

## ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP NARRATIVES ON YOUTUBE: A FRAMING ANALYSIS OF DIGITAL DA'WAH MESSAGES

Nadya Amalia Nasution<sup>1\*</sup>, Alisya<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia

\*email: [nadyaamalia@radenintan.ac.id](mailto:nadyaamalia@radenintan.ac.id)



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### Abstract

This research aims to analyze the framing of da'wah messages on YouTube, focusing on leadership themes. Using a constructionist approach through Robert N. Entman's framing model, this study examines four elements: define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and make treatment recommendations. The research analyzes four YouTube videos uploaded between September 2022 and September 2023, each having more than 1,000 views and containing leadership-themed da'wah content. The findings reveal that the da'wah messages are categorized into three types: faith-based messages (found in videos 1 and 3), sharia-based messages (found in videos 2 and 4), and moral-based messages (found in video 4). The framing analysis identifies consistent patterns in highlighting leadership aspects through four perspectives: defining leadership issues in religious contexts, identifying systemic causes of leadership problems, emphasizing moral judgments based on Islamic values, and recommending solutions that combine religious teachings with leadership practices. This study concludes that the da'wah messages frame leadership issues by presenting specific viewpoints to the public, emphasizing the importance of integrating Islamic principles in leadership while addressing current social and governmental concerns.

**Keywords:** *Da'wah message; Framing analysis; Leadership; YouTube*

### INTRODUCTION

Religious experience is now not only obtained through direct interactions such as attending religious assemblies/institutions and studying holy books but can also be accessed through technology. The transition from conventional *da'wah* to *e-da'wah* began in the 1990s. In terms of 'Lived religion,' it allows for synergy between religion and technology. Thus, technology helps humans find religious meaning by consuming and accessing it through technology (Fakhruroji, 2017). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the Internet have given birth to new media known as cyber media or new media (Castells, 2007). The use of cyber media not only impacts the social, economic, political, and legal fields but has also become part of religious life, especially in da'wah activities. According to Sunarto (2011), among Muslims today, there are two developing meanings of da'wah: da'wah in the narrow

sense and da'wah in the broad sense. *Da'wah*, in the narrow sense (tabligh), includes religious lectures, sermons, recitations, etc. Meanwhile, in a broad sense, da'wah consists of all efforts to realize Islamic teachings in every aspect of life (Haq & Syaripah, 2023)(Ferdiansah, 2023).

According to Fakhruroji, religion in social practice generally includes three important elements. First, holy books are symbols that can imaginatively describe an ideal world and life. Second, people use practices or means to relate and place themselves in a symbolic frame of reference (Fakhruroji, 2017). Third, human agency or the ability of individuals to be actively involved in the religious domain they wish. This relationship between religion and social practice is referred to as 'lived religion,' as Roof explains ('lived religion' focuses on what people do rather than the 'official' religion, sources of teachings, institutions, and its doctrine (Ganzevoort & Roeland, 2014). In the modern era, the media and methods of *da'wah* must be adapted to the conditions of society or mad'u so that the *da'wah* message can be conveyed well (Hilmi, 2021)(Novriyanto et al., 2024). His is closely related to the classification of da'wah methods as outlined in Surah An-Nahl verse 125, which emphasizes three fundamental approaches: wisdom (bil hikmah), suitable lessons (mau'idzah hasanah), and engaging in respectful dialogue (mujadalah) (Nordin, 2018).

