



A public communication and social representation theory approach on islamic issues in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Background: The rise of Islamic issues in Indonesia, which are generally packaged in various policies or programs, is often not responded to positively by the public. In some cases, such as the issue of waqf, zakat and Hajj, it actually receives counterproductive responses. **Methods:** This paper aims to study this social phenomenon using a two-theoretical approach, namely public communication and social representation as conceptualized by Serge Moscovici. To sharpen this theoretical study, this paper dissects two dissertations related to the preaching of the Prophet Muhammad and public policy of internalizing religious values in the city of Bandung. **Results:** This research shows that the theory of public communication and social representation is relevant for studying Islamic studies which continues to develop and is marked by the emergence of various social phenomena. **Conclusion:** However, the results of this theoretical approach are not standard because Islamic issues are influenced by many factors, such as social, political, cultural and others.

KEYWORDS: islamic issues; public communication; social phenomena; social representation; moscovici.

1. Introduction

The Islamic issues that have flourished in Indonesia in the last two decades have not fully shown positive developments. In some cases, the issues that arise even seem to be a 'wild ball' that is far from constructive so that it tends to only leave tiresome debates. In the end, the Islamic issues fail to be comprehensively anchored to the public because they are distorted or co-opted by certain interests such as politics, economics, law and so on.

Among the Islamic issues that have surfaced to the public are the optimization of waqf, zakat, hajj fund management, standardization of preachers, regulation of loudspeakers, marriage services for all religions at the religious affairs office (KUA) and religious moderation programs. These issues have high appeal and attention because they are closely related to the individual needs of the ummah as well as having broad social impacts. Not only at the central level, the phenomenon of using religious issues in this policy has also spread in various regions. In 2008, for example, as studied by Kamil, there were around 50 attempts to formulate religious issues or themes in a regional regulation (Kamil, 2008). Of course, in the field, this plan caused a variety of responses, some were fully supportive, but not a few rejected it.

On the issue of waqf, for example, the Indonesian government has actually provided a very wide space to optimize the great potential of this sector. Through Law (UU) No.

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41/2004 on Waqf, the issue of waqf has been regulated both in terms of regulations, organizational structures such as establishing the Indonesian Waqf Board (BWI) and infrastructure on various fronts.

Even in 2023, the government made an innovative step by launching cash waqf linked sukuk (CWLS) and retail waqf sukuk (SWR) in order to optimize waqf. However, these new instruments targeting young people or millennials have not yielded many results. On the other hand, the potential of waqf in Indonesia according to the Ministry of Finance's projection is huge, reaching Rp180 trillion per year (Republika, 2024). Based on data reported by BWI, the waqf money collected in 2023 reached IDR2.361 trillion. Meanwhile, specifically from CWLS and SWR instruments, it reached IDR400 billion (Badan Wakaf Indonesia, 2024).

Similarly, the issue of Hajj fund management has continued to spark polemics. Hajj funds, which are now officially under the control of the Hajj Financial Management Agency (BPKH), have always aroused the suspicion of a number of people, both in terms of the use of investment or the utilization of the investment returns themselves. On the other hand, the presence of BPKH, whose formation is a mandate from Law No. 34 of 2014, is actually the answer to the management of Hajj finances, which was previously considered chaotic, full of irregularities, corruption practices and so on. However, since its establishment in 2017, the skewed narrative on BPKH's performance has been quite strong, such as Hajj funds being used to build toll roads, reservoirs, airports and being corrupted by certain officials.

Negative narratives also appear in the issue of standardization of preachers, religious moderation programs and plans to use the KUA for marriage registration for all religions. This negative public response is certainly not expected by the government or policy makers. This is because this negative narrative is clearly counterproductive to the big targets that are desired, namely the realization of life practices that are in line with Islamic values and principles.

So why did all that happen? The outbreak of negative narratives or responses to the issue is also counterproductive to the goals of Islamic da'wah. The trigger is influenced by many factors, including the weak management of public communication. Philosophically, the emergence of issues of modernizing waqf management, Hajj funds, regulation of preachers and others is a necessity, especially in the midst of the development of digital information technology today. But in fact, there is still a gap between the idealized ideals and the reality in society. The public generally responds on the basis of suspicion or skepticism rather than providing constructive criticism.

2. Methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to understand deeply and holistically how the theories of public communication and social representation are applied to Islamic issues in Indonesia. This approach is suitable for studying complex and dynamic social phenomena. The method used is a literature study relevant to the research topic, including scientific journals, books and academic papers. Relevant documents will be analyzed to identify how public communication theory and social representation are applied in policies and programs related to Islamic issues.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Approaches to public communication theory in islamic issues

The failure to build positive narratives on Islamic issues in Indonesia is a social phenomenon that indicates a weakness in public communication. This weakness is

indicated, among other things, by not fully capturing the information transmitted by the messenger. The existence of a gap between the sender and receiver of this information is very likely to be the main trigger for disruption in communication.

However, referring to the theory of mass communication introduced by Lasswell (2009), it is also very possible that the failure is not influenced by a single factor. So that both the messenger, the content of the message, the conveying media, the recipient of the message and the extent of the effect caused are actually interrelated.

Dijkzeul and Moke (2005) define public communication as communication activities and strategies that target people or audiences. Not only conveying information, the purpose of public communication is to raise awareness as well as to influence the audience in their attitudes and behaviors.

While in another concept, Person and Neelson interpret public communication in the framework of public speaking which means the process of utilizing messages to build common meaning (Nelson, 2013). In the process, public communication is broader than what Lasswell conceptualized because it requires feedback in the form of questions and answers or even nonverbal communication.

Public communication also requires responsive technical work. To strengthen this communication, the right narratives are needed as materials for forming public opinion. In his journal entitled *The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda*, Brustein found the fact that public opinion has a major influence on the birth of a policy (Burstein, 2003). If policy makers are able to carefully identify the content that will be transmitted to the public, then the policies taken will not get many obstacles, even though efforts to deny it from some political actors still appear.

In the realm of public policy in Indonesia, public communication management has been regulated in more detail in the era of President Joko Widodo. Through Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2015, President Joko Widodo expects that well-managed public communication will be able to help the success of the Working Cabinet. Not only conveying information to the public, through the management of public communication, the government is expected to be able to absorb the aspirations of the community appropriately. In other words, public communication is in an important position because it is a bridge between the government and the people.

Communication, according to Edwards III, is also a vital part of implementing a policy. Apart from communication, several other factors are resources, disposition or attitude and bureaucratic structure. On the one hand, if these four factors can be managed properly, it will have a very positive impact on the course of a policy. But on the other hand, these four factors can also be obstacles if they are not managed properly (Ramadani, 2018).

In more detail, according to Ahmed Kurnia Soerawidjaja's explanation, public communication is a form of controlling public information which includes planning, preparing and implementing communication from a government policy or program. Ahmed Kurnia divides the characteristics of public communication management into three core parts. First, being able to serve the public regarding policies that have been, are being and will be implemented. Second, there is public involvement during the process of formulating, implementing and monitoring policies. Third, public communication is always based on the latest data, facts and information. Fourth, being able to provide clear and straightforward explanations without the intention of defending or attacking back. Fifth, there is room for public education (Ramadani, 2019).

Good public communication has almost the same goal as da'wah, namely the realization of an enlightened society. Islamic teachings teach a lot about the importance of prioritizing preaching methods that rely on good values, right on target in order to minimize negative effects (mafsadat).

According to Abdul Aziz, in language, da'wah contains various meanings. Among other things, it means calling, calling out, affirming or defending something, actions or words to attract people to something and begging or asking (Aziz, 1997). From Aziz's definition, it appears that the relationship between da'wah and communication is very close. Because da'wah also contains elements of communication such as the content of the

message that is expected to have an effect on the audience either about cognition or new behavior.

Da'wah and public communication also have the same goal, which is goodness. The difference is that public communication is generally strengthened through a policy or regulation with a target community that has also been determined. Sukayat (2011) in his dissertation entitled 'Internalization of Religion Through Public Policy: Structural Da'wah of Bandung Agamis explains that da'wah is essentially an Islamization Process.

The principles of public communication are also explained in the Quran and Hadith. Although the Quran does not specifically explain about communication, there are many sentences or terms that refer to the importance of prioritizing good speech patterns. Among these terms are qaulan baligha (straightforward, effective, uncomplicated speech); qaulan karima (noble and respectful words); qaulan maisura (speech that is easy to understand, does not offend); qaulan ma'rufa (good, polite and refined speech); qaulan layyina (gentle and palatable speech); and qaulan sadida (speech that is as it is or does not lie). All of these terms are actually close to the principles of public communication (Islami, 2013).

Likewise, in the Hadith, there are several principles and ethics that are closely related to the practice of public communication. These include the Prophet Muhammad's command to convey information factually (qulil haqqa walau kana murran), not to be afraid to speak out if the information conveyed is true (falyaqul khairan au liyasmut) and speak on the basis of strong data or clear thinking (laa taqul qabla tafakkur).

Islamic issues in Indonesia such as the management of Hajj funds, zakat, waqf and loudspeaker settings certainly arise because there are messages that the sender (da'i) wants to convey to the receiver (mad'u) (Muhtadi, 2012). In order for there to be a communication effect that is not even just linear, it certainly requires an appropriate communication management pattern.

From here it is clear that public communication theory is very possible to be studied more in the Islamic field. Moreover, apart from being sourced from the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic-based public communication actually has a very broad perspective along with the development of scientific thinking such as fiqh, da'wah, kalam and others.

3.2 Social representation theory approach to islamic issues

The use of social representation theory in this study is done because this theory also affects public communication carried out by the government or institutions related to Islamic issues. In essence, social representation theory shows that there is a strong relationship between communicators and audiences in the transmission process of communication messages.

The issue of the weak achievement of waqf in Indonesia, for example, is understood not to be influenced by a single factor. This is indicated, among others, by the various efforts and policies made by the Indonesian Waqf Board (BWI) and various parties in campaigning for the importance of waqf. However, the achievement of waqf in Indonesia from year to year is still relatively minimal. Very likely, this is influenced by the pattern of public communication approach that is carried out not really anchoring the target, such as millennials for example. Therefore, the national waqf optimization program seems to be only busy at the elite level but is not understood and fails to invite Muslims to actively participate.

The first formulation of social representation theory was introduced by Serge Moscovici (1925-2014) in the 1960s. The concept of this theory is related to various types of collective cognition in which mainstreaming aspects of reason or systems of thought of an individual or group in society. This cognition also concerns various things, whether social, cultural or symbolic objects, which essentially represent something. With this representation, it allows the classification of people and objects. Not only that, this representation can explain and compare the behavior of individuals or groups that are part of the social environment (Moscovici, 2001).

Moscovici states that social representation is a system of values, ideas and practices that has a dual function. The first function of this representation is as a means to build an order that ultimately allows each individual to position himself in the material and social world. The second function is to create communication between community members. In its mechanism, this communication is built through codes as a solution to social interaction and naming until finally it is able to classify aspects of the world or history of each group (Moscovici, 1973).

Judging from these two functions, among the strong features of social representation is the interaction of ideas among individuals or groups that have a common link. But specifically, in addition to ideas, other networks in Moscovici's view are metaphors and images (Moscovici, 2000: 153).

Historically, the birth of social representation theory cannot be separated from Moscovici's criticism of the concept of collective representation introduced by Durkheim (1951). In his conception, Durkheim said that society is not just an association or summation of individuals. But for him, society is a system built on relationships between individuals based on characteristics (Khakim, 2022). Moscovici understands collective representation in a broader context that does not only rely on similarities in nature, fate and others. Social representation is a system between individuals that is influenced by the social situation around them. This situation is not rigid but develops as it adjusts to the conditions.

In line with Moscovici's ideas, Gismar (2022) states that contemporary societies with a multiplex division of labor also have increasingly complex structures and categories. This means that people who come from different social structures and categories inevitably interact, communicate and negotiate with each other. In this situation, the cultural order becomes more complex. Territorial boundaries are also increasingly eroded or even blurred. According to Gismar, this phenomenon is a consequence of changes and the spread of information and communication. In this condition, Gismar believes that every contemporary phenomenon will always be surrounded by social explanations. Such as the extent of the relationship between individuals and society, subjectivity and psychological factors (Gismar, 2022).

Among the studies to explain social representation theory have been conducted by Khakim (2021-2022). By taking a case study of the public communication strategy carried out by Semarang Mayor Hendrar Prihadi, Khakim explained that leader communication based on social representation has strong binding power, and even tends to be successful. This power is influenced by the direct involvement of the community in the planning, implementation and monitoring of public policies. Public communication based on social representation presents the community directly in order to build new cognitions and then followed by more tangible changes. The anchoring of cognition to the public is done with various approaches such as naming, thematic, emotional and metaphorical. Among the signs of efforts to build social representation, Semarang Mayor Hendrar, among others, carries a development naming mechanism, namely the concept of 'Moving Together' (Khakim, 2022).

From these various anchoring efforts, the public is invited to be directly involved so that their cognition of the development of a city also changes. They are no longer passive objects or citizens who see development, but can be actively involved in planning, deliberation, execution and control or supervision. The reorganization of the Old City area is one of the concrete proofs of change based on social representation in Semarang City. The historical city area that was once very shabby, dull and unkempt has now changed a lot and even become a major tourist destination in Semarang. Social representation-based communication strategies require leadership that is not structuralist, but participatory.

On the other hand, the phenomenon of the failure of Islamic issues in Indonesia, which are generally difficult for Muslims to understand or practice, may be influenced by the unidirectional or linear pattern of public communication. Especially in today's digital era, interactive and participatory patterns of public communication are a necessity. The

approach of social representation theory as conceptualized by Moscovici can be an alternative to building more effective public communication on Islamic issues.

3.3 Studies of public communication and social representation in relation to islamic issues

Islamic issues in Indonesia, especially