

QUR'ANIC INTERPRETATION ON INSTAGRAM: The Shift from Traditional to Digital Platforms in Indonesia

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Abstract

This article examines the shifting landscape of Qur'anic interpretation in Indonesia, from traditional platforms to digital spaces, by focusing on contemporary practices emerging on social media, particularly Instagram. Employing netnografi, the study investigates the activities of two Instagram accounts, @yufid.tv and @quranreview, over a five-month period (January–May 2022). Of the 300 posts by yufid.tv, 20.67% featured interpretations of specific Qur'anic verses. Meanwhile, 74.36% of the 39 interpretive posts by @quranreview addressed contemporary social issues and trends. The findings



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reveal a significant transformation in the mode of Qur'anic interpretation in the digital era, from unidirectional, text-heavy delivery characteristic of traditional methods to more interactive, visually driven approaches. The concept of dakwahtainment, a fusion of dakwah and entertainment, has become a defining feature of Instagram-based interpretations. Rather than merely presenting textual exegesis, these accounts repackage Qur'anic messages using light packaging, headline appetite, and trailer vision, making the content more engaging and accessible. In this context, Instagram functions as a new public space where Qur'anic interpretation intersects with Islamic pop culture, fostering a communicative, adaptive, and socially responsive form of digital dakwah.

Keywords: Qur'anic interpretation; Instagram; Dakwahtainment; Pop Islam

Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas pergeseran lanskap penafsiran Al-Qur'an di Indonesia dari platform tradisional menuju platform digital, dengan menyoroti praktik tafsir yang berkembang di media sosial, khususnya Instagram. Melalui metode netnografi, penelitian ini mengkaji aktivitas dua akun Instagram, @yufid.tv dan @quranreview, selama lima bulan (Januari–Mei 2022). Dari 300 konten yang diunggah oleh @yufid.tv, 20,67% di antaranya memuat penafsiran atas ayat-ayat tertentu. Sementara itu, 74,36% dari 39 konten interpretatif pada @quranreview berkaitan dengan isu-isu kontemporer. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahwa penafsiran Al-Qur'an di era digital mengalami transformasi signifikan, dari model penyampaian tradisional yang cenderung satu arah menuju pendekatan yang lebih interaktif dan estetis. Konsep dakwahtainment perpaduan antara dakwah dan hiburan menjadi ciri khas dalam penafsiran berbasis Instagram. Penafsiran Al-Qur'an tidak lagi hanya disampaikan secara teks, tetapi dikemas secara visual dengan gaya kemasan ringan (light package), selera tajuk berita (headline appetite), serta tampilan cuplikan (trailer vision). Dalam konteks ini, Instagram berperan sebagai ruang baru yang menjadikan tafsir bagian dari budaya pop digital yang komunikatif, adaptif, dan responsif terhadap dinamika sosial.

Kata Kunci: Interpretasi Al-Qur'an; Instagram; Dakwahtainment; Pop Islam

Introduction

The rise of dakwahtainment or contemporary dakwah is marked by the presence of activists or dawah content creators who are active on social media platforms. Islamic messages are conveyed through social media accounts. In other words, people's

religious life extends to the internet.¹ Especially on social media. This is also a space for the publication of a product of interpretation of Islamic teachings. As Gary R. Bunt describes the massive development of the Qur'an, both on the Internet, on blogs, webs, applications, and on social media.²

In 2022, the number of social media users in Indonesia reached approximately 191.4 million. Social media has become deeply integrated into nearly every dimension of contemporary life. The Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 further accelerated this integration by disrupting conventional modes of interaction. Amidst the chaos and uncertainty, individuals increasingly turned to the internet for a wide range of activities education, commerce, business, communication, political expression, and even religious practice. Within this context, the Qur'an is expressed not only as a sacred text but also as part of everyday digital routines and as a marker of Muslim identity.³ Certain organizations operating in the name of Islam, such as ISIS, have also utilized social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, as strategic

¹ Merlyna Lim, "The Internet and Everyday Life in Indonesia: A New Moral Panic?," *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia* 169, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 133–47, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-12340008.142>.

² Gary R. Bunt, "The Qur'an and the Internet," *The Routledge Companion to the Qur'an*, January 1, 2021, 384–93, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315885360-38/QUR-INTERNET-GARY-BUNT>.

³ N. A. Mansour, "The Qur'an in Contemporary Mass and Popular Culture," *The Routledge Companion to the Qur'an*, January 1, 2021, 394–401, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315885360-39/QUR-CONTEMPORARY-MASS-POPULAR-CULTURE-1-MANSOUR>, 396.; Robert Rozeñnal, "Mapping Islamic Digital Media in the Internet Age," in *Cyber Muslims Mapping Islamic Digital Media in the Internet Age*, ed. Robert Rozeñnal (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2022), 5.; Heidi A.; Ruth Tsuria Campbell, "Digital Religion Understanding Religious Practice in Digital Media," 2016, 5.

tools to influence a wide range of audiences, including adversaries, sympathizers, and journalists.⁴

Many Muslims actively utilize social media to articulate and disseminate Islamic messages in ways that reflect their personal understandings. Through these platforms, they express individualized visions of religious identity, piety, and practice, shaping how Islam is interpreted and performed in the digital age.⁵ Many of the so-called "new" phenomena introduced by the internet, both positive and negative can be understood as extensions of the moral and ethical frameworks that already govern our lives in the offline, physical world.⁶

