Parhan et al., 2022), in stark contrast to traditional lecture-based methods, which attract merely 12 percent of youth engagement (Purwanto et al., 2017). This demographic shift necessitates innovative approaches that bridge traditional religious transmission with contemporary communication modalities.

While existing scholarship predominantly focuses on digital *da'wah* strategies, a critical research gap remains in understanding public relations approaches that simultaneously preserve traditional religious pedagogical methods while adapting to evolving youth cultural landscapes. This research aims to address this lacuna by exploring the public relations strategies of Santrendelik, an innovative youth-focused *da'wah* community that exemplifies adaptive religious communication.

Existing studies primarily focus on digital *da'wah* strategies, with limited attention to public relations approaches that balance traditional methods and youth cultural adaptation. To address this gap, this study applies Grunig & Hunt's systems theory, which emphasizes the importance of strategic communication as a means of fostering meaningful interactions between religious institutions and young communities (Rahmadanty et al., 2019). In the context of *da'wah*, this theory is relevant as it enables analysis of how communities can effectively understand the needs, values, and preferences of the younger generation to build sustainable relationships. In addition, this study uses Scott M. Cutlip & Allen H. Center 1952 four-stage public relations framework, research-listening, planning-decision, communication-action, and evaluation. These stages provide a systematic guide to understanding how the implemented public relations strategy can attract attention, build engagement, and mobilize youth in *da'wah* activities. Combining these two theoretical approaches, this study analyzes how Santrendelik utilizes data-driven, youth audience-oriented strategic communication to bridge traditional religious values with modern communication needs.

Santrendelik, colloquially known as the "*kampung tobat*" or "repentance hangout," represents a paradigmatic case of innovative religious communication. Characterized by youth-centric language, interactive discussion formats, contemporary venue designs, and culturally relevant discourse, this community has successfully attracted significant youth participation. By examining its strategic communication mechanisms, this research contributes nuanced insights into effective religious outreach methodologies in the digital age.

The novelty of this study lies in its nuanced exploration of public relations strategies in religious communication, specifically focusing on the innovative approach of the Santrendelik "Nongkrong Tobat" community to youth *da'wah* engagement. Unlike previous studies that predominantly examined digital *da'wah* strategies in isolation, this research provides a holistic perspective on integrating both conventional and contemporary communication methods (Mahendra, 2021).

A significant contribution of this study is its challenge to the prevailing assumption that younger generations exclusively seek spiritual content through digital platforms. The research offers a transformative perspective on religious outreach by showcasing Santrendelik's successful model of preserving traditional *da'wah* methods while incorporating contemporary communication strategies (Mardiana, 2020). This approach maintains the essence of traditional religious transmission and adapts to the evolving communication preferences of millennial and Gen Z audiences.

This research aims to examine the innovative public relations strategies used by the Santrendelik *da'wah* community to effectively attract and mobilize the younger generation through a contemporary communication approach. It also aims to understand how the community integrates traditional religious values with modern communication needs. This research seeks to answer several main questions: (1) What public relations strategies are used by the Santrendelik community to attract the younger generation? (2) How are these strategies able to effectively mobilize young demographics? (3) How are traditional religious values applied in a contemporary communication paradigm? By bridging traditional religious transmission with contemporary communication paradigms, this research provides critical insights into adapting religious discourse to meet the evolving needs of younger generations.

METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative methodology, a comprehensive approach designed to explore and interpret complex social phenomena through nuanced narrative and contextual data collection (Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The methodological selection is predicated on the research's intrinsic requirement for an in-depth, interpretive exploration of participants' perspectives and experiences within the Santrendelik community's public relations ecosystem (Patton & 2015). Descriptive qualitative research provides a robust framework for comprehensively understanding social realities by facilitating systematic, in-depth examination of lived experiences and strategic interactions (Sandelowski, 2010; Wirawan, 2012).

The study's epistemological approach aligns with interpretive paradigms, emphasizing the subjective nature of social phenomena and the importance of understanding meaning-making processes from participants' perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). By prioritizing rich, contextual descriptions and participants' interpretive frameworks, the research seeks to generate nuanced insights into the complex dynamics of youth religious communication strategies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

The research employed a qualitative approach, strategically triangulating evidence through three complementary data collection techniques to ensure a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Santrendelik's communication strategies. In-depth Interviews represented the primary data collection method, following (Rianto, 2002) methodological recommendations for extracting rich, contextual information by using the purposive sampling technique in selecting informants with specific criteria that include: (1) direct involvement in the management and development of Santrendelik Community for at least 2 years, (2) in-depth understanding of the community's vision, mission, and programs, and (3) experience interacting with various stakeholders in the community.