Many *Da'i* in Indonesia use YouTube media to preach (Yuliasih, 2022), one of which is Gus Nur, whose real name is Sugi Nur Raharja. Where he is a *Da'i* who comes from Probolinggo, East Java. Gus Nur is a lecturer who has a preaching character that is full of controversy and is anti-government. The delivery of Gus Nur's preaching message, accompanied by his very controversial anti-government preaching and often even criticism of the government, is one of the special interests or advantages to study. Gus Nur's YouTube channel is @gusnur13official, and it consists of 683 videos with a total of 179 thousand subscribers. The videos uploaded by Gus Nur on YouTube have been watched on average by 21,786,537 people in Indonesia. The topics he raises are elementary to understand, but sometimes they are controversial. The wide use of YouTube services makes it easier for preachers to convey their preaching through videos (Sikumbang & Siahaan, 2020). YouTube videos that have unlimited duration are a very appropriate support. YouTube can describe or spread *da'wah* messages to the public (Purnomo, 2021). The phenomenon of *da'wah* via YouTube has attracted much attention from *Da'i* (Ahim, 2020). Apart from videos that can be viewed repeatedly, *da'wah* videos on YouTube can also include mad'u and convey *da'wah* messages to a broad audience (Nasution, 2024).

Da'wah is a communication process in the mass media during the construction process. In the process of reality construction (Pranoto, 2023), in principle, every attempt to describe the conceptualization of an event, situation, or object is an attempt to construct reality (Hamad, 2002). Mass media is a tool used to convey messages from sources to audiences (recipients) using mechanical communication tools such as

newspapers, films, radio, and TV (Cangara, 2021). Thus, mass media is a place where the conceptualization of an event, situation, or object is described. Reality can be constructed through mass media, such as YouTube media (Berger & Luckmann, 2016). Language and the delivery method certainly influence the construction of reality, which contains meaning or images. Using specific language can have implications for constructing reality and its meaning (Badara, 2012). Construction is carried out using language. Language is used as universally recognized verbal communication. Without using language, the construction of reality will be challenging to understand. By using language understood by the audience, the meaning of reality can be understood, and an image can be formed in the audience's minds.

The content construction process on YouTube also involves a framing process (Mosemghvdlishvili & Jansz, 2013) (Boerman & Müller, 2022) (Nasoetion, 2014). Framing is an approach to finding out what perspective or point of view the communicator (YouTube content owner) uses when selecting issues and writing information, in this case, preaching content. This point of view or perspective ultimately determines what facts are taken, which parts are highlighted and omitted, and where the news will go (Eriyanto, Dedy N. Hidayat, 2001).

Research conducted (Fakhruroji et al., 2020) focused on analyzing religious language used on social media using framing analysis. The result is that the construction of religious language on social media was built as a religious practice packaged through a series of verbal and non-verbal symbols. Verbal. In the context of cyberculture, this construction of ideas is carried out by subjectively reshaping reality. Next, in the article (Ningsih et al., 2023) that focuses on analyzing the content of the *da'wah* messages on Habib Jafar's account in the "Login" program on Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube Channel, researchers analyze the *da'wah* messages conveyed, including the content, delivery style, and communication strategies used. Previous research also examined the *da'wah* messages and crisis communication strategies used by Buya Yahya in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic on YouTube. The *da'wah*'s contribution to crises confirms that *da'wah* is *shalih li kulli masa wa makan* or *da'wah* in harmony with the development of the situation and contextually according to the space and time surrounding it.

Previous studies have examined various aspects of digital *da'wah* on social media platforms. However, this research focuses on Gus Nur's YouTube channel, which offers distinctive characteristics that make it particularly significant for academic study. First, unlike mainstream preachers who avoid political controversy, Gus Nur represents a unique phenomenon where religious discourse intersects with critical political commentary, particularly on leadership issues. His channel, with 21.7 million views and 179,000 subscribers, demonstrates significant public engagement with this preaching style. Second, Gus Nur's background as a religious scholar and

academic lecturer from Probolinggo, East Java, provides him with a unique position to bridge traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary social-political analysis. Through a holistic approach using Entman's framing analysis, this research adds new and in-depth perspectives to the existing literature by examining how controversial religious messages about leadership are constructed and delivered through digital platforms. This study of Gus Nur's consistent critical stance toward governance and leadership practices while maintaining religious legitimacy offers meaningful contributions to understanding how religious authority can be exercised through digital platforms to address controversial social issues. This combination of religious knowledge, academic background, and critical discourse, delivered through accessible language and cultural elements, not only distinguishes Gus Nur's content from other Islamic preachers on YouTube but also provides valuable insights into the evolving nature of digital da'wah in contemporary social media contexts.