The study of Islam on social media has attracted considerable scholarly attention, particularly with regard to authority, authenticity, piety, performativity, as well as Qur'anic studies and tafsir. Gary R. Bunt, in *The Qur'an and the Internet*, emphasizes that the internet has opened new spaces for the distribution and contestation of Qur'anic meanings,⁷ while in his article *The Net Imam Effect: Digital Contestations of Islam Religious Authority* he demonstrates how new figures of authority have emerged, challenging the dominance of traditional ulama through digital legitimacy.⁸ The performative dimensions of Muslim women's piety on social media are explored by Anna Piela in *The Digital Niqābosphere as a Hypermediated Third Space*,

⁴ Eva F. Nisa, "Creative and Lucrative Da'wa: The Visual Culture of Instagram amongst Female Muslim Youth in Indonesia," *Asiascape: Digital Asia* 5, no. 1–2 (February 14, 2018): 68–99, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22142312-12340085.2>

⁵ Robert Rozehnal, "Mapping Islamic Digital Media in the Internet Age", 5.; Campbell, "Digital Religion Understanding Religious Practice in Digital Media, 5."

⁶ Lim, "The Internet and Everyday Life in Indonesia: A New Moral Panic?, 145."

⁷ Bunt, "The Qur'an and the Internet."

⁸ Gary R. Bunt, "The Net Imam Effect: Digital Contestations of Islam Religious Authority," in *Cyber Muslims Mapping Islamic Digital Media in the Internet Age*, ed. Robert Rozehnal (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2022), 19–50.

which portrays digital media as a “third space” for negotiating identity and religious expression.⁹ Meanwhile, in the Indonesian context, Fadhli Lukman, through his article *Tafsir Sosial Media di Indonesia*, asserts that social media has introduced participatory and dialogical models of tafsir, enabling lay audiences to actively engage in the production of Qur’anic meanings.¹⁰

This article seeks to build upon the scholarly contributions of Islah Gusmian by exploring an area that remains underexamined in his work. In his book entitled *"Khazanah Tafsir di Indonesia: Dari Hermeneutika hingga Ideologi"*, Gusmian systematically maps the methodological landscape of Qur’anic interpretation in Indonesia. However, his study does not extend to the emerging discourse of Qur’anic interpretation within social media platforms.

Building upon the phenomena outlined in the research background and addressing the identified research gap, this article investigates methods of Qur’anic interpretation on social media specifically Instagram by focusing on two prominent accounts: @yufid.tv and @quranreview. These accounts are characterized by substantial followings and high levels of user engagement, while consistently publishing interpretative content on the platform. This study adopts a qualitative research approach. Data were collected through observation and documentation. The analysis was carried out using content analysis techniques. The researchers selected a sample of content posted by @yufid.tv and @quranreview over a five-month period (January–May 2022), categorizing posts into those that contain Qur’anic interpretation and those that do not.

⁹ Anna Piela, “The Digital Niqābosphere as a Hypermediated Third Space,” ed. Robert Rozeahnal (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2022), 120-144.

¹⁰ Fadhli Lukman, “Tafsir Sosial Media Di Indonesia,” *Nun : Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Tafsir Di Nusantara* 2, no. 2 (October 30, 2016): 117–39, <https://doi.org/10.32495/NUN.V2I2.59>.

Result and Discussion

The Rise of Dakwahtainment in the Digital Era

Oral communication, namely speeches, is the most popular dakwah in the history of dakwah. Along with the development of technology in social media, dakwah media also experienced rapid development, dakwah media from radio, television, social media¹¹. The creativity also develops activities, dakwah is inserted with entertainment to grab attention and keep listeners from getting bored, Then celebrities or pop dakwah or dakwahtainment. Furthermore, dakwah also experienced rapid development in the era of social media development.

In the past, the mediation of religious knowledge was carried out by graduates of Islamic boarding schools and universities. However, in the digital era, the perpetrators of dakwah are not necessarily those who have a pesantren educational background have taken part in dakwah in Indonesia, young people who have digital expertise are one of the main actors who use various social media platforms to preach. this began with the introduction of the internet followed by the proliferation of communication technology, and various social media platforms, resulting in the rise of Muslim youth involvement in dakwah.¹² Although some do not have a mature religious knowledge background.

In the digital era, ordinary people can become preachers or even interpreters (mufassir), shifting the authority of Qur'anic interpretation away from traditional scholars (ulama).¹³ Marlyna Lim in her research formulated the principles of contemporary

¹¹ Asep Syamsul M. Romli, *Komunikasi Dakwah: Pendekatan Praktis* (Bandung: Romelte, 2013), 36-37.

¹² Eva F Nisa, "Creative and Lucrative Da'wa: The Visual Culture of Instagram amongst Female Muslim Youth in Indonesia," *Asiascape: Digital Asia* 5, no. 1–2 (February 2018): 68–99, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22142312-12340085.5>.

¹³ Lukman, "Tafsir Sosial Media Di Indonesia, 135.."

communication for the achievement of the objectives conveyed. These principles are: light package, headline appetite, and trailer vision.¹⁴

Instagram Profile @quranreview

@quranreview is one of the accounts that uses Instagram to preach, @quranreview focuses its program on Al-Qur'an education for millennials, especially in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an in an interesting and easy-to-understand language. Through a search on the google chrome page, it is found that the founder or founder of @quranreview is Ahza¹⁵ or Angga Ashari.¹⁶ @quranreview was founded in 2019, this can also be seen from the beginning of posts on @quranreview Instagram. The content of the interpretation content was previously posted on a personal account, due to inconvenience, a new account was created under the name @quranreview. According to his LinkedIn profile, Ahza has an educational background from the Institute of Agricultural Science (Instiper) and Mercu Buana University, Yogyakarta¹⁷.