Five key informants were selected based on their strategic roles, consisting of the Head of the Foundation and the Founder of the community as the primary policy maker, two experienced Volunteers who are directly involved in program implementation, and one Study Program Participant who can provide a beneficiary perspective. This number of five informants is considered adequate because: (1) it includes representation from various levels of the organization, (2) it allows in-depth data collection through semi-structured interviews, and (3) it is in accordance with the principle of data saturation in qualitative research, where the information obtained has reached a saturation point and can provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study. Interview protocols were meticulously designed to elicit comprehensive narratives about public relations strategies, communication approaches, and youth engagement mechanisms, drawing on Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009) guidelines for qualitative interviewing. The list of interview questions was designed based on Grunig & Hunt's theoretical framework and Cutlip & Center's public relations framework, which are relevant to the public relations strategy of the *da'wah* community. The questions covered key themes such as communication strategy, youth engagement, and adaptation of religious values in modern communication. The instrument was validated through expert testing and pilot testing on two participants to ensure the clarity and relevance of the questions.

Participant observation complemented the interview data by providing rich contextual insights into Santrendelik's communication dynamics and interaction patterns. Following

Spradley's (1980) systematic observation techniques, researchers conducted non-participant observations of community activities, carefully documenting communication strategies, interpersonal interactions, and engagement mechanisms. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of the lived experiences and unspoken communication nuances that might not be fully captured through interviews alone. Documentary analysis was a critical supplementary data collection method, enhancing data triangulation and interpretive depth. Researchers collected and analyzed a comprehensive range of organizational documents, including communication artifacts, programmatic materials, strategic documents, and internal publications.

The integration of these three data collection strategies enabled a holistic and rigorous exploration of the research objectives, ensuring methodological robustness and comprehensive insight into the Santrendelik community's innovative public relations approach. This approach ensures data validity and reliability through triangulation of methods, expert testing, as well as the application of data saturation principles to ensure deep and comprehensive insights. The research adopted Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive data analysis model, a sophisticated analytical framework that provides a systematic yet flexible approach to qualitative data interpretation. This model conceptualizes data analysis as a dynamic, iterative process characterized by three interconnected and recursive analytical phases that enable comprehensive and nuanced research insights (Huberman & Milles, 1994; Patton & 2015).

Data reduction represented the initial analytical stage, serving as a critical mechanism for transforming raw, complex data into meaningful analytical constructs. Following (Miles et al., 2014) methodological guidelines, this phase involved a systematic process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and abstracting collected information. Researchers engaged in critical examination and preliminary coding, meticulously scrutinizing interview transcripts, observational notes, and documentary materials. The primary objective was to identify salient themes, conceptual patterns, and emergent theoretical insights that could illuminate the Santrendelik community's public relations strategies. In the data reduction phase, systematic coding generated key concepts such as 'creative *da'wah* strategy', 'millennial approach', and 'community collaboration', which were then grouped into broader categories following the methodological guidelines of Miles et al., 2014. Through careful coding and categorization, researchers distilled extensive qualitative data into refined, manageable analytical units that captured the essence of participants' experiences and communication approaches (Charmaz, 2014). This study integrates the results into a deep and comprehensive description of the event

and incorporates the words of the participants in the final description (Salama & Chikudate, 2021; Salama et al., 2022).

Data display constituted the second analytical phase, which focused on organizing and compressing collected information to facilitate meaningful interpretation and conclusion drawing. Utilizing narrative text and sophisticated thematic matrices, researchers developed comprehensive visual and textual representations of the refined analytical insights (Miles et al., 2014). Drawing on Bradley et al.'s (2007) recommendations for qualitative data presentation, this stage transformed complex, multidimensional data into coherent, accessible formats (Krueger & Casey, 2014). The carefully constructed displays enabled researchers to identify interconnections, patterns, and underlying structures within the Santrendelik community's communication strategies, thereby supporting a more comprehensive and nuanced interpretation of the research findings (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013).

