Piety and commercialization da’wah: the influence of Hanan Attaki’s Kajian on young urban muslims in Indonesia

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Introduction

The phenomenon of increasing piety among urban youth is inseparable from the massive information consumed through social media and is marked by the emergence of several popular figures who have migrated to (Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Jakarta, 2021). The advent of digital media has significantly influenced the religious practices of Muslims in Indonesia (Husnudldlon, 2022). These new media platforms have reshaped and influenced Muslim behavior in the public sphere, altering the socio-political and cultural landscape of religious practice. Today's, youth are no longer interested in the intricacies of

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ABSTRACT
Urban youth's growing piety and social media's expansion are intertwined, as shown by the resurgence of influential relocated people. Modern youngsters are disinterested in religious theology and prefer digital preachers who can answer their inquiries quickly. This has changed youth religion, which the media business has exacerbated. Thus, some renowned da’i, notably in Indonesia, use the internet to spread da’wah. Hanan Attaki, a famous preacher, often addresses youth issues on social media. Mental health, loneliness, future fear, and sin remorse are common concerns. This study aims to analyze piety and commercialization of da’wah which is Hanan Attaki’s case in kajian towards young urban Muslims in Indonesia. This research uses a qualitative case study method and literature review as an additional reference. Data collection using interview and documentation techniques such as journal articles, books, and information from the internet as secondary resources. The result of this study the success in commercializing Ustadz Hanan Attaki's influence preaching can be categorized as first, branding suitable for young people's da’i, second, specialization, such as his being an expertise in da’wa from his education journey, and third, building social contacts, which is a process where media and technology can penetrate geography such as social media or internet.

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religious teachings and prefer preachers who can answer their needs instantly. This has led to a shift in religious orientation among the younger generation, which has also been exacerbated by the media industry.

The rise of youth piety generally increases together with the Muslim middle class in Indonesia. This is a multifaceted phenomenon that reflects the socio-economic changes that have occurred in the country as well as the tendencies of consumerism and capitalism that are occurring on a global scale. This subset of the population has been gaining popularity, notably in the period following the New Order. New Order or orde baru is the name given to the reign of President General Soeharto in Indonesia. The New Order replaced the Old Order, which referred to the Soekarno era. The background of the New Order began with the issuance of the March 11, 1966 Order. The New Order lasted from 1966 to 1998, and has been distinguished by a distinctive way of life that combines Islamic devotion with the consumerist practices of the bourgeoisie (Sunaryanto et al., 2022). The increasing commodification of Islam has significantly influenced the cultural dynamics of the Muslim middle class in Indonesia, especially the youth, leading to a fusion of religious practices and consumer culture (Husna, 2019). Although this phenomenon can weaken the religious aspect, in the context of Hanan Attaki kajian, it can also strengthen people’s attachment to religion, especially young people. In this case, this shows that religion and commercialization can coexist.

As a result, some famous da’i in Indonesia in particular, utilize the internet as a medium to deliver da’wah messages. Hanan Attaki is one of them, who is a well-known preacher because the content of his da’wah on social media is often related to the problems and concerns of contemporary youth (Kamillah, Aulia Nur; Fitri, Ahmad Asrof; AR, 2023). The issues raised are often related to mental health, loneliness, anxiety about the future, guilt over sins, and many more. Not only that, there are interesting variables regarding the figure of Hanan Attaki who is a good-looking young preacher, born in Aceh, an alumnus of Al-Azhar Cairo, a branding to engage young people. The relaxed delivery of the da’wa and the selection of diction of words that are attached to the daily language of young people (Fajrin, Sitka Farahita; Suherman, 2020). As a result, it has garnered a lot of favor from young people, especially urban youths from the middle to upper class.

