Religious Learning, Social Media, and the Emergence of Religious Intolerance in Social Relations

Cucu Nurhayati

Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

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Abstract: Religious learning influences and determines the attitudes of its adherents. A religion which primarily teaches to maintain the peaceful and harmonious relationships between people in society sometimes creates intolerance and is used as a justification for the attitude taken. Along with technological advancement and easier internet access, often people in learning religion take a fast path by learning religion through social media. Ironically, it is sometimes not based on the primary reference sources that lead to a misunderstanding. This study aims to see the process of religious learning through social media in interpreting diversity and building social relations. Some individuals learn religion from social media and then apply it in social life. People with an erroneous understanding of religion tend to blame those who have a different opinion from them. From the literature review, it can be found that studying about religion by using only social media sources have given birth to intolerance in social relations among people.

1 INTRODUCTION

The development of information technology at this time has made it easier for the public to search for resources and references by relying on internet technology. One of the fastest growing technologies is social media technology, as a means for people to interact with each other through the technology they hold every day. Social media in Indonesia is loved by various groups and ages. In the search for information, not everyone is careful and rechecks to the primary sources, both the Quran, the hadith, the study of interpretation and *fiqh* written by experts in their fields. Due to time constraints, people sometimes respond and understand the knowledge gained from social media rigidly. Along with the rapid development of information technology and social networking sites, the spread of Islam is growing rapidly to the realm of social media. When attempting to understand a religion, social media can only be used as a tool; there is still a need to observe to check the source to ensure the truth of the teaching. Social media is a medium on the internet that allows users to represent themselves and interact, collaborate, share, communicate with other users and form virtual social bonds. Studying religious material through social media requires

precision in choosing content and accounted sources. Errors in choosing content will result in misunderstanding, intolerance and even radicalism. When religion is rigidly understood without checking the original and comprehensive study, the essence and function of religion as the bearer of peace turns into hateful teaching. Learning religion is ideally done through kyai or ustadz who understand religion based on the study of al Quran and *hadith* in depth in a relatively long period so that their understanding is mature. There are cases where the preachers in social media are not religious scholars who comprehend religion comprehensively but only someone who understands and explains about religion based on their understanding. Their popularity is not due to the high knowledge they have, but a large number of followers and the frequent people who access the material it conveys.

The use of massive social media in every life of society cannot be avoided because it has become the lifestyle of modern society. At this time the public must be good at controlling themselves to be able to avoid the fake news, hoax and hate speech. Conducting religious propaganda by using social media has become a trend, the preach is delivered through Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp or Youtube. Even some preachers like Yusuf Mansur, Abdullah Gymnastiar or Arifin Ilham have social media

1582

Nurhayati, C. Religious Learning, Social Media, and the Emergence of Religious Intolerance in Social Relations. DOI: 10.5220/0009932315821589 In Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Recent Innovations (ICRI 2018), pages 1582-1589 ISBN: 978-989-758-458-9 Copyright © 2020 by SCITEPRESS – Science and Technology Publications, Lda. All rights reserved accounts with millions of followers. People can easily follow religious lectures delivered through the social media of preachers. The follower then uploads religious picture or script on social media and also uses chat application to spread the message. The original writer of the content is usually unclear. With the many phenomena of religious learning through social networking in the digital era will significantly facilitate the community in learning religious values. So, how the influence of religious understanding in building relationships in the community?

This study has several objectives, first to see the phenomenon of religious understanding in the religious community with the development of the networking community. Second, to provide an overview of social relationships built by the community based on the understanding of the gained through the media. As we know that social media has a positive and negative impact that always together. On the one hand, social media helps facilitate the community in the learning process, but one side of learning conducted social media running only one direction, and there is no social interaction built between teachers and students in the process of religious understanding.

Several things can be done as a problem-solving plan such as by giving an understanding to the public that social media is only as a tool used to facilitate the searching of specific content but cannot be used as a single reference. Religious learning through social media must be accompanied by the teaching from religious teachers who master certain areas of expertise gained through education and intensive and in-depth learning process.