## METHOD

This article uses qualitative content analysis. The analytical tools used are based on Robert N. Entman's framing analysis (Entman, 2007) model through a constructionist approach, which consists of defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and making treatment recommendations (Eriyanto, 2015). Primary data is collected by researchers directly from the field or research location. The data source is words and actions from the research site, collected by observations or interviews.

The primary data used in this research is obtained directly from the studied media by collecting data (Observations) from several videos uploaded to *the YouTube channel @gusnur13official*. In researching videos on YouTube accounts @gusnur13official, Researchers chose videos uploaded from September 12, 2022, to September 12, 2023, as primary data. In this study, four video samples were taken. Nine video samples were taken because they had reached more than 1000 views or had been viewed at least 1000 times and contained *da'wah* messages.

**Table 1.** Gus Nur's YouTube content with the theme of preaching and leadership

Theme	Title video	Viewers
Dakwah	a) Ingin pemimpin yang taat beragama – tapi karakter dirimu masih seperti ini   mustahil   ayo berubah.	1.577 ribu
	b) Maaf kalau terlalu vulgar : dari presiden sampai lurah semua sudah terbelenggu harga dirinya.	39.174 ribu 2.015 ribu
	c) 2024 Gus nur akan pilih sosok ini! Kenyataan sistem indonesia saat ini!	7500 ribu
	d) Ya Allah...merinding   kapan Indonesia mempunyai pemimpin seperti ini – membuat kebijakan seperti ini.	

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This subsection discusses the findings from the research content. Primary data was obtained through observations of videos uploaded to the YouTube channel @gusnur13official. The analysis focuses on narratives, messages, and key themes reflecting perspectives on da'wah and religious issues.

### *Framing of The @gusnur13official*

In table 2, the video highlights religious deviation in Indonesia, where individuals worship entities other than Allah, as a core leadership issue. It attributes this problem to idolizing material objects, leaders, organizations, positions, and wealth. The solution emphasizes self-reformation, urging individuals to eliminate idolatrous tendencies and embrace genuine religious devotion as a means to foster personal and societal transformation.

**Table 2.** Framing of the @gusnur13official account about Leadership

<i>Element</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Brief Conclusion</i>
<i>Define problem</i>	Negara Indonesia dipenuhi oleh manusia-manusia musyrik. Dimana manusia-manusia tersebut beribadah atau menyembah Tuhan selain Allah Swt.	The video identifies religious deviation as a fundamental leadership issue
<i>Diagnose causes</i>	Terjadi karena manusia-manusia tersebut meyembah berhala, menuhankan benda, menuhankan kyai, menuhankan ormas, menuhankan jabatan, menuhankan uang.	Multiple forms of 'worship' beyond Allah are identified as root causes
<i>Make moral judgement</i>	Bunuh karakter syirik dan musyrik dalam dirimu.	Self-reformation is emphasized as crucial for leadership
<i>Treatment recommendation</i>	Taat beragama dan ubah karakter dalam diri.	Personal religious devotion is presented as the solution

In the table 3 "*Maaf kalau terlalu vulgar, dari presiden sampai lurah semua sudah terbelenggu harga dirinya*", the video addresses systemic constraints in leadership, attributing the root causes to poor governance and a weak spiritual connection with Allah. It emphasizes personal accountability, asserting that no one can constrain an individual unless they permit it. As a solution, it advocates for breaking free from life's constraints and pursuing personal and spiritual liberation to live a truly independent and meaningful life.