Based on the explanation of Dida Utama as Chief Operating Officer, found on the liputan 6, @quranreview's educational content has the main theme of Al-Qur'an which is related to viral or widely discussed issues, be it home life, romance, finance, to movies. According to him, in such a way, millennials enjoy and are interested in learning Al-Qur'an.

¹⁴ Merlyna Lim, "Klik Yang Tak Memantik: Aktivisme Media Sosial Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Komunikasi Indonesia* 3, no. 1 (July 2, 2017): 35–50, <https://doi.org/10.7454/JKI.V3I1.7846>, 37.

¹⁵ Dian Kurniawan, "Cara Asyik Belajar Alquran Saat Ramadan Dengan Aplikasi Quranreview," www.liputan6.com, 2022, <https://www.liputan6.com/surabaya/read/4921565/cara-asyik-belajar-alquran-saat-ramadan-dengan-aplikasi-quranreview?page=2>.

¹⁶ Angga Ashari, LinkedIn Profile, accessed 2022 <https://id.linkedin.com/in/anggashari>.

¹⁷ Angga Ashari, LinkedIn Profile, accessed 2022 <https://id.linkedin.com/in/anggashari>.

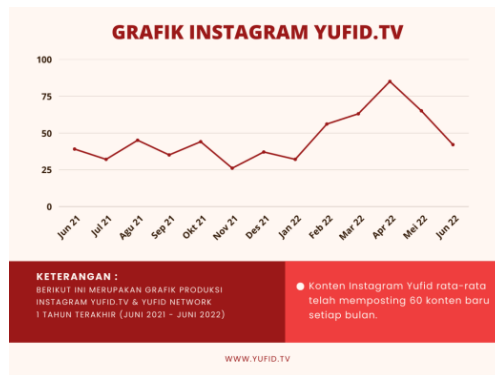
Dida's explanation is justified by looking at Instagram followers, likes and comments on the @quranreview account. Since 2019 to 2022 @quranreview has been followed by 319,000 Instagram users, as well as likes on every post from thousands to three hundred thousand that exceed its followers, and every post always has many comments that respond to the content.

Instagram Profile @yufid.tv

@yufid.tv is not just limited to videos. @yufid.tv is one of the websites under the auspices of the Yufid Network which also has a legal umbrella. Yufid is a creative team under the auspices of the Yufid Network Foundation, a non-profit foundation dedicated to creating and sharing free dakwah and educational content. Yufid was established in 2009. Yufid has been working for 12 years for dakwah and Islamic education. @yufid.tv carries the mission of presenting Islamic educational videos, both in the form of Islamic study video recordings, short soul-stirring stories, and light and soothing advice. Everything is presented for the purpose of dakwah and Islamic education for all Muslims ("tentang kami")¹⁸.

Figure 1. @yufid.tv instagram graph June 2021-June 2022

Source: Yufid's June 2022 production report



On the @yufid.tv Instagram account there are 1.1 million followers. Since the first post until now, the content on his

¹⁸Yufid, "Tentang kami" accessed 2022. <https://yufid.com/>.

instagram has reached 2,826. there are several types of content that are loaded on the @yufid.tv Instagram account: ulama advice, tadabbur Al-Qur'an, Al-Qur'an murattal, hadith discussion, dakwah posters.

The word "Yufid" is inspired by the Arabic verb "يفيد" which means "to give faidah" or "to give benefit". This is what Yufid aspires and aims to be: working in the present, and insha Allah will continue to work in the future, and continue to work to provide benefits to humans. Yufid Network also operates multiple platforms and manages several other media, including websites, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and others. The funds spent by Yufid reach two hundred million per month¹⁹.

Display, Source, Content Tafsir on Instagram @quranreview and @yufid.tv

The display, source and content of tafsir on Instagram @quranreview and @yufid.tv which are then detailed in seven aspects that refer to Islah Gusmian's mapping of the methodology of the study of interpretation of the Qur'an.

Systematic Presentation of Interpretation on Instagram

The systematic presentation of tafsir in Indonesia takes two forms. The first is sequential presentation. The second is thematic presentation. Then this thematic presentation also has two forms, classical and modern thematic presentation. Moreover, modern thematic presentation is distinguished into two subcategories- namely, singular modern thematic and plural modern thematic.²⁰

¹⁹Yufid, Laporan Produksi Yufid Network accessed 2022, yufid.org/laporan-produksi-yufid-network-juni-2022.

²⁰ Islah Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia: Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi* (Yogyakarta: LkiS Yogyakarta, 2013), 123-124.

Figure 2. Display of verse interpretations on the @quranreview Instagram account

Source: @quranreview Instagram account



The visual display of the Instagram account @quranreview presents Qur'anic exegesis through a modern thematic approach. It is important to note that the notion of “thematic” here is not defined in the sense articulated by al-Hayy al-Farmawī or Quraish Shihab as a method of tafsir, but rather follows the definition advanced by Islah Gusmian as a writing technique in tafsir. An examination of the content reveals that the discussion of verses on this account does not follow a sequential exegetical system, whether according to the order of the muṣḥaf or the chronological order of revelation (nuzul). Instead, the presentation is organized around specific themes, which are then developed into reflective or motivational narratives within a single post. Accordingly, at the micro level, the model of presentation can be categorized as singular modern thematic, since each post generally focuses on one verse and one central theme. However, when viewed across the entire account grid, the presentation forms a plural or collective modern thematic pattern, as the selected themes constitute responses to contemporary issues that are currently prominent in public discourse.