2 RELIGIOUS LEARNING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

This research begins with some literature or research studies that have been done by previous researchers. First, Malik and Chairani's (Malik & Chairani) research on Social Media Usage as Islamic Learning Media to 46 respondents at 12 universities in urban areas shows the result that 58.7% of respondents follow the Islamic issue happened in Indonesia through social media. Islamic social media accounts that respondents follow as many as 52 accounts. Examples of accounts that are followed by many respondents are @islamicfreedom, @QURAN dan SUNNAH, @felixsiauw, @gadisberjilbabb, @sabdarosul, @Yusuf_Mansur, @TeladanRasul, @quraishihab, @aagym. 52.2% of respondents said that the reason they followed me was because they

knew the characters. As many as 82.6% of respondents said that they always follow the issue of Islam which is being discussed and the same number shows that when they hear the issue of Islam they always look for the truth of the issue. A small amount was found when researchers asked about their direct involvement. Only 28.3% of respondents often post status related to Islam and only 32.6% of respondents often discuss Islam on social media. All respondents have a social media account that distinguishes them from the many social media accounts they have. From the results of the study showed that 85% agreed that the younger generation believes that social media is effective to be a medium of *da'wah*. This suggests that the method of spreading Islam in cyberspace, especially on social networking sites is more likely to be accessed by Muslims, especially for those who are young and have solid activities, but this does not mean that the conventional method of da'wah done in places of worship such as mosques and mushola are no longer interesting. One of the advantages of Islamic learning methods on social networking sites has the advantage that there is no compelling element. this shows that the stigma of coercion, indoctrination, and the imposition of coercive dogmatism does not occur in Islamic learning methods through social networking sites. Respondents assume that the learning of Islam through social media indirectly, with no coercion, so that it is so easy to accept and can be read when there is spare time. An interesting finding from respondents indicates that the young Muslim with a better education tends to pay more attention to the references and validity of the literature presented in social media. Thus, the learning of Islam through social networking sites also need to be collaborated with selecting the accounts that will be used as a reference; this is to avoid anonymous accounts that sometimes just spread hate virus. The role of religious leaders still has an important position because the tendency of Muslim communities in Indonesia which shows dependency on the religious leaders. Therefore, the religious leaders need to adjust to this condition so that it can become a decent figure to be a role model. the context of Islamic da'wah should be non-patronizing, not too rigid and standard, using light language, connected with daily life and the issues that are happening, considering the psychology of the younger generation, concerned with aspects of tolerance that is not offending other religions and containing motivation and invitations to value of goodness.

Second, Adam et al. (2015) on the new media as a medium of learning media of religion and its completion of Islamic perspective (Adam, Ali, Anuar, & Ali, 2015), analyzes the issues related to the phenomenon of social media usage within Malaysian Islamic society. A new problem arises in studying religion through the internet, namely the emergence of religious issues such as religious propaganda, religious liberalization and the issue of religious syncretism. Islamic society must realize that the use of internet technology in preaching has the aim to facilitate the delivery of religious advice globally to the world community in various regions. Preachers on social media can be categorized into three groups. First, genuine preachers who have scientific authority known to the public. Secondly, preachers from religious groups who have scientific authority but are not known by the public. Third, not from religious groups but have the desire to carry out da'wah and provide knowledge through social media. Thus internet users must make comparisons in gaining knowledge through social media by investigating the original source as a tabayun concept. In the context of religious teaching and learning, sometimes not all problems can be answered directly; this is where the importance of the role of the teacher can communicate directly to the problems faced. The results of this study showed that social media has a vital role in learning Islam for Malaysian society and become a tool in preaching. For Muslim society, the use of social media as a medium of religious learning is very useful as a da'wah media that is relevant in the present context. The internet is a media that cannot be removed in the delivery of information, content and thoughts to people who want to convey and obtain religious information. The Internet can be a medium of knowledge, study, and thinking for the community. Some harmful elements that appear cannot be used as a barrier for the community in its use as a medium of religious learning. Feelings of phobia in internet usage coupled with the attitude of distancing technology will cause the group alienated and get rid of technology because it is considered not to give goodness and blessing, not practicing the rules of learning and so on can cause the Islamic community to lag in actualizing thinking and being marginalized in religious innovation.