Furthermore, the effect of image branding through social media has a tremendous impact on attracting audiences or worshipers in real life. Subsequently, the more popular or famous a preacher is, the higher the demand for the need for reality existence. In the context of the case study of Hanan Attaki’s influence, he has succeeded in attracting thousands of worshipers, especially the majority of Muslim women, on several occasions kajian in major cities in Indonesia. Surprisingly, Hanan Attaki’s fame is commercialized in the form of a study program.
or kajian entitled Uncertainty, My Support System is Allah, Rabbi don't let me down, and Gwanchanayo. Young people as the market segmentation are required to buy tickets in the range of hundreds of thousands in order to get access to lectures from Hanan Attaki. This highlights the so-called Islamic consumption as a religious commodity that has spread and developed in Indonesia (Fealy & White, 2008). Finally, this article aims to explain a new understanding of the concept of religious commodities in the new media era carried out by several famous preachers in Indonesia. By utilizing the high rate of piety for young people, especially those living in urban areas.

**Method**

This research uses a qualitative methodology, which is a method through the process of research and discussion based on the Hanan Attaki case study. According to Creswell's narrative, he categorizes several cases for a study, namely: (1) Identify a "case" for a study; (2) The case is a "system bound" by time and place; (3) Case studies use a variety of information in their data collection to provide a detailed and in-depth description of the response of an event and (Using a case study approach, researchers will "spending time" in describing the context or setting for a case (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In this case, Hanan Attaki is used as a case study of his influence on urban youth and packaged in a commercialized event or kajian. From the Fig.1, it can be revealed that the focus of a biography is the life of an individual, namely Hanan Attaki, as well as the focus of phenomenology on the increasing piety of young people in urban areas. Consequently, understanding the concept of Attaki's influence with the focus of study through case specifications in an event whether it includes individuals, cultures, and portraits of life.

**Fig. 1.** The figure taken from the book John W. Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions
Results and Discussion

Piety and Religious Commercialization

In the essay titled "Piety and Public Opinion: Understanding Islam," which was written by Pepinsky Liddle and Mujani, the term "piety" is utilized. Piety encompasses three concepts, namely ritual, orientation, and behavior. The term "orientation" refers to the relationship between an individual Muslim’s beliefs and the Islamic faith, while the term "behavior" refers to the activities that reflect religious conviction. Ritual is always related to the practice of Islamic pillars (Pepinsky et al., 2018). It is clear that piety refers to the quality of being devoutly religious or reverent, often demonstrated through acts of devotion, prayer, and adherence to religious principles and practices (Makiah et al., 2022). In "The Politics of Piety," Saba Mahmood presents the notion of piety as a condition of being in close proximity to God. This state encompasses one’s behaviors and actions, encompassing both religious and secular aspects of life. Consequently, ritualistic practices are regarded as the ideal domain for individuals to align their desires with the conventions of pious Islamic conduct, allowing for spontaneous adherence to these norms (Mahmood, 2011).

Furthermore, piety can be illustrated as taqwa in Arabic literature, which means increasing faith by the application of carrying out all the commands of the almighty and avoiding all the series of prohibitions of God. Piety can be viewed in terms of individuals and groups and this can be characterized by various forms of symbols, trends and identities. The proliferation of modern symbols of sophistication, the ascent of the Muslim middle class, and the flourishing of Islamic popular culture may all be considered manifestations of symbolic religiosity (Wildan & Witriani, 2021). In the context of Indonesia, Islamic popular culture and popular piety culture have grown in Indonesia due to Islamic piety. In the previous decade, religious symbols have dominated public spaces to reflect public Islam. Islamic fashion is spreading worldwide, notably in Muslim-majority Southeast Asia (Lewis, 2013). Therefore, religious symbols in public are not only signs of Islamic popular culture and Muslims’ consumerism but also popular piety. Among the phenomena of popular piety are the growing usage of hijab among the middle class, performing 'umrah pilgrimage with celebrities, attending religious events or kajian, etc.