Several posts, such as “Spirit Doll as an Idol,” respond to viral trends surrounding spirit dolls that were widely discussed on social media and television. Similarly, the theme “Ghozali Every

Day” refers to the NFT phenomenon of Ghozali, who successfully sold his self-portraits in digital form, while “It’s My Dream” quotes a popular line from the Indonesian soap opera *Layangan Putus* and links it to Islamic messages. These examples demonstrate that the @quranreview account employs a pop-digital exegetical approach, in which religious messages are directly connected to popular culture, viral phenomena, and the emotions of contemporary audiences. In this way, tafsir is not only normative but also communicative, adaptive, and relevant to digital social life. This pattern aligns with the characteristics of modern thematic tafsir as outlined by Gusmian, which emphasizes the social context as the point of departure for interpreting Qur’anic verses.

Figure 3. Display of verse interpretations on the @yufid.tv Instagram

Source: @yufid.tv Instagram account



The presentation of tafsīr by the Instagram account @yufid.tv, as illustrated in Figure 3, demonstrates an attempt to package the explanation of Qur’anic verses in the format of *tadabbur per sūrah*, yet without adhering to a sequential system—either in accordance with the order of the *muṣḥaf* or the chronological order of revelation. Based on content observation, @yufid.tv began its *tadabbur* posts with Surat al-Fatiḥah on July 18, 2021, before moving to shorter chapters such as al-Naba’, al-Nazi’at, ‘Abasa, al-Takwir, and others. Interspersed within this

sequence are explanations of verses from al-Baqarah, which were uploaded in a non-linear manner, before returning again to the shorter chapters. This pattern indicates the absence of a fixed system of presentation, although it consistently maintains the unit of tafsīr by individual sūrahs or specific clusters of verses

Using Gusmian's classification, this presentation cannot be fully categorized as a sequential exegesis, since it does not follow the order of the muṣḥaf, nor can it be regarded as entirely thematic, as it does not select a specific theme and then refer to multiple verses across different sūrahs. Accordingly, the @yufid.tv account occupies an intermediate position—presenting a form of semi-sequential tadabbur that remains flexible, with an editorial logic shaped more by content strategy and the segmentation of social media audiences. This illustrates that, within the digital sphere, the systematization of tafsir becomes more fluid, and its presentation is adapted to patterns of rapid consumption and the dense visuality characteristic of platforms such as Instagram.

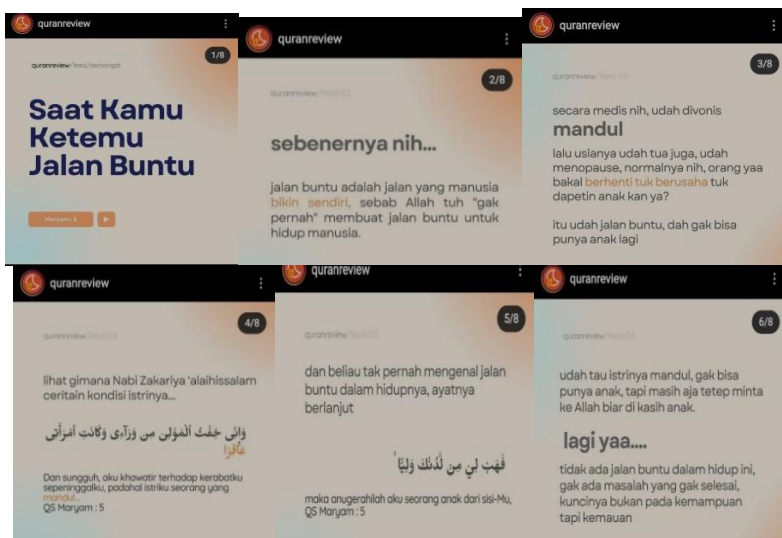
Form of Interpretation Presentation on Instagram

The mode of tafsir presentation in this context refers to the explanatory format employed by a mufassir in interpreting the Qur'an. According to Gusmian, there are two forms of tafsīr presentation: first, the global presentation, and second, the detailed presentation.²¹ Referring to Gusmian's classification, the tafsīr presentations found on the Instagram accounts @quranreview and @yufid.tv can be categorized as global. For instance, this can be observed in the content posted by @quranreview.

Figure 4. Form of tafsir presentation on @quranreview account in the form of infographics.

Source: @quranreview Instagram account

²¹ Gusmian, 154-159.



In the post displayed in Figure 4, the account @quranreview presents exegetical messages in a global manner through a visual infographic format that conveys the main meaning of the verse in short and affirmative sentences. This mode of presentation reflects a tendency toward tafsir ijmalī (global), namely a way of communicating the meaning of a verse concisely and comprehensively without linguistic elaboration or technical explanation as typically found in classical tafsīr.

In addition to the main visual, this account also supplements its posts with narrative captions that reinforce the conveyed meaning in a reflective and emotional tone. For instance, in one caption it is written: *‘Hopefully this can serve as a small spark of enthusiasm this morning. Indeed, nothing is impossible as long as we have Allah. #quranreview... keep up the spirit’*. Such captions not only strengthen the message of the infographic but also aim to establish emotional resonance with young audiences, who constitute the account’s primary target. The sentences are deliberately crafted to provide motivational encouragement and light yet meaningful spiritual affirmation.

This mode of presentation demonstrates that @quranreview employs a popular tafsir approach, packaged with accessible language, appealing design, and a presentation structure that does not require deep expertise in tafsir scholarship. It illustrates a transformation in the form and medium of digital tafsir, shifting from an elitist and highly technical model to one that is inclusive, concise, and communicative.