Third, Rokiah (Rahman et. al., 2015), et al. (2015) on the use of Youtube as a medium of Religion Learning in Generation Y in Terengganu, Malaysia. Generation Y is a generation born between 1980 and 2000 who were born in the technological era. Youtube is a social media that is very popular and is often used by generation Y to get useful information in various forms of images, videos or animation. You tube is an interesting medium for generation Y because it combines audio and visual elements that provide innovative and creative benefits in the learning process. This study was conducted on 100 respondents and showed the results of the usefulness factor and usefulness of Youtube in religious study. Youtube is a medium that is often used in finding information that combines audio and visual innovatively and creatively in the learning process. As many as 47% of respondents said using youtube media to watch religious lectures, religious issues as much as 20%, religious entertainment 17%, learning Qur'an 5%, watching religious film 85% and studying prayers or worship was only 3%. The use of media in the learning process has a relationship with the level of education of users. The higher the level of education the higher the level of media use because they feel the benefits of the internet in studying religion. In the context of youtube usage, the benefits of youtube are important in providing religious input for users. To ensure users do not fall into errors and misunderstandings in internet use, religious knowledge is key in decision making. In other words, studying religion from the internet is not in a position from the start but previously has knowledge as a filter of information obtained.

Fourthly, Sadida (Sadida, 2017) on studying Islam in social media mentions that studying religion through social media should be supported with a policy in choosing content and religious site. Today's social media is considered to be able to meet many people's needs. Starting from the need to find information, communicate, interact, self-disclosure, even to religious needs. Activities on social media that fulfill a person's religious needs are browsing religious material, discussing religion, and also selfdisclosures about religion as outlined in writing, drawing, or video status. In an unstructured survey on Facebook social media, some social media users felt that with the rise of Islamic material on the social media timeline, they were increasingly interested in studying Islam, felt they had an improved understanding of Islam, and felt their daily behavior was more appropriate. with Islamic guidance. Islamic materials on social media are also considered helpful for those who feel they have limited time to attend the study forum. Positive impacts will be given when netizens choose an indepth study and have a particular study of religiosity. But on the other hand, there are also concerns about the growth of religious extremism,

the rise of hate speech, to the lies on social media. Based on these concerns the government issued a regulation on hate speech, until a discourse on monitoring religious activities in Islamic schools and organizations emerged. Negative impact will be acquired when studying religion is not thorough but intensely follow the learning in social media without reference to the primary source. Hence, the use of the Internet in developing countries has the impact on the advancement of science development but negatively affect the moral formation of the young generation. social media as one of the effective media to study Islam cannot be used as the main media to fulfill all aspects of one's religious needs. in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding, it is proper to study Islam directly to religious leaders, by following formal classes, and text literature from trusted scholars.

Fifth, Sari (Sari, 2017) about the phenomenon of the use of social media called Instagram as a communication media among the Muslim students in Social and Politics faculty, the University of Riau showed that the use of Instagram in following Islamic learning affects student behavior be it the cognition, affection and psychomotor elements of their behavior at university. This change can be seen from how to dress, talk and commence activity on campus. Some students follow religious studies and akbar by obtaining information tablig and communicating through Instagram. The owners of da'wah accounts serve as teachers by providing informative motivational messages of and educational background derived from religious sources. The authors use a qualitative framework, specifically, using the phenomenology theory of Alfred Schutz. There are two kinds of the motive of using Instagram as the communication medium of religious learning, namely in-order-to motive (motive of the future) and causal motives (past motives). These motives explain the reason why students learn do not learn about the religion by using study or religious lecture on the forum study. Second, the message is shorter, more precise and less confusing compared to those taken from the Quran and hadith. Third, the posts made on Instagram motivate students to improve. In-order-to motive can be seen when the students use social media to get know more about the religion as it is part of their responsibility as a Muslim, invite others to realize the norms of religion based on the Our'an and hadith, the last as information in getting the knowledge of Islam. This study uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach that aims to find in-depth understanding to explain the