**Table 3.** *“Maaf kalau terlalu vulgar, dari presiden...”*

Element	Content	Brief Conclusion
Define problem	Terbelenggu.	Identifies systemic constraints across all leadership levels
Diagnose causes	Terjadi karena rezim pemerintahan atau hubunganmu dengan Allah yang tidak baik.	Poor governance and weak spiritual connection are root causes
Make moral judgement	Tidak ada yang bisa membelenggu dirimu, kecuali dirimu sendiri yang mengizinkan.	Personal accountability in allowing constraints
Treatment recommendation	Lepaskan belenggu hidupmu siapapun, hidup sekali harus merdeka.	Advocates for personal and spiritual liberation

In the table 4, the video critiques Indonesia's current system as a barrier to the emergence of good leadership, attributing the issue to systemic governance flaws. It emphasizes that effective leaders must undergo proper development and advocates for a strategic approach to leadership selection by choosing leaders with minimal harm, preferably supported by credible political parties.

**Table 4:** *“2024 Gus Nur akan pilih sosok ini! Kenyataan sistem Indonesia saat ini!”*

Element	Content	Brief Conclusion
Define problem	Sistem Indonesia saat ini tidak memungkinkan melahirkan pemimpin yang baik.	Current system impedes good leadership emergence
Diagnose causes	Sistem pemerintahan yang tidak mendukung.	Systemic barriers in governance
Make moral judgement	Jadi pemimpin harus melalui proses yang baik.	Emphasis on proper leadership development
Treatment recommendation	Pilihlah pemimpin yang mudhorotnya kecil minimal dari partai yang mengusung.	Strategic approach to leadership selection

In the table 5, the video highlights the gap between Indonesia's current leadership and the ideals of past Islamic caliphs, attributing it to an unsupportive policy environment. It stresses the importance of ethical leadership, urging officials to avoid abuse of power and uphold justice for the people. As a solution, it advocates for policies inspired by the principles of the Rashidun Caliphate

**Table 5:** *“Ya Allah... merinding kapan Indonesia...”*

Element	Content	Brief Conclusion
Define problem	Indonesia tidak memiliki pemimpin seperti para khalifah terdahulu.	Gap between current and ideal Islamic leadership
Diagnose causes	Kebijakan yang tidak mendukung.	Unsupportive policy environment

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Element	Content	Brief Conclusion
Make moral judgement	Pejabat tidak boleh menyalahgunakan jabatan dan menjadi pejabat yang adil bagi Masyarakat.	Emphasis on ethical leadership and justice
Treatment recommendation	Membuat kebijakan seperti yang dilakukan kekhalifahan rasyidin.	Advocating for policies based on Islamic leadership principles

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### *The framing Analysis of Da'wah Messages*

The framing analysis of da'wah messages reveals significant implications for understanding contemporary Islamic digital communication, particularly in the context of leadership discourse. The analysis demonstrates three key patterns in how social media platforms construct and deliver religious messages. This transformation of religious communication aligns with Fakhruroji's (2017) concept of 'lived religion,' where religious meaning-making occurs through technological mediation, allowing for synergy between traditional religious teachings and modern societal concerns.

The problem definition frames demonstrate an evolution in religious discourse where spiritual and governance issues are increasingly interlinked. This pattern reflects Sunarto (2011) describes the broad meaning of da'wah, where Islamic teachings are realized in every aspect of life, not merely through conventional religious lectures. The consistent framing of leadership challenges through religious perspectives indicates a significant shift in how da'wah is adapted to address contemporary social issues, particularly in the digital space where religious authority and political commentary often intersect.

The moral framework employed in the videos reveals a strategic integration of Islamic principles with contemporary leadership ethics. This approach demonstrates how digital platforms facilitate the transformation of traditional Islamic concepts into relevant social commentary while maintaining religious legitimacy. The emphasis on moral accountability in leadership positions and references to historical Islamic governance models show how religious discourse adapts to address modern challenges while preserving its foundational principles. As Hilmi (2021) highlighted, this adaptation of da'wah methods to contemporary conditions enables new forms of religious discourse that effectively combine traditional wisdom with modern contexts.

The treatment recommendations throughout the videos illustrate an innovative approach to religious communication where historical Islamic ideals are presented as solutions to modern governance challenges. This pattern suggests that digital platforms are fostering new forms of religious communication where traditional Islamic concepts are being reinterpreted to address current leadership challenges while maintaining their religious authenticity. The analysis further reveals how YouTube has become a significant platform for constructing and maintaining religious

legitimacy in the digital age, enabling preachers to reach wider audiences with complex religious-political messages.

These findings contribute to understanding how digital platforms are reshaping religious discourse and authority in contemporary society. The study demonstrates that YouTube serves as more than just a communication channel; it becomes a space where religious authority is exercised, challenged, and reconstructed through strategically framing leadership issues. This transformation of da'wah in the digital age suggests a broader evolution in how religious messages are conveyed and consumed, particularly when addressing sensitive topics like governance and leadership in Islamic contexts.

**Table 6:** Framing of Gus Nur's account

No	Title video	Define pr Oblem	Diagnose causes	Moral judgement	Treatment recom-mendation	Types of da'wah messages
1.	Ingin pemimpin yang taat ber-agama - tapi karakter dirimu masih seperti ini mustahil, ayo berubah.	Negara Indonesia dipenuhi oleh manusia-manusia musyrik. Dimana manusia-manusia tersebut beribadah atau menyembah Tuhan selain Allah SWT	This happens because these people worship idols, deify objects, deify clerics, mass organizations, positions, deify money.	Kill the <i>Syirik</i> and polytheist character in you.	Be religious and change your inner character.	Judging from the element of diagnosis causes, it is included in the message of preaching aqidah or faith. Also, judging from the treatment recommendation elements, including sharia da'wah messages.
2.	Maaf kalau terlalu vulgar, dari presiden sampai lurah semua sudah terbelenggu harga dirinya.	Terbelenggu (Fettered)	This happens because the government regime or your relationship with God is not good.	No one can shackle you, unless you allow yourself to	Release the shackles of your life, whoever you are, you must live once to be free.	Judging from the element of diagnosis causes included in the message of sharia da'wah,
3.	2024 Gus Nur akan pilih sosok ini! Kenyataan system Indonesia saat ini!	Sistem Indonesia saat ini tidak memungkinkan melahirkan pemimpin yang baik.	The current government system does not support it.	So leaders must go through a good process.	Choose a leader whose disadvantage is at least small for the party that supports it.	Judging from the treatment element, recommendation -dation is included in the message of preaching the faith.



4.	Ya Allah.. merinding, kapan Indonesia mempunyai pemimpin seperti ini – membuat kebijakan seperti.	Indonesia tidak memiliki pemimpin seperti para khalifah terdahulu.	Unsupportive policies.	Officials must not abuse their position and be fair officials to society.	Making policies like the Rashidun Caliphate did.	Judging from the treatment recommendation element, it is included in the sharia <i>da'wah</i> message.
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The *da'wah* message conveyed by Gus Nur in the YouTube video on the account @gusnur13official includes types of preaching messages about faith or faith, sharia, and morals. This is proven in the nine videos that are the subject of this research and have been analyzed previously. In the analysis, the preaching message of faith found in videos 1 and 3 aligns with the theory of faith-based preaching (*da'wah aqidah*), which emphasizes a belief system based on sincere faith and confidence in the Oneness of Allah SWT. As referenced in Surah An-Nisa verse 4, this fundamental principle of faith underscores the importance of complete belief in Allah, His messengers, His books, and the Day of Judgment.

Thus, in video 1, Gus Nur has a perspective or a way of looking at leadership towards oneself to always believe in Allah SWT, always do his commands, stay away from his prohibitions, and avoid forgetting or associating with God SWT. People who commit polytheism are called polytheists, and the act of polytheism is a major unforgivable sin. In video 3, Gus Nur gives a perspective on good leaders. A good leader does not do dirty things and can differentiate between haram and halal because a leader's mistakes will have a significant impact and bring misery to society. An honest attitude is the main characteristic of someone with faith in Allah SWT.

Thus, in video 1, Gus Nur has a perspective or a way of looking at leadership towards oneself to always believe in Allah swt, always do his commands, stay away from his prohibitions, and stay away from cheating or associating with God swt. People who commit polytheism are called polytheists, and the act of polytheism is a major unforgivable sin. In video 3, Gus Nur has a perspective regarding good leaders. A good leader does not do dirty things and can differentiate between haram and halal because a leader's mistakes will have a significant impact and bring misery to society. An honest attitude is the main characteristic of someone with faith in Allah SWT.

Meanwhile, the message of sharia *da'wah* is found in videos 1, 2, and 4. This aligns with the theory of sharia *da'wah* messages, which explains that sharia in Islam is closely related to external (actual) deeds, obeying Allah's rules or laws to regulate the relationship between humans and their God and fellow humans. This principle is grounded in the hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslims regarding the five pillars of Islam, which outline the fundamental practices that form the foundation of Islamic worship and social conduct.

The principles outlined in this hadith reflect the comprehensive relationship between humans and Allah SWT. This means that actions included in the scope of sharia are not only worship of Allah but also things in social life between fellow human beings, such as Islamic laws, namely civil law, public law, household, buying and selling laws, and other laws or other pious deeds.

The message of moral *da'wah* is in video 4. According to the theory of moral *da'wah*, morals is a science that explains the meaning of good and bad and what humans should do to other humans. In *da'wah* activities, morals are only a complement, namely a complement to one's faith and Islam. The message of moral *da'wah* includes various aspects, namely first, morals towards Allah SWT, such as repentance, trust, sincerity, patience, restraining oneself from the difficulties one is facing, and so on. Second, morals towards fellow humans, how we behave or act towards other humans, and those actions will determine our good and bad actions. Third, morals towards the environment, how we protect and care for the environment around us, plants, animals, and other animate objects.

## CONCLUSION

From the framing analysis of four preaching videos on Gus Nur's YouTube account, this study demonstrates how Islamic preaching messages are framed through three categories: faith-based preaching (videos 1 and 3), sharia-based preaching (videos 2 and 4), and moral-based preaching (video 4). The analysis through Entman's four elements reveals consistent patterns in framing leadership issues: defining problems related to family, *da'wah*, and governmental leadership; diagnosing systemic and behavioral causes; making moral judgments based on religious values; and recommending solutions that emphasize personal and collective improvement.

This research offers several practical contributions to digital *da'wah* development. The study provides insights for digital preachers on effectively framing religious messages about leadership in social media contexts while demonstrating successful strategies for integrating traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary social-political issues. The findings offer practical guidelines for maintaining religious authenticity while addressing controversial topics and show how YouTube's platform features can be leveraged for impactful religious communication. Additionally, it provides a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of digital *da'wah* content, which can be valuable for practitioners and researchers in the field.

However, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The analysis is limited to four videos within a specific timeframe and focuses solely on leadership-themed content. The research does not examine audience responses or engagement metrics, is confined to a single platform and preacher, and does not measure the impact of the framing strategies employed. These limitations provide opportunities for future research directions.

Future research in digital da'wah offers several promising directions. First, investigating audience reception and interpretation of digital da'wah messages can reveal how diverse demographics respond to various framing strategies. Second, comparative studies across multiple digital platforms and preachers would provide broader insights into practices and challenges in digital religious communication. Third, examining the role of social media algorithms in shaping the dissemination and reach of da'wah messages and the long-term effects on religious understanding could deepen our knowledge of this field. Lastly, exploring the relationship between content engagement metrics and the effectiveness of da'wah messages would offer valuable strategies for enhancing digital religious outreach. These findings contribute to understanding the evolution of religious communication in the digital age and provide practical recommendations for improving the relevance and impact of digital da'wah in contemporary contexts.

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