On the yufid.tv account, tafsir is also presented in a global format by utilizing the Instagram Reels feature. Tafsir content is delivered in short video segments, each lasting a few minutes, which cover verses that have been thematically grouped (see Figure 3). Each segment typically includes several verses that are first recited in murattal style, accompanied by the written text of the verses and their translation. This is then followed by a general explanation of the verses, alternating between audio narration and the written tafsir text. In addition, captions summarizing the meaning of the interpreted verses are provided beneath the content. For example, under the tafsir content of Qs. al-Baqarah 127–134 (see Figure 3), a general explanation of the verses is included:

“Tadabbur Surat al-Baqarah 127–134; Tafsir al-Mukhtasar. Continuing the discussion of the previous verses in al-Baqarah regarding God’s covenant with the Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him), in al-Baqarah verses 127–129, God reminds us of the supplication made by Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Isma’il (peace be upon them) when constructing the Ka’bah. This is followed by another supplication in verse 127”.²²

The Language Style of Tafsir Writing on Instagram

Several linguistic styles can be found in tafsir writing: first, the style of column writing, second, the style of scientific

²² Yufid.tv account accessed 2022.

reportage, and finally, the popular style.²³Tafsir on Instagram, however, has developed its own linguistic style, in which content creators are free to choose the language they employ. On the @quranreview account, the language used is contemporary millennial discourse—light, accessible, and easy to grasp—allowing anyone to understand the content without strenuous effort. This is also reflected in the results of interviews with followers of the @quranreview Instagram account:

The interviews were conducted online through the direct message (DM) feature with several followers of the @quranreview account on July 23, 2022. Some of the responses obtained include the following:²⁴

1. "@quranreview can relate to current life or something that is currently viral, explained by a verse of the Qur'an. So that it adds confidence to the reader, that the Qur'an is truly in accordance with the times. Even in the Qur'an has far explained about it".
2. "I like the verse-by-verse discussions because they use youthful language, and the explanations are closely related to the issues young people are facing."
3. "The content is packaged simply, using language that is easy to understand and contemporary, which makes it more appealing to young audiences."
4. "@quranreview is able to connect present-day life or trending issues with explanations drawn from the Qur'an. This strengthens the readers' conviction that the Qur'an

²³ Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia: Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi*, 174-181.

²⁴ Quranreview account accessed 2022.

truly corresponds with the developments of our time, and in fact has long addressed such matters.”

5. “In our observation, the account explains the Qur'an by relating it to everyday life. For lay audiences, this makes it very easy to understand because it feels highly relatable. However, there has also been criticism from netizens who argue that the account employs a ‘cocoklogi’ method—in other words, that some of the examples seem forced. Even so, I think the explanations are good, as @quranreview also provides references. The language is clear, and the delivery is engaging and not monotonous, making it accessible to a wide audience.”

In addition to direct interviews, there are also comments from followers on several posts of the @quranreview account, such as the following:

1. “Admin, what application do you use for note-taking? By the way, I really love the way you present tafsir—for someone like me who does not understand literary language... May this become an ongoing charity (sadaqah jariyah) for you, admin. amin”
2. “Masha Allah... why does the topic feel so timely, as if this verse is speaking directly to today's situation.
3. “So inspiring, I think I need to start reading from the very first post” .

Meanwhile, the @yufid.tv account tends to employ a popular linguistic style that is light and accessible to diverse audiences. Nevertheless, the researcher was unable to secure informants for direct interviews regarding the delivery of tafsir content by this account. User interaction in the comment sections also appears relatively passive; only a few comments directly address the substantive content of tafsir, even though each post

receives a relatively high number of views—averaging around three thousand per post during the period from January to May. From the analyzed Qur’anic tadabbur posts, the researcher found only a handful of comments relevant to the content, among them: “please keep creating content like this, admin”.²⁵ The scarcity of comments engaging with the substantive aspects of tafsir suggests that, although @yufid.tv’s content is visually received, the level of audience engagement in the form of reflective or discursive responses remains relatively low.

In the broader landscape of digital tafsir, linguistic style plays a crucial role in bridging religious messages to diverse social media audiences. Based on the observation of content and user interaction, the @quranreview account tends to adopt a popular style that is reflective and emotional. The language used is light, communicative, and highly relevant to youth culture. Many captions are composed in motivational and affirmative tones, emphasizing vitality, self-healing, or spiritual comfort. Phrases such as, “nothing is impossible as long as we have Allah” exemplify an intimate, empathetic, and relatable style of delivery. This is further reinforced by short interviews indicating that followers feel emotionally connected to the content and describe it as “simple,” “contemporary,” and “easy to understand.”

By contrast, @yufid.tv displays a popular style that is more informative and normative. Although it also employs accessible language, its presentation is more focused on content and verse explanation, with less emphasis on building emotional engagement with the audience. The content is primarily delivered in the form of videos, featuring dense narration accompanied by the Qur’anic text, translation, and brief captions. User responses to this content tend to be passive, as reflected in the limited number of comments and the minimal depth of interaction. This suggests that although @yufid.tv employs a popular style, its approach is more top-down

²⁵ Yufid.tv account accessed 2022.

and formal compared to the interactive and personal tone of @quranreview.

Thus, both accounts utilize a popular style of communication, yet with distinct approaches: @quranreview is more dialogical and emotional, while @yufid.tv is more informative and instructional. This contrast demonstrates the diversity of digital dakwah strategies, adapted to specific target audiences and platform characteristics.