meaning of life experiences of some people about a concept or symptom. Communication information messages from Islamic da'wah accounts contained in the captions and uploaded photos as visual media provide convenience for users in understanding the contents of the message. The learning process that changes informants begins with changes in cognition, based on knowledge and understanding of the application of information conveyed by Islamic da'wah accounts on Instagram. Such as the knowledge of the obligations of a Muslim woman in veiling, how to dress well according to Islam, the way of praying performed by the prophet Muhammad SAW, and regarding Islamic laws.

3 POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE OF RELIGIOUS LEARNING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Nowadays, social media becomes so close to the community, because, in addition to providing information, it is also used to interact. It becomes the media to proof self-existence as well as to study religion. Studying religion by using social media is done by searching for religious material, discussion or question and answer about religion. Experience or knowledge of one's faith is poured through writing, picture or video so the netizen can access that. The use of social media becomes an exciting thing because it can present various information needed in the various life of society. As explained by Adam et al. (2015) social media is used as the medium of da'wah by various religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. Today's mass media has become the "largest refinery" for religious propaganda, and this space has been used as a means of spreading religion and communication among people, especially by western society (Camphell, 2006: Helland, 2000; 2005; Bunt; 2003).

Along with the increasingly massive development of information technology and the growing popularity of several social networking sites, the spread of Islamic teachings through social media is also increasing. According to Malik and Chairani (2017), there are two most popular social networking sites used as a medium for spreading Islam. The first one is Facebook; this media is often used as a medium of *da'wah*, for example by creating a group, one of the most popular groups of discussion groups "Learning Islam." This group provides quite rich information about Islam from some competent sources. The second is Twitter, Islamic teaching is spread through personal accounts of preachers like @ShihabAlwi, @Haidar_Bagir, and other personal accounts, and group accounts, such as @FaktaAgama @Nasehat_Islam or @Belajar_Islam.

In the case of Indonesia, the uploaded religious material is sometimes associated with a political motive aimed at encouraging or dashing one another's popularity. During the national and local election, *Qur'anic* verses are adapted and used in the context of the election. This phenomenon can sometimes lead to resentment and mislead the society to believe in false news, especially for netizens who are just learning and knowing religion in passing through social media. With the rise of Islamic material in social media has a positive and inseparable negative impact such as two sides of the coin. On the one hand with the number of religious sites, it becomes easier for people to learn Islam teaching that is adapted to their time without having to come directly to the study forum. However, on the other hand, the "instant" understanding of religion often results in anarchism, hate speech to the increasingly widespread fake news without checking on the primary source that has the authority of its validity.

The question that arises is, what the danger of studying religion through social media is? According to Lin & Utz (Lin & Utz, 2015) in his study of the influence of the use of social media facebook on emotions, as quoted by Sadida (2017) mentions that Facebook users have more positive feelings when reading the positive status but if too intense it will impact on sudden sorrow feeling and depression. Another study conducted by PEW Global (2015) revealed that internet use in developing country societies would have a positive impact on knowledge but on the other hand, will also bring a negative impact on moral formation. The positive influence of studying Islam through media when doing direct interaction with the positive material (Bobkowski & Pearce, 2011).