Mahmood used the concept of 'piety' in close relation to the Arabic da’wa, sometimes even as its literal translation. Da’wa literally means "call" or "appeal," and is related with God’s summons to Islam, the "true religion." Da’wa is primarily seen in modern Islamist discourses as a religious duty for all adult members of Islamic society to encourage fellow Muslims to greater piety (Jansen, 2011). In contrast, Habermas explicitly uses the notion of piety to explain the distinction between the dogmatic content of religion and the 'piety' [Frommigkeit] that inspires and sustains the personal conduct of the believer.

Syams ul Haq (Piety and commercialization da’wah…)

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The intertwining of piety and commercialization has been a consistent phenomenon, wherein one observes the inherent manifestation of piety devoid of the monetization of religious practices. Conversely, the phenomenon of piety coexists with the trend of commercialization within religious contexts that incorporate economic activities. Commercialization refers to the systematic process of converting various entities into valuable items that possess the capacity to be exchanged for goods, hence serving as a viable alternative (Mosco, 2009). According to Pattana Kitiarsa, commodification or commercialization refers to the process of transforming or regarding something as a commodity, hence commercializing an activity that is fundamentally non-commercial in character (Kitiarsa, 2007). Commodification is also key to economizing social ties. In terms of the commodification of Islam refers to commercializing Islam or turning Islamic symbols into commodities, which must be desirable and marketable. In conjunction with this, it is possible to comprehend that the commodification of religion is a discourse concerning the trading of interests. According to the findings, religion and the symbols that are associated with it can be utilized as a commodity that can be traded in order to acquire benefits for the individuals who do the offenses. In a number of different activities, the problem of the commercialization of religion, particularly Islam in Indonesia, is readily apparent (Suryana & Handoko, 2023).

Products that "breathe Islam" are increasingly popular among Muslim middle classes eager to explore new forms of religiosity through consumption and public piety (Fealy, 2008; Hasan, 2009; Hoesterey, 2008; Howell, 2008; Jones, 2007; Smith Hefner, 2007). Religious monopolies claim they benefit society by promoting appropriate social roles through preserving the faith of the citizens (Scharffs, Brett G.; Clark, Elizabeth; Baughman, 2005). According to political economics studies on communication, commodification processes occur in three stages. The first is commodification, which is the process of transforming valued items into marketable goods. The second concept is specialization. It is the process by which mass media and technology overcome geographic space limits. The third step is to establish social contacts (Sinha, 2011). The first stage of religious commercialization necessitates communication and access to the religious commodification message.

As Islamic identity has grown in prominence within the public spheres of Indonesia, religious symbols and new ways of life have proliferated. Presently, there is an increased prominence of various manifestations of Islam in both public and media spheres. These include opulent mosques, Islamic educational institutions, Islamic banks, hospitals and pharmaceutical products, films and music, da'wahainment on television and the internet, ḥijāb, and da’wahainment. Emerging forms of da’wah, including cyber da’wah and cellular da’wah, leverage various forms of social media and web-based platforms to integrate Islam into the
daily lives of individuals, providing them with convenience, accessibility, and immediacy (Wildan & Witriani, 2021). The manifestation of Islam in public domains serves as an embodiment of the freedom that Muslims have to articulate their faith and culture. The prevalence of Islamic popular culture has undeniably increased in recent times, primarily as a result of the processes of globalization and democratization.

The commercialization of religion particularly towards da’wa, in the context of public piety in Indonesia, can be seen in the way religious figures like Aa Gym. He has leveraged their personal brand to create a form of religious authority that is mediated by the consumption of their image and teachings (Hoesterey, 2015). Aa Gym’s approach to preaching and his relationship with his disciples is influenced by the commoditization and consumption of his personal brand, which is a reflection of the broader framework of Islamization, corporatization, and privatization in post-authoritarian Indonesia. The figure of Abdullah Gymnastiar (Aa Gym), who was a preacher during that time period, was able to successfully garner popularity by combining elements of psychology, western management, and Islam (Hoesterey, 2015). He is both a preacher and a motivator.

As a result of this, the advent of the new preachers above demonstrated that the symbol of religious authority was no longer monopolised by ulama or a Kyai, who are those who possess qualified theological knowledge (Saputra & Triantoro, 2021). Furthermore, Hanan Attaki is a figure who has succeeded in creating a personal branding that is different from other preachers who are known to be rigid. The popularity of the language style used is close to young people and supporting media makes him a top da’i. This is an exclusive value if commercialized because the demand for existence in the real world is getting higher. With the number of piety of urban youth, especially those in the upper middle category, Ustadz Hanan Attaki’s presence is an exclusive value that can be accessed and his figure can be marketed for a variety of benefits. In summary, there is a complex process that combines the interplay of religious authority, personal branding, and the economic and emotive relationships between religious leaders and their communities in Indonesia (Hoesterey, 2015). This process is known as the commodification of public piety.

**Short Biography of Hanan Attaki**

Tengku Hanan Attaki was born in Aceh on December 31, 1981. He is the fifth of six children. He has known the Quran since he was a child. He won many competitions to read the Quran. The Ruhul Islam Islamic Boarding School in Banda Aceh was where he got his early schooling. He later got a scholarship and continued his studies at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, where he studied Tafsir al-Qur’an at the Faculty of Ushuluddin. Besides that, he has done an
achievement in the area of *Tilawatil Qur'an* (DetikJatim, 2023). He was in charge of a student group and edited the school bulletin. He also worked on Islamic matters and was the head editor of the Salsabila bulletin at once. While he was in Egypt, he also tried running a lot of different businesses, like selling meatballs and leading pilgrims on Hajjar Rasward trips. He married a woman from Bandung before going back to Indonesia, and he joined his wife, Haneen Akira, in Bandung. After that, Hanan Attaki went to Indonesia, to Bandung. In Bandung, he taught at the Habiburrahman School of Qur’anic Interpretation (STQ) and at Jendela Hati. He was also in charge of Salman Qur’an House at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) (MD, 2023).

In March 2015, UHA started the Hijrah Youth Movement while he was in Bandung as a place for da’wa. It was started by Ustadz Hanan Attaki (UHA) and a few of his friends to get as many young people as possible to start learning Islam again. Furthermore, Hijrah Youth does not just teach at one spot, like the Trans Studio Bandung Grand Mosque. They do this all over the city. In its programs, Shift lists the following religious activities: Routine Studies, Impromptu Hijrah Youth Shift, Ulin Hijrah Youth Shift, Hijrah Youth Quiz, Hijrah Youth Request Shift, Hijrah Challenge Youth Shift, Hijrah Youth Shift Give Alms Every Day, Charity Activities, Voice of Youth, Sempatkan, Berkingat, Tarbiyah, Teras Tahfizh, Ngabuburide, Nongkrong Bareng UHA (Ustadz Hanan Atas), and Shift worshipers hold a lot of different programs. For young people, the most exciting one is regular studies (MD, 2023). As a youthful preacher, he is close to youth. Hanan Attaki founded Hijrah Youth as essential movement to reach the youth. Recently, the NU East Java leadership accepted Hanan Attaki into Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in May 2023 (Indonesia, 2023).

**The influence of Da’wah Hanan Attaki’s Kajian on young urban Muslims in Indonesia**

Youth, both biologically and socially, play an important role in the development of contemporary religious activism in Indonesia (Ja’far, 2020). In the context of Indonesia, these phenomena have been quickly expanding in the years immediately following the fall of the Soeharto dictatorship in the twenty-first century. In his discussion of the changing landscape on the development of political and religious life in Indonesia, Fealy referred to these phenomena as the changing landscape. He also discussed the ways in which Indonesian Muslims express their faith, including the wearing of Islamic clothing, the purchase of halal products, the depositing of their money in a sharia bank, the watching of influential preachers, the undertaking of pilgrimages, the consumption of Islamic herbals, the dating in sharia cafes-hotels, and most importantly, the posting of these activities on their social media accounts.
(Fealy & White, 2008). Ustadz Hanan Attaki depicts his da’wa to appeal to the younger generation by employing language style that is easily accepted, tends not to be rigid, and addresses contemporary issues that resonate with the current times (Inderasari et al., 2020).

Based on Hanan Attaki’s case, his popularity can be traced through various social media such as YouTube as much as 2.5 million, and Instagram with almost 10 million followers, not to mention the Instagram account of the Hanan Attaki kajian event organizer namely Ayah Amanah Event Organizer (@ayah_amanah) as much as 448 thousand followers outperforming various other celebrity ustadz, such as Felix Siauw’s personal account, as many as 1.1 million followers on Instagram through updated access on November 26, 2023. Compared to Islamic missionaries affiliated with large organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), UHA or Ustadz Hanan Attaki and Felix Siauw are new partisans on the stage of religious discourse in Indonesia. Both of them deliberately use social media as an instrument of da’wah by targeting 150 million users, most of whom are young people (Muthohirin, 2021).

A substantial amount of impact is exerted by social media, particularly Instagram, in the dissemination of da’wah messages. Hanan Attaki utilizes Instagram as a platform for da’wa (Islamic preaching) by adopting a contemporary approach that resonates with young audiences (Parhan et al., 2020). The content he shares is designed to be interesting to young followers because it is packaged to address contemporary problems, making it particularly appealing to the youth of muslim Indonesia. Another explanation for this particular instance can be found in a paper authored by Rahmatu Lailia and titled "The Role of Ustadz Hanan Attaki’s Instagram Account and Its Effectiveness as a Da’wah Media in Review of Hypodermic Needle Theory." According to the hypodermic needle theory, the efficiency of Ustadz Hanan Attaki’s da’wah messages can be regarded as the ability of da’wah messages provided through the @hanan_attaki Instagram account to penetrate and influence the thoughts, feelings, actions, or reactions of his followers. As a result, the da’wah messages are effective (Khouri Nisa et al., 2023). The hypothesis of the hypodermic needle theory is based on the assumption that the media exerts a direct and powerful influence on the recipients of messages, who in this case are the people who follow Ustadz Hanan Attaki’s Instagram account. They are said to be passive recipients because they absorb the messages that are communicated without posing any pointed inquiries or offering any criticism.

Based on Slama (2018), she provides an elucidating explanation of the shift in the religious orientation of the Muslim community that has occurred in the digital age. An Indonesianist and anthropologist, Slama, finds the influence of the media on Indonesian Muslims to be an inseparable aspect of their existence. Media serves not only as a primary source of amusement and entertainment but also as a religious reference (Husein & Slama, 2018). It is undeniable
that the power of the media can gather the masses in reality life as well as Ustadz Hanan Attaki's kajian in several cities such as JABODETABEK (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi), Bandung, Surabaya, Malang, etc. Attended by thousands of worshipers, the majority of whom are young people from the capital city. In this case for instance, the study program or kajian is usually titled such as Ustadz Hanan Attaki's 'sharing time', collaboration with young celebrity Lora Kadam Sidiq, and at the same time guided by female influencers such as Amelia Andani, etc. Those influencers have a huge impact on forcing young people to attend the event because they are one of the famous ones in social media and help promote the event. For example with the aforementioned figure, such up to 2 million followers (@basyasman) meanwhile one of the hosts has 1.2 followers (@ameliandanii).

Ayah Amanah Event Organizer is the organizer in charge of Ustadz Hanan Attaki's kajian events, under the direct management of Ustadz Hanan Attaki, worshipers who want to attend the kajian event can purchase tickets for Rp. 100,000.00 per individual. Each city visited varies and each city consists of 4 sessions (morning, afternoon, evening, and night) which are attended by hundreds of worshipers per session. With the calculation of 4 studies or kajian at different times in single city, it can generate thousands of worshipers per day, not counting the benefits of brands that have collaborated with Ayah Amanah Event Organizer such as Kahf and Wardah respectively.

Fig. 2 is a study poster for Hanan Attaki based in Bandung and Surabaya.

On the Fig. 3 explains that the registration stages in purchasing tickets for Hanan Attaki's kajian are priced at 100.000 Rupiah per individual and also for children up to seven years 50.000 Rupiah. As the picture shows, the benefits of Hanan Attaki kajian has been putting
numerous benefits for instance the advantages of knowledge, new friends, water mineral, e-certificate, block note, and pen. This was confirmed by direct management and by a buyer named Farida Triana through an interview in the Instagram chat column, she said; "Adults 100,000, for children from 7 years 50,000 while if there are worshipers bringing babies for free" (Farida, 2023). In the event held in Semarang on 26 November 2023, participants received several benefits related to ticket purchases such as kajian bracelets, notebooks, pens, and water and plastic bags to bring footwear into the ballroom. As told by Triana regarding the question of what benefits besides getting access to Ustadz Hanan Attaki's live lectures, the informant said: "Earlier, I got a kajian bracelet, notepad, pen, water and crackle for footwear because entering the ballroom must be removed" (Farida, 2023). The duration of the event that has been carried out by the resource person is about two hours specifically for the morning session from 08.00 to 10.00 WIB which consists of a series; reciting together, listening to lectures from Ustadz Hanan Attaki, sharing time (question and answer) and ending in a prayer together as confirmed by the resource person. Based on Triana, she quoted: "There is also a prayer together, besides that, we are told to open surat al-Kahfi verse 82" (Farida, 2023).

![Fig. 3. The reply of a message from one of the contacts Ayah Amanah Event Organizer in the Semarang city batch](image)

Based on the case of a famous preacher in Indonesia, Hanan Attaki has successfully fulfilled the spiritual soul of many young urban Muslim people through his preaching and media. The rise of youth piety is inseparable from the existence of media as the main unifying factor. Young people seek sanctuary to increase devotion and faith through studies held in urban areas, for
example. Therefore, the media plays an important role in mobilizing and ideologizing a discourse. One topic that is quite widely discussed in the media is the discourse around hijrah. Social media users began to engage in more discussions about hijrah compared to discussions about Islamic economics, gender, Islamic politics, or Islamic law (Juliansyahzen, 2023).

The success in commercializing Ustadz Hanan Attaki's preaching can be categorized as three based on Sinha's theory; first, the process of converting valuable goods into marketable goods, in this case the figure of Hanan Attaki is used as a branding that is suitable for young people's da'i, second is specialization such as the figure of Hanan Attaki from a fairly trusted scientific sanad because he is an Al-Azhar alumnus, and finally the most important thing is to build social contacts which is a process where media and technology can penetrate the boundaries of geographic space that capitalizes on all segments that coincide with the increasing number of urban youth piety.

Conclusion

The tendency of young people to utilize social media is inextricably linked to the phenomenon of the growing religiosity of young people living in urban regions. There is a higher probability that younger people will be curious about religious consciousness and will question anything that they can obtain through their devices in an instant. There are some preachers who have been successful in delivering high engagement and providing the best offer through the current style of preaching with the target audience of young people who desire to perform the hijrah. In this particular instance, Hanan Attaki has been successful. Additionally, the effect of image branding through social media has a tremendous impact on the ability to attract audiences or worshippers in the real world. As a consequence of this, the need for the requirement of reality existing is increased in proportion to the fame or notoriety of a preacher. Relationships between piety and commercialization can sometimes be defined as mutually beneficial. When considering the Hanan Attaki kajian event that took place in a number of places across Indonesia, it is possible that certain groups of people or jamaah could derive satisfaction from the content of the preachers, which has the potential to enrich their souls. On the other hand, the preacher can come out ahead financially from those who come to the event and purchase tickets. Hanan Attaki has been successful in developing the event by establishing social interaction, specialization, and religious branding. These are the requirements that must be met in order to affect the number of people who commit to commercialization.
Declarations

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