Conclusion drawing and verification represented the final, iterative analytical stage, characterized by continuous interpretation and rigorous validation of emerging patterns. Following Huberman and Miles' (1994) analytical principles, researchers engaged in a dynamic process of interpreting preliminary findings, continuously cross-referencing and verifying insights against original data sources (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This approach prioritized generating novel theoretical contributions and developing a sophisticated understanding of public relations strategies in religious youth communication (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The verification process involved multiple analytical techniques, including peer debriefing, participant validation, and reflexive analysis, ensuring the credibility and trustworthiness of the research conclusions (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

The interactive, iterative nature of this analytical approach allowed for continuous refinement and deepening of research insights, ultimately enabling a comprehensive and nuanced exploration of the Santrendelik community's innovative communication strategies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Organizational Profile: *Nongkrong Tobat Santrendelik*

Santrendelik emerges as a pioneering contemporary religious institution that challenges traditional *da'wah* paradigms, representing a transformative approach to youth religious engagement. The community was founded in response to a critical gap in religious communication strategies targeting younger generations. The initiative originated from a

collective recognition of the need for innovative, culturally resonant spiritual discourse that transcends conventional religious pedagogical approaches.

The community's foundational philosophy centers on deconstructing traditional religious communication barriers by creating an inclusive, accessible spiritual learning environment. Santrendelik strategically reimagines religious education through a unique "Nongkrong Tobat" (Repentance Hangout) model that deliberately subverts traditional religious instruction methodologies (Muttaqin, 2019). This approach is characterized by its deliberate departure from formal, hierarchical religious learning spaces, instead creating a cafe-style setting that prioritizes informal, dialogic interactions between religious educators and young participants.

The organization's unique "Nongkrong Tobat" (Repentance Hangout) program represents a sophisticated reimagining of religious education strategically designed to attract and engage youth through multisensory and participatory learning environments. By transforming traditional religious spaces into contemporary, cafe-style settings, Santrendelik creates an innovative platform that integrates multiple engagement modalities: interactive dialogue sessions, complimentary refreshments, and cultural interventions such as live musical performances. This holistic approach challenges the conventional perception of religious learning, positioning spiritual education as an accessible, dynamic, and enjoyable experience for young participants, whom the community affectionately terms "Tobaters" (Muttaqin, 2019).

Established in 2014 through a familial *waqf* (charitable endowment) from a Semarang-based academic, Santrendelik emerged from a profound understanding of young people's spiritual aspirations and communication preferences. The foundation's genesis was rooted in addressing the systemic disconnection between traditional religious instruction and contemporary youth culture. By consciously rejecting restrictive dress codes and monotonous instructional formats, the organization creates an inclusive spiritual learning environment that respects individual expression while maintaining core religious values.

The organization's leadership articulates a nuanced vision of continuous generational engagement, emphasizing the critical importance of understanding and adapting to youth characteristics. As the Santrendelik Foundation head eloquently explains, the primary objective transcends immediate participant recruitment, focusing instead on creating a sustainable, regenerative platform that can continuously attract and meaningfully serve emerging generations of spiritual seekers. This approach reflects a sophisticated understanding of religious communication as a dynamic, evolving dialogue rather than a static, unidirectional transmission of knowledge.

Strategically diverging from the predominant trend of digital-only religious engagement, Santrendelik deliberately maintains a hybrid approach that prioritizes direct, interpersonal interactions while simultaneously leveraging digital communication platforms. The organization's distinctive methodology of integrating culture, art, and religious discourse is a powerful mechanism for youth spiritual development, challenging conventional boundaries between religious education and contemporary cultural expression.

In the initial stages of its development, the organization's communication efforts centered on introducing the innovative "Nongkrong Tobat" (Repentance Hangout) concept - a unique *da'wah* (Islamic outreach) format tailored specifically for younger generations. This program was operationalized through weekly study sessions held in cafe-style settings, featuring speakers who delivered accessible, contextually relevant religious discussions. Recognizing the importance of digital platforms in contemporary youth communication, Santrendelik then expanded its reach by leveraging Instagram as the primary channel for disseminating information about these study events, strategically aiming to attract increased participation from the target demographic.

Concurrently, the organization positioned itself as a "*tongkrongan*" (casual hangout) space that seamlessly blended a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere with the integration of religious values - a deliberate branding strategy designed to cultivate a positive, youth-centric image. At this early stage, the management of financial contributions for Santrendelik's activities was facilitated through a simple, direct "*kencleng*" (donation box) system that encouraged direct *tobater* (participant) involvement.