From the perspective of Islam *da'wah* can be done locally as long as it is not on the contrary to religious beliefs. Learning religion through the media needs to be discussed in more detail. Religion is closely related to belief and self-belief in Allah the Almighty. These beliefs need to be realized with worship, morals, and good social behavior. Social media as a means of delivering information has differences with previous religious learning media. Therefore there are some things to note (Adam et al.: 2015), the first is, the rules of teaching and learning

of Islam which previously followed a tradition that is full of religious values, the delivery of information is based on *muktabar* books and delivered by mutawatir. The learning of religion through the internet is too open and free without limitation and can be carried out by anyone. This situation indeed ignores the concept of *mutawatir* and the integrity of religious teaching in Islam. Secondly, in addition to ignoring the concept of *mutawatir* the internet is so open and free that there is a huge number of religious knowledge, so it becomes harder to find a reliable source. Third, religious learning through social media requires integrity and should be delivered more careful. Social media has the good and bad sides that coexist because there is no provision of what is wrong and what is right. Fourth, Islam is a religion that emphasizes the communication between students and teachers. Islamic Education requires the process and involvement of teachers to ensure and maintain the learning of *adab* in accordance with the will of the Shari'a in providing education to students. While learning through social media does not describe the direct relationship between students and teachers as emphasized by religion. Fifth, social media users have different backgrounds. For users who have religious knowledge, they can compare several opinions and find the most important source, but for users who have common religious knowledge will result in misunderstanding of understanding due to difficulties in finding valid sources.

Despite the various impacts that it brings, learning religion through social media seems to be effective in reaching people from various regions with relatively cheaper cost, for example, to learn from the great scholars such as Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, people can do it easily by only watching it from Youtube. Many of the books written by the great Islam scholars can also be accessed on the internet. However, it is also necessary to be careful in studying religion through social media because the teacher does not directly guide the students. There is no dialogue and discussion which aims to maximize understanding. Everyone can post their religious opinion even some of them feel the most knowledgeable and accurate just by reading one of the sources and then upload the opinion of social in media that can be accessed by everyone. This is the dangers of religious learning without going through formal learning institution such as boarding school, school or college because students do not get to see qualified teachers in the field of Hadith, Fiqh or *Tafsir*. When we learn directly understanding will be better as there will be a discussion especially when

teachers and students have different interpretations. Thus, learning directly with the teacher becomes a necessity because the teacher will reprimand when students misunderstood the teaching. Teachers will also provide tests and exams to see the students' understanding of what is being learned.

According to Syarwat (Sarwat, 2017) as delivered in the house of *fiqih* some things must be considered when studying religion from the internet, namely: first, expert teachers. Preachers in social media often have no related educational background; they do not even master Arabic, nahwu, sharaf, balaghah, which are the necessary tools when reviewing religious teaching. These instant preachers only study the religion through the Quran and the *hadith* of the translation, attending the recitation forum then productively making posts on the internet. They copy and pasted translation from unreliable source without doing a separate study on it. Hence, making it dangerous for those who read their posts. Second, studying religion should be a more interactive dialogue between teachers and students. This interaction can be done with email, chat or video conference. One of the obstacles encountered are some scholars who have excellent knowledge are not familiar with using social media and other information technology skills. Third, the quality of scientific writing concerning the source of science that *muktamad*. For example, the matter of figh should refer to our figih, not the book of hadith. Looking at the reference, we can distinguish figh writings that have high scientific quality and or the low one.

Instant religious community understanding with religious learning through media has established a firm understanding. Improper source selection affects the social relationships that are built in the community. One of the impacts is the arrogance of those who feel that their view is the right one. There is also a tendency to blame others and spread the message of hatred. This condition can lead to the assumption that Islam is repressive, intolerant and frightening. This hate-based and criminal acts tarnished the image of Islam as a religion of love and tolerance. In a discussion held by the Tifa Foundation (TIFA Foundation, 2016) and LTN PBNU in October 2017, NU online director Saviq Ali mentioned that the media has a high level of visits so that an improper reference can have a bad impact for people who are just learning religion. The radicalization of religion through the media needs to be done by communities, governments, and religious leaders simultaneously and integrated into two ways:

- 1. Build a friendly and peaceful Islamic face and increase the traffic of Islamic friendly sites. This can be done by enriching the content of the site by involving the scholars by contributing articles containing peaceful Islamic values to the Islamic media to enhance the credibility of the Islamic media.
- 2. The National Agency for Combating Terrorism (BNPT) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs can embrace the Islamic media and invite them always to disseminate information that can be justified. Both can also help improve the capacity and network of Islamic media to be able to compete until finally defeating radical Islamic media.