Forms of Interpretation Writing on Instagram

There are two forms of interpretive writing; scientific and non-scientific writing.²⁶ Referring to the form of interpretation writing according to Islah Gusmian, the two accounts @quranreview and @yufid.tv use a non-scientific form of writing, based on the form of language used, it is certain that the two accounts do not use a scientific form of writing.

The Nature of Mufassir on Instagram

In the classification of tafsir authorship, Islah Gusmian distinguishes between two types: individual and collective or team-based.²⁷ On Instagram, however, it is often unclear who is actually responsible for producing tafsir content unless explicitly stated. Typically, an account is managed by an administrator responsible for posting content, while a team may be involved in reviewing and editing before publication. From an Instagram Story on @quranreview, the account explained that it had previously been operated as a personal Instagram account with similar content, namely reviewing Qur'anic verses. However, due to fear and reluctance to be personally identified when sharing Qur'anic content, the individual deactivated that account and created a new one under the name @quranreview. Judging from its posts and

²⁶ Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia: Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi*, 182-185.

²⁷ Gusmian, 187.

development, the account now appears to have a basecamp used for discussing content and current issues, which indicates that its work is carried out collectively by a team rather than solely by an individual. Similarly, regarding @yufid.tv, the researcher was unable to obtain clear information about who is behind the account.

In the pre-digital era, the identity of tafsir authorship could often be clearly discerned-whether by ‘ulama’, intellectual-academics, literati-cultural figures-bureaucrats, or politicians.²⁸ In contrast, within the realm of social media tafsir, it is far more difficult to determine authorship. Ordinary members of the public may also act as mufassir. Although ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān sets out clear criteria for one to be recognized as a mufassir, in the context of social media these boundaries can be transgressed, allowing non-specialists to assume this role.²⁹

In the preparation of a tafsir, Islah Gusmian divides two types, individual and collective or team³⁰. Regarding tafsir on Instagram, it is not known for sure who actually creates the content, one account is usually managed by an admin to post content, and has a team to review and a team of content editors before posting. From the @quranreview instastory, the account explains that previously he had a personal Instagram account with the same content reviewing the Qur'anic verses, however, for reasons of fear and not wanting to be recognized when sharing about the Qur'an he deactivated the account and created a new account with the name @quranreview. Judging from the posts and the development of the personal account, it has a basecamp that is

²⁸ Islah Gusmian, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dan Kekuasaan Di Indonesia: Peneguhan, Kontestasi, Dan Pertarungan Wacana* (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Salwa Yogyakarta, 2019), 111–14.

²⁹ Lukman, “Tafsir Sosial Media Di Indonesia,” 132.

³⁰ Gusmian, 187.

used to discuss content and current issues³¹, which means that not only one person is working on it but collectively/team.

If in the pre-digital era the identity of the interpreter could be clearly seen, whether ulama, scholars-academics, literary-culturalists-bureaucrats, politicians³². So in social media interpretation, it is very difficult to determine its identity. The general public can also be a mufassir. Although the *ulumul qur'an* has criteria as a mufassir, but not in social media, ordinary people can break these criteria³³.

Scientific Origins of Digital Mufassirs on Instagram

Tracing the scientific origins of muafassir on social media is a challenge, it is very difficult to get information on the exact origin of their knowledge, because they have a creative team, meaning that not only one person works but is done by many people. In addition, their social media accounts do not list who contributes to their accounts.

@quranreview for example, there is no specific information to write the origin of its knowledge. In his Instagram highlights @quranreview once made a story "studying where, which graduate?" but he did not clearly answer the origin of his knowledge. The founder is known as Angga Ashari with an educational background in the Institute of Agriculture and Mercu Buana University,³⁴ but his other educational history is unknown, and the rest of the team is not specifically known.

³¹ Quranreview account accessed 2022.

³² Islah Gusmian, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dan Kekuasaan Di Indonesia: Pengubahan, Kontestasi, Dan Pertarungan Wacana* (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Salwa Yogyakarta, 2019) 111-114.

³³ Lukman, "Tafsir Sosial Media Di Indonesia, 132."

³⁴ Angga Ashari, LinkedIn Profile, accessed 2022. <https://id.linkedin.com/in/anggashari>.

Just like @quranreview, @yufid.tv also has a creative team, seen from the dakwah message @yufid.tv often translates pieces of lectures by Sheikh Al-Bani, Sheikh Abdussalam Ash-Syuwa'ir, Sheikh Shalih Al-Ushaimi, Sheikh Muhammad Al-Ma'yuf, and so on. However, there is no clear information on the content or video of the tafsir, so there is also no information on the geneologi of the knowledge.

The Geneologi of Interpretation Literature on Instagram

In terms of its origin, there are two forms of tafsir literature. First, from the academic space. Second, from the non-academic space.³⁵ @quranreview with its logo is a picture of the moon and the number seventeen with the meaning inspired by Qs. Al-Qomar: 17 which explains that the Qur'an is *easy*, that message is also what you want to convey to everyone, the Qur'an is easy, fun and always relates to the surrounding life. Then @quranreview also has the tagline "be humble stay close to the Qur'an" which reminds us to be humble and to stay close to the Qur'an, because it guides life in the right direction.³⁶ The Qur'an can basically be used as inspiration, expression, and even provocation.³⁷

Meanwhile, @yufid.tv is part of the yufid network which is a collection of young people who are determined to provide benefits by creating authentic Islamic educational content, this too, in accordance with the understanding of the Prophet, and the Companions. Then also disseminate it for free to anyone. The word yufid itself is inspired by the Arabic word "يفيد" which is a verb that indicates a job that is being done now or will be done in

³⁵ Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia: Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi*, 193-197.

³⁶ Quranreview account accessed 2022.

³⁷ Mansour, "The Qur'an in Contemporary Mass and Popular Culture."

the future.³⁸ While @yufid.tv is one of the websites under Yufid Network. @yufid.tv carries the mission of presenting Islamic educational videos, both in the form of video recordings of Islamic studies, short soul-stirring stories, and light and soothing advice. Everything is presented for the purpose of dakwah and Islamic education for all Muslims.³⁹ So that in this category the origin of tafsir on Instagram is non-academic.

Reference

Tafsir literature used as a reference by tafsir writers in Indonesia is very diverse, both in terms of language and generation and flow of tafsir.⁴⁰

It would also be inaccurate to claim that tafsir on social media lacks references. While @quranreview does not cite sources in every tafsir post, in its Instagram Stories the account has mentioned its preferred reference, namely *Mafatih al-Ghayb* by Imam al-Razi. Moreover, in several posts from January to June, @quranreview referred to *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* by Imām Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Tabari* by Imam al-Tabari, and *Tafsir al-Qurṭubi* by Imam al-Qurtubi. A distinctive feature of @quranreview's tafsir content is its focus on lexical discussion, often drawing upon classical lexicons such as *Mufradat Alfaz al-Qur'an* by al-Raghib al-Asfahani and *Lisan al-'Arab* by Ibn Manzur.

By contrast, @yufid.tv consistently refers to Tafsir al-Mukhtasar, sourced from Tafsirweb.com, as indicated in the closing section of each tafsir video.

³⁸ Yufid, Yufid Network Profile, Accessed 2022 <https://yufid.org/profil-yufid-network/>.

³⁹ Yufid, Tentang Kami, Accessed 2022 <https://yufid.tv/tentang-kami>.

⁴⁰ Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia: Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi*, 198.

Figure 5. 'Tafsir references on yufid.tv account

Source: @yufid.tv Instagram account



Digital Tafsir: Interactivity and Dakwahtainment in Qur'anic Exegesis on Instagram

Social media interpretations, especially Instagram, have added space for the publication of interpretations beyond what Islah Gusmian calls, namely mass media, ceramah, institutional projects and academic assignments.⁴¹ In addition, the delivery of interpretation on social media has provided a new space for interpretation, where content creators and readers or viewers (digital society) can respond directly to the interpretations they post. So that in this case the interpreters and readers are interactive and communicative through the comments column on Instagram, even when netizens comment, it can open up new interpretation space again or a new meaning of the verse being discussed or it can also complement existing understanding, this is also the diverse knowledge of @quranreview followers. Suppose @quranreview posts the meaning of green fire, then is responded to by netizens who study scientifically how fire becomes green. So that there is recognition from one of @quranreview's followers in

⁴¹ Gusmian, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dan Kekuasaan Di Indonesia: Peneguhan, Kontestasi, Dan Pertarungan Wacana*, 146-155.

the comments column "*reading this content, feels like the Qur'an is coming down and dialoguing now*".⁴²

The era of the rise of dakwahtainment on social media, dominated by millennials who have the characteristics of thinking out of the box, has changed the landscape of dakwah in Indonesia. They are slowly leaving conventional dakwah both in terms of topics and methods.⁴³ Dakwah content is modified as interestingly as possible, and utilizes the social media menu, especially reels on Instagram which can reach many Instagram users. For example @yufid.tv presents its content by utilizing the reels menu on Instagram, the verse of Al-Qur'an which is the topic of discussion, is read with murattal by qori accompanied by its interpretation, also equipped with Arabic writing and Latin translation. Reels are also equipped with visuals in the form of images or videos with natural backgrounds or also called video posters, which combine photos with animation.⁴⁴ On average, this content reaches three thousand impressions. In contrast to @yufid.tv, @quranreview creates short narratives, images, infographics and occasional videos with funny designs and striking colors. Dakwah or the delivery of Islamic values through social media in particular has its own appeal for the millennial generation, without them feeling patronized.⁴⁵

Thus, as what Marlyna Lim calls the principles of contemporary communication, the Instagram accounts

⁴² Quranreview account accessed 2022.

⁴³ Mohammad Hidayaturrahman and D.I Ansusa Putra, "The Role of Technology and Social Media in Spreading the Qur'an and Hadiths by Mubalig," *DINIKA: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (December 19, 2019): 45, <https://doi.org/10.22515/dinika.v4i1.1858>, 4.

⁴⁴ Audah Mannan And Akhmad Fachri, "Penggunaan Fitur Vidgram Pada Akun @yufid.Tv Di Instagram Sebagai Tren Media Dakwah," *Jurnal Dakwah Tabligh* 19, No. 2 (2018): 218–237–218–237, <https://doi.org/10.24252/Jdt.V19i2.7476>, 235.

⁴⁵ Erwin Jusuf Thaib, "Da'wa, Social Media and Challenge the Mainstream of Islam among Millennial Generation," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, November 6, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.2139/SSRN.3736758>, 101.

@quranreview and @yufid. tv also apply these principles, namely: *light package* (content that can be enjoyed quickly, understood without deep reflection, and usually contains sensational elements), *headline appetite* (the condition in which information is obtained in order to accommodate short attention spans and one-line conversations), and *trailer vision* (stories that are too simplified, too superficial, and sensationalized compared to stories that are dense; or shallow representations of one fact).⁴⁶ Instagram is one of the media that is widely used for dakwah activities, it is considered capable of conveying Islamic educational values effectively,⁴⁷ In addition, Instagram offers a feature that allows the uploading of longer-duration videos .

Other than that, content on social media is not bound by standard regulations, so that activists of dakwah on social media (including Instagram) can express themselves as creatively as possible.⁴⁸ The effect of this interpretation on social media also changes new attitudes and behaviors towards the Qur'an (which is conveyed on social media).⁴⁹ This also makes it difficult to control the quality of content presented online.⁵⁰

In the digital era, preachers can no longer be limited to lecturing, but must also become a professional dakwah movement, which has clarity of design, and a measurable vision-mission in a

⁴⁶ Lim, "Klik Yang Tak Memantik: Aktivisme Media Sosial Di Indonesia, 37."

⁴⁷ Adi Wibowo, "PENGUNAAN MEDIA SOSIAL SEBAGAI TREND MEDIA DAKWAH PENDIDIKAN ISLAM DI ERA DIGITAL," *JURNAL ISLAM NUSANTARA* 3, no. 2 (December 10, 2019): 339–56, <https://doi.org/10.33852/JURNALIN.V3I2.141>, 347.

⁴⁸ Saidulkarnain Ishak, *Dakwah Sambil Ngenet* (Jakarta: Alex Media Komputindo, 2015), 96.

⁴⁹ Göran Larsson, *Muslim and New Media Historical and Contemporary Debates* (England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2011), 182.

⁵⁰ Göran Larsson, 189.

polite system.⁵¹ Because a da'i must be able to dialogue with modern culture and actively fill it with Islamic substance and nuances.⁵² It is also seen that the two accounts succeeded in delivering their dakwah, because they delivered it with cultural dakwah⁵³ or adaptive.⁵⁴ The @yufid.tv account has many followers and impressions on each post. Meanwhile, @quranreview also has a large number of followers, as well as likes and positive comments on its Instagram, so many netizens claim to be very influenced by posts on @quranreview.⁵⁵ Dakwahtainment is proven to be able to attract the attention of social media users. It does not take long to make the content go viral.⁵⁶ This includes content that contains Qur'anic interpretations. However, the number of followers, likes and comments is not a measure of the quality of the content posted, although it shows that the account is a reference for many Instagram users.⁵⁷

⁵¹ Badrah Uyuni A Ilyas Ismail, "Theology to Technology; The Shift of Facilities Media Da'wa in Millennial Era," *Journal of Xi'an University of Architecture & Technology* XII, no. III (2020), 457.

⁵² Abdul Wahid, *Gagasan Dakwah: Pendekatan Komunikasi Antarbudaya* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2019), 104.

⁵³ Wahid, 116.

⁵⁴ Welhendri Azwar and Muliono, *Sosiologi Dakwah* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2020), 127.

⁵⁵ Izzuthoriquil Haq and Muhammad Labib Syauqi, "DIGITAL NATIVE CHARACTER IN SOCIAL MEDIA INTERPRETATION: A STUDY ON INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS, @QURANREVIEW," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat* 18, no. 1 (June 30, 2021): 47–68, <https://doi.org/10.22515/AJPIF.V18I1.3491>, 221.

⁵⁶ Tika Mutia, "Dakwahtainment: The Creativity of Muslim Creators in Dakwah Communication on Social Media," *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah* 32, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/DOI: 10.24014/jdr.v32i2.15536>, 161.

⁵⁷ Achmad Muhibbin Zuhri and Jauharoti Alfin, "Online-Offline in Religion; Observing Islamic Learning Patterns in Online Media," *Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman* 33, no. 2 (August 2, 2022): 223–38, <https://doi.org/10.33367/TRIBAKTI.V33I2.2720>, 227.

Conclusion

Findings from this study indicate that out of 300 posts uploaded by @yufid.tv during the research period, only 20.67% featured Qur’anic interpretation, while 74.36% of @quranreview’s 39 posts addressed contemporary social issues through interpretive content. These data illustrate that the phenomenon of Qur’anic interpretation on Instagram—exemplified by @quranreview and @Yufid.tv—represents a profound transformation in how the Qur’an is communicated in the digital era. Whereas in classical tafsir traditions scholarly authority was grounded in the credentials of ‘ulama’ and academic institutions, social media platforms extend interpretive authority to anyone with digital access, creative skills, and broad social networks. This confirms Lukman’s (2016) and Larsson’s (2011) arguments that the digital age has democratized religious authority, shifting it from exclusive scholarly domains toward more fluid and open forms of digital legitimacy.

In the context of mediatization, Marlyna Lim’s (2017) three principles of contemporary communication—light package, headline appetite, and trailer vision—are clearly manifested in both accounts. @quranreview presents culturally resonant content such as “Spirit Doll as an Idol” and “Ghozali Everyday” with colorful infographics and emotionally engaging language, while @yufid.tv employs Instagram Reels featuring murattal recitations with concise narration. Both cases exemplify the logic of media, where design and aesthetics are prioritized to capture emotions and ensure rapid audience engagement (Campbell, 2016).

The explicit comparison shows that @quranreview adopts a pop-reflective approach characterized by light visuals, motivational narratives, and strong relational engagement with youth audiences through comments and direct messages. By contrast, @yufid.tv emphasizes authority through curated content referencing Tafsir al-Mukhtaṣar and a systematic Reels format, though with relatively passive audience interaction. Together, these cases demonstrate

that tafsir has migrated beyond academic and religious institutions into algorithmic spaces governed by digital aesthetics, viral logics, and participatory culture. This aligns with Bunt's (2021) notion of "digital authority," in which the credibility of tafsir is no longer determined solely by sanad or scholarly certification, but also by social resonance, the number of likes, and the power of visual narratives.

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