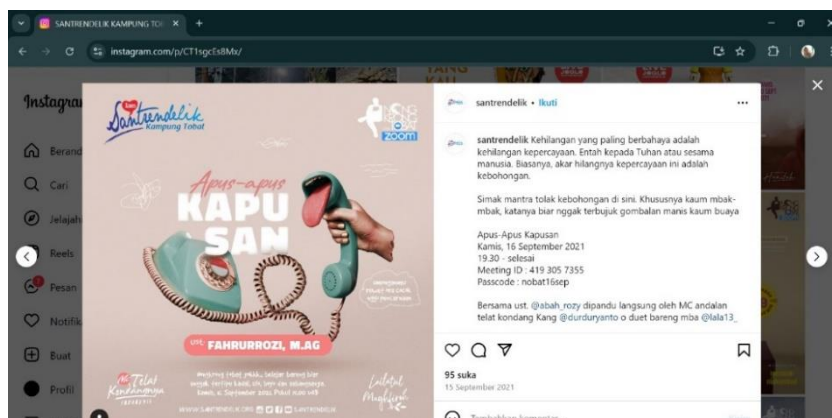


Figure 1. Online recitation during the Covid-19 pandemic

However, based on evaluations and feedback from previous years, Santrendelik subsequently optimized its public relations strategy for the "*Nongkrong Tobat*" program. While maintaining the core interactive event format and effective social media utilization, the organization implemented significant changes, particularly in its donation management

approach. Recognizing the financial constraints faced by its predominantly out-of-town student demographic, Santrendelik discontinued the *kencleng* practice, instead adopting a more inclusive policy that eliminated the need for direct financial contributions. As articulated by a community representative, "*The average tobaters who come to Santrendelik are out-of-town students. Many friends face delays in receiving money from their parents, making it difficult to afford meals. Therefore, you don't need to give infaq or pay for parking—eat as much as you want, so you don't go hungry*" (P3). This strategic shift reflects Santrendelik's commitment to creating a truly accessible and inclusive space for spiritual engagement, prioritizing its target audience's needs and economic circumstances.

Santrendelik's policy decisions reflect a steadfast commitment to cultivating an inclusive space for *da'wah* (Islamic outreach) activities, demonstrating a nuanced understanding of its audience's economic circumstances. When the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a shift in operational modalities, the organization swiftly adapted by transitioning the "Nongkrong Tobat" program from in-person gatherings to online study sessions that the majority of tobaters (participants) were students who had to conduct their activities remotely from home during the public health crisis.

In 2021, Santrendelik resumed its face-to-face study sessions at the Joglo Santrendelik facility. Since then, the community has continued to develop innovative digital *da'wah* strategies tailored for younger generations. This includes the creation of content reels derived from online study footage, as well as the establishment of interactive discussion spaces on Instagram focused on topics of faith, spiritual well-being, and personality. The Nongkrong Tobat program's *da'wah* approach has thus demonstrated significant evolution and adaptability since the community's inception, reflecting its capacity to strategically navigate changing circumstances while maintaining its core mission of inclusive, accessible religious engagement.

Public Relations Strategy for Santrendelik “Nongkrong Tobat” Community

In this study, public relations refers to how the community engages in two-way communication activities with the public to foster mutual understanding, trust, and cooperation. Developing a public relations strategy involves aligning with the values and character of young people based on public opinion. Santrendelik aims to offer lighthearted and engaging studies for young people. They have created a *da'wah* study program called “Nongkrong Tobat,” which takes place on Thursday night once a week. Additionally, there is another program called “Healthy Hangout,” which includes weekly badminton sports activities. Most visitors to the

Santrendelik program are young people, aligning with the community's target audience. To attract and engage this demographic, Santrendelik provides a cafe-style setting, free food, and preaching material that addresses current news and social issues.

Santrendelik's strategy for improving the image of *da'wah* studies aligns with the public relations strategic planning process outlined by Cutlip and Center (1952). This process emphasizes the importance of research and listening to community needs.

a. Research and listening

Santrendelik actively analyzes issues related to youth *da'wah* activities. The founder observed that traditional study formats, often characterized by formal attire such as caps, sarongs, and gowns, tend to create an exclusive atmosphere, particularly for younger audiences. Through direct engagement with various youth communities, the need for a more contemporary and inclusive study format became evident.

In response, the founder introduced a lighter, more accessible study concept. This new format allows participants to dress casually (while still maintaining decorum), provides free meals to foster a sense of community, opens interactive discussion spaces, and incorporates musical interludes to create an enjoyable yet educational environment.

Observational studies revealed that young audiences prefer presenters who use clear, relatable language. In-depth interviews indicated that participants feel more comfortable with ustadz who can incorporate humor into their teachings while preserving the essence of the material. Additionally, traditional question-and-answer sessions often limit discussions to topics of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and worship. In contrast, Santrendelik's open discussion format encourages questions from various aspects of life, fostering a closer connection between speakers and the audience. As the head of the Santrendelik Foundation stated, "*Our study concept deliberately eliminates the dichotomy of discussion by creating the broadest possible space for dialogue, extending beyond just fiqh or worship issues.*" This approach allows participants to consult on various personal challenges more openly and authentically.

Recent analyses of social media and observations by Santrendelik activists have revealed several themes that resonate deeply with the younger generation, particularly the concept of youth *hijrah*, which embodies aspirations for spiritual growth and a hopeful afterlife. A preliminary survey of the Santrendelik audience indicated that a significant majority expressed strong interest when contemporary themes were integrated with religious perspectives. This finding highlights the importance of

relevance in engaging young participants, suggesting that discussions framed within the context of current societal challenges become more appealing and relatable.

Interviews with active *tobaters* further emphasized that the connection between study themes and contemporary issues is crucial in influencing their participation in study activities. When religious discussions address real-life challenges, they foster a sense of connection and engagement among the youth. Santrendelik's public relations team has also recognized the vital role of digital platforms in building community goodwill in today's society. Engagement metrics across Santrendelik's social media channels demonstrate a notable increase in audience interaction when content is designed to be interactive and encourages direct participation.

Communication preferences among *tobaters* reveal a strong inclination towards accessing information through platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp groups, with a smaller percentage utilizing the official website or traditional media. Feedback from a survey indicated a desire for more informative content on Instagram, such as highlights from previous study sessions and announcements of upcoming schedules. This insight underscores the need for Santrendelik to refine its communication strategies to enhance engagement between study management and participants.

Additionally, discussions during monthly forums with division coordinators have highlighted a collective recognition of the need for a more structured internal communication system. This structure is essential for ensuring message consistency and maintaining the quality of programs. Insights from core administrators suggest that the success of Santrendelik's initiatives is significantly influenced by the cohesiveness and shared vision among the administrative team. This alignment fosters a collaborative environment that is crucial for the effective implementation of programs and the overall success of the organization.

b. Planning and decision-making

Planning is a crucial process for determining objectives based on the data gathered from various issues related to *da'wah* activities. Santrendelik plans to hold a *da'wah* study session titled "Nongkrong Tobat," which will adopt a talk show format featuring a host and a moderator to introduce the *ustadz* before the study begins. The planning process will focus on creating a flexible study format that eliminates restrictions on discussion topics, allowing the audience to consult freely on various aspects of life.

The discussion agenda will be structured to include 60% religious topics and 40% contemporary issues relevant to young people's lives. This plan aims to develop a lighter yet educational study format, allowing visitors to dress modestly. To foster a relaxed and intimate atmosphere, free food will be provided at each study session, along with interactive discussions and enjoyable music interludes.

Additionally, careful selection of study presenters is essential, with criteria tailored to the young target audience. Presenters should be able to communicate engagingly, possess a good sense of humor, and be open to two-way discussions. Santrendelik management emphasizes that the *ustadz* should encourage critical and logical thinking while remaining approachable, ensuring that the environment is perceived as welcoming rather than overly serious.

Santrendelik's management stated,

“The ustadz who meet our criteria are those who can think critically and logically, yet are also open-minded enough to accept differing viewpoints. This ensures that the ustadz who lead the studies understand that Santrendelik is not a strictly formal study environment and that the audience's questions, regardless of their depth, are welcomed.”

In addition, Santrendelik plans to develop a series of study programs that integrate popular trends among young people with a profound religious perspective. This initiative will involve scheduling regular study sessions that address themes relevant to contemporary issues, thereby increasing participation among tobaters. This approach aims to cultivate a distinctive identity for Santrendelik that resonates with young audiences while upholding religious values in every session.

Furthermore, recognizing that public relations activities heavily depend on social media and news coverage to foster community goodwill, Santrendelik will implement a comprehensive and effective media strategy. This plan will prioritize the optimization of various social media platforms as the primary means to promote Santrendelik's flagship programs while building sustainable relationships with the public.

c. Communication actions

Effective communication is essential for fostering innovation and conveying messages that influence public perceptions of the Santrendelik community. The role of public relations is significant in establishing positive relationships between the community and Santrendelik.

In implementing its communication strategies, Santrendelik presents a more inclusive and contemporary study concept that prioritizes modest dress for participants. The study format is designed to be light yet educational, featuring free food to create an intimate atmosphere, interactive discussion sessions, and enjoyable music interludes. This relaxed and open communication approach has proven effective in attracting younger generations to religious study activities.

Santrendelik also implements the “Millennial Ustadz” concept in every study session, featuring *ustadz* who meet specific criteria. Each session begins with an icebreaker that includes light humor, followed by material presented in a relaxed and relatable manner. The question-and-answer session is open to all and promoted with the tagline “Ask Anything,” shared through study posters on social media. Because *da’wah* today requires material that is not wordy, simple, effective, and does not seem patronizing, delivering messages in a more relaxed and engaging manner is essential to attract and retain young audiences (Kurniawan & Fadilah, 2024). The *Ustadz* is also given time after the study for personal consultations with audience members who wish to engage in more deep discussions. These activities are documented through Instagram Story highlights and YouTube Shorts to showcase the friendly and inclusive atmosphere of the studies.

To stay relevant, a dedicated team will monitor social media regularly to identify trending topics that can be incorporated into study materials. Themes such as “Home is Death,” “Tobrut (Brutal Repentance),” and “Proclamation of Tobaters” reflect Santrendelik's commitment to contemporary issues, moving beyond traditional discussions of *akidah* (faith) and *ubudiyah* (worship). One foundation administrator noted, “*The most challenging aspect of youth da’wah activities is capturing young people's interest in religious learning.*” In an era where media shapes public relations, *da’i* must strategically engage with it to ensure an accurate and inclusive representation of Islam. Public relations strategies help counter misconceptions and promote a positive image of Islamic teachings contemporary media engagement (Tohari et al., 2024).

To implement an effective communication strategy, Santrendelik actively optimizes various social media platforms to promote its flagship programs. The media team consistently publishes content on Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and WhatsApp Channels, tailoring posts to the characteristics of each platform. This includes distributing digital posters for routine studies, video footage of study sessions, and relevant religious articles aimed at younger audiences. Given that young people

predominantly use Instagram, the media team designs visually appealing posts that align with current graphic design trends. Each post features modern typography, vibrant colors, and engaging compositions to communicate the *da'wah* message effectively.

Santrendelik's management collaborates closely with volunteers to develop engaging event concepts, fostering a sense of family within the organization. The founder of Santrendelik stated, “*We aim to nurture Santrendelik as a platform for anyone who wants to contribute, creating a welcoming space for all who wish to engage in da'wah activities.*” The organization also partners with external entities to support its study programs, including *Iksa* (branding), *Realsa* (coconut sugar), *KNK* (cafe supplies), *Inibaru.id* (online news portal), *Gasindo* (gas distributor), *Telkomsel*, *E-Guru Foundation* (online teacher training), *Sindu Shop* (original shoes), *Sedekah Kamisan* (donors for “Nongkrong Tobat” activities), and *Ruang Tamu Creative* (photography and videography).

d. Evaluation

Evaluation is the process of measuring and assessing the effectiveness of implemented programs. It serves as a tool for identifying achievements and challenges within the program, providing valuable insights for the Santrendelik community regarding program effectiveness. Conducting evaluations significantly impacts the continuous improvement of programs and ensures they remain aligned with community needs.

Santrendelik conducts evaluations through scheduled meetings to assess program outcomes. The evaluation process identifies both inhibiting and supporting factors.

1. Inhibiting Factors

Santrendelik faces several challenges in implementing its public relations strategy, particularly regarding gender imbalance in audience participation, with fewer women attending than men. This issue is primarily attributed to the study schedule, which runs from 8:30 PM to 11:00 PM, and weather conditions affecting overall attendance.

As a short-term solution, Santrendelik has initiated a pre-study dialogue program to acclimate participants to the earlier schedule. This strategy aims to optimize study times to increase participation, particularly among female attendees.

2. Supporting Factors

In 2024, Santrendelik is benefited by significant supporting factors that enhance its community image, mainly through strong internal communication. As noted by a volunteer, the foundation management fosters an open communication culture that prioritizes family values when guiding volunteers. This approach has proven effective in generating creative ideas for the “Kajian Nongkrong Tobat” program and various other *da'wah* initiatives.

Challenges and Limitations of the Santrendelik “Nongkrong Tobat” Program

Santrendelik faces a number of challenges in the implementation of its *da'wah* program. One of the main issues is the gender imbalance in participation, where women only account for about 30 percent of the total participants. This is influenced by several factors, including the study schedule that runs from 8:30 pm to 11 pm, which is considered too late for most women. In addition, unfavorable weather conditions often affect overall attendance. To address these issues, Santrendelik has initiated a pre-study dialogue program that allows for earlier schedule adjustments to increase attendance, particularly among women.

In addition, limited human resources are a significant constraint to program implementation. Program documentation relied on only one person who was fully responsible, while the other volunteers involved did not have sufficient technical expertise. This has led to inconsistent documentation quality and limited dissemination of *da'wah* materials through digital platforms. To overcome this limitation, Santrendelik needs to train more volunteers in documentation skills and social media management to ensure program sustainability. In addition, the diversity of presenters in the studies is also a concern, as invited preachers often come from the same groups by inviting speakers with diverse backgrounds and specialties. The program can offer a broader and more relevant perspective to a diverse audience.

External factors also pose challenges, such as the difficulty of accessing the study locations, especially for participants who live in distant areas or have limited transportation. Some participants also complained about the program's lack of local community support. Santrendelik could work with the local community to provide transportation for participants or hold the study in a more strategic location. This approach is expected to increase attendance and strengthen the relationship between Santrendelik and the surrounding community.

Despite these challenges, Santrendelik's remedial efforts, such as schedule adjustments and pre-study dialogue initiatives, show great potential to increase the program's effectiveness. By addressing human resource constraints, diversifying presenters, and improving

accessibility, Santrendelik can continue to expand the impact of its *da'wah* to the younger generation more effectively and inclusively.

This study compares the findings with other studies, such as research conducted (Hasanah & Islami, 2023) regarding the *hijrah* community, which emphasizes formal institutional transformation and strengthening the *da'wah* network. Meanwhile, the findings of this study show differences in the *da'wah* approach between Santrendelik and the *hijrah* community, with Santrendelik prioritizing a more relaxed and dialogical cultural approach through hangout spaces and social media. Santrendelik's hybrid approach provides greater flexibility, in contrast to the more rigid structure of the *hijrah* community.

Santrendelik's success in integrating popular culture with *da'wah* makes it a relevant model for younger generations, inspiring *da'wah* innovations that suit their social and emotional needs. Comparison with other studies shows that Santrendelik's approach offers novelty, especially in integrating *da'wah* with popular culture, which is more appealing to the younger generation than the more structural approach of the *hijrah* community.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that implementing a public relations strategy for the *da'wah* study program is essential. Santrendelik's "Nongkrong Tobat" initiative aims to present *da'wah* studies in a manner that aligns with the characteristics and values of today's youth. These efforts are consistently reinforced by fostering strong relationships with both internal and external stakeholders. Utilizing systems theory, this study highlights the comprehensive approach taken by the Santrendelik community in executing its *da'wah* strategies, encompassing the processes of research and listening, planning and decision-making, communication and implementation, and evaluation. As a result, Santrendelik has successfully built public trust and established a positive image within the community.

The ongoing weekly studies demonstrate Santrendelik's commitment to engaging with its audience. However, to further enhance participation, particularly among female audiences who may face challenges attending "Nongkrong Tobat" due to its location and timing, it is recommended that Santrendelik develop study programs in more accessible downtown locations. This research also challenges the assumption that young people prefer to fulfill their spiritual needs solely through online media. While some preachers are increasingly pursuing the digitalization of *da'wah*, Santrendelik effectively preserves traditional *da'wah* methods by facilitating direct interactions between *tobaters* and clerics, thereby attracting a youthful audience.

Despite these positive findings, this study has limitations. The sample size was relatively small, focusing primarily on a specific demographic within the Santrendelik community. Future research should consider a broader range of participants to gain a more comprehensive understanding of youth engagement in *da'wah* activities across different regions and contexts.

As a recommendation, the insights gained from this study should be revisited and expanded upon in future research using diverse methodologies. Additionally, establishing more communities similar to Santrendelik in various regions is encouraged to support youth *da'wah* activities further and foster spiritual engagement among young people.

REFERENCES

- Abrori, A., & Alnashr, M. S. (2023). Aktualisasi Metode Dakwah Milenial Menghadapi Tantangan Perubahan Sosial Masyarakat. *Mu'ashir: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi Islam*, 1(1), 29–40. <https://doi.org/10.35878/muashir.v1i1.768>
- Achmad Tohari, Aviv Nafiuddin, & Fathul Qorib. (2024). Contestation Of Islamic Discourse In The Digital Space On Islamic Portals. *Mediakita*, 8(2), 172–192. <https://doi.org/10.30762/mediakita.v8i2.2121>
- Bazeley, P., & Jackson, K. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis With NVivo* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing Grounded Theory* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Keterampilan Esensial Untuk Peneliti Kualitatif*. Pustaka Belajar.
- Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry. *Theory Into Practice*, 39(3), 124–130.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Hasanah, U., & Islami, F. (2023). *Gerakan Dakwah Komunitas Hijrah pada Kaum Muda di Banten: Kaderisasi, Agensi, dan Otorisasi*.
- Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1994). *Qualitative data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Jalil, A. (2021). Program Dakwah “Serambi Islami” di TVRI Perspektif Audience And Users. In *Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi Islam* (Vol. 2, Issue 1). Online. <https://mediaindonesia.com/humaniora/298392/nielsen-covid-19-tingkatkan-jumlah-penonton->

- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2014). *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Kurniawan, A., & Fadilah, N. (2024). Digital Influence: A Review of Husain Basyaiban's Da'wah Through the TikTok Platform. *Mediakita*, 8(1), 39–52. <https://doi.org/10.30762/mediakita.v8i1.1531>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Mahendra, R. (2021). Dakwah Islam Melalui Media Digital Dan Konvensional. *Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi*, 1(1), 71–82.
- Mardiana, R. (2020). Daya Tarik Dakwah Digital Sebagai Media Dakwah untuk Generasi Milenial. *Komunida: Media Komunikasi Dan Dakwah*, 10, 148–158. <https://doi.org/10.35905/komunida.v7i2>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (3th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Moch Nurcholis Majid. (2024). Humanist Da'wah Husain Ja'far Al Hadar on Instagram Media: Millennial Generation Perspective. *Mediakita*, 8(1), 85–98. <https://doi.org/10.30762/mediakita.v8i1.1439>
- Muttaqin, Z. (2019). Reimagining Islamic Education in The Digital Age: Pedagogical Innovations in The Santrendelik Community. *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, 9(1), 23–48.
- Parhan, M., Rahmawati, Y., Rahmawati, I. R., Rastiadi, H. A., & Maysaroh, M. (2022). Analisis Metode dan Konten Dakwah yang Diminati pada Remaja. *Anida (Aktualisasi Nuansa Ilmu Dakwah)*, 22(1), 65–75. <https://doi.org/10.15575/anida.v22i1.16633>
- Parhan M., Riezky P., & Alifa S. (2020). Analisis Metode Baru Dakwah Hanan Attaki Di Era Konvergensi Media: Studi Deskriptif Pada Akun Instagram @Hanan_Attaki. *Komunida : Media Komunikasi Dan Dakwah*, 4(2), 175–196.
- Patton, M. Q., & 2015. (n.d.). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Purwanto, Y., Taufik, M., & Jatnika, A. (2017). Peran Teknologi Informasi Dalam Perkembangan Dakwah Mahasiswa. *Jurnal Sosioteknologi*, 16(1), 96–108.
- Qudsy, S. Z., & Muzakky, A. H. (2021). Dinamika Ngaji Online Dalam Tagar Gus Baha (#GusBaha): Studi Living Qur'an di Media Sosial. *Jurnal Sosial Keagamaan*, 2(1), 1–19.

- Rahmadanty, M., Arif, E., & Zetra, A. (2019). Fungsi Public Relations Sebagai Fasilitator Komunikasi Menjembatani Hubungan Antara Pemerintah dan Masyarakat. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 9(2), 242–254.
- Rianto, A. (2002). *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial dan Hukum*. Rahmatika Creative Design.
- Salama, N., & Chikudate, N. (2021). Religious Influences On The Rationalization Of Corporate Bribery In Indonesia: a phenomenological study. *Asian Journal Of Bussiness Ethics*, 10, 85–102.
- Sayyidah, Ramadoni M. S., & Bakti A. F. (2023). Program Dakwah Pada “Chanel Youtube Ustadz Adi Hidayat Official.” *Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam*, 4(1), 51–61.
- Scott M. Cutlip, & Allen H. Center. (1952). *Efective Public Relations* (Pertama). Prentice Hall.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basic of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Wirawan, I. B. (2012). *Teori-Teori Sosial Dalam Tiga Paradigma (Fakta Sosial, Definisi Sosial, dan Perilaku Sosial)*. Prenadamedia Group.