Learning through social media without control can result in intolerance and extremism by spreading hatred and hoax filled with racist sentiments, hatred and religious and political nuances. The Tetra Pak Index 2017 (Paramitaratri, 2017) report records that there are approximately 132 million internet users in Indonesia with over 106 million people using social media every month and 85% of them access social media via mobile devices. Thus by this figure, it seems that Indonesia could be a potential target in spreading hatred and radicalism. Laras Sekarsih, a lecturer of Media Psychology from the University of Indonesia stated to Kompas.com that people tend to believe in hoax if the information is in accordance with opinion or attitudes. Likewise, when one likes a particular group, product and policy, if it receives information according to what is believed, then there is less desire to check the truth. Based on research by World's Most Literate Nation in 2016, Indonesia ranked 61 out of 62 countries studied in terms of literacy. As a result, with the lack of knowledge, most people in Indonesia easily accessible information received without wanting to re-check or evaluate the truth. Anticipating the harmful impacts of the internet, it is necessary to educate the public on how to use social media wisely and correctly.

Furthermore, increasing the media literacy, so that people can select the right and wrong information. Thinking independently, intelligently, not easily influenced by a particular group or group, and have sufficient knowledge so as not to be easily provoked and carried away the flow of alignments. One of the steps taken by the police is by enacting Law Number 19 the Year 2016 on the amendment to Law no. 11 of 2008 on Information and Electronic Transactions (UU ITE).

The advancement of information technology has enabled hundreds and even thousands of information in seconds can be spread through social media and can be accessed by all internet users. Social media as a place to express themselves, the views of life, attitude, and opinions wearer depends on the use of positive or negative. However, it is unfortunate when social media serve as a place of spreading hatred and religious provocation. The modes used by sharing news, image quotations or statements whose origins are not clear and some even add their own sentences. The spread of provocations and hate speeches of religious nuance can affect anyone without considering the age, social status, and education level, so it is hazardous in the life of society. The solution is to learn how to interact with others in social media with self-control and clarification. Another step is to mark sites that are proven to have repeatedly disseminated information hoax, lies and ignore any information submitted the site

As a concrete step in tackling the hoax news and hate speech of Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) published Fatwa MUI Number 24 of 2017 on Penalties and Guidelines of social relations through Social Media on Monday, June 5, 2017, which aims to prevent hostility and hatred that is rampant in social media. The prohibited material are slander, racist hate speech, fake information, pornographic material, and other inappropriate material. The prohibited act is to produce and distribute content that twists facts, disseminates personal content that is not publicly consumable, as well as buzzer activity that spread lies and hatred.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The learning of Islam through mass media cannot be separated from the life of modern society, especially in urban areas. Limitations of time and intensity of the community in using social media become the main thing to use religious learning through social media. Social media can be accessed by the public whenever it is a time fill between busy work and activities undertaken by the community. In fact, often individuals spend more time in cyberspace than the real world. Thus for people who have limited time and want to learn religion practically will use social media as a means of meeting the needs of the religious values being studied.

Social media is one of the media that can be used in the religious study but not as the primary source of reference; people still have to refer to the primary source or religious experts who have particular expertise comprehensively and deeply. The amount of information obtained through social media requires the ability of users to be able to compare, choose religious resources that have a high level of validity and authority. For people who have more ability in religious science can check directly on the main source and provide clarification when there is information that troubles and confuses people in understanding a religious phenomenon.

The occurrence of a firm religious understanding because it only studies the religion that focuses on the media alone can lead to misunderstandings of religion and the occurrence of relationships that are not harmonious in building social relations. This condition occurs when receiving information in full without checking the source directly and does not compare with other sources. Thus, it is necessary for religious leaders who have the function to provide explanations and clarifications on religious understanding that is controversial and minimizes conflict in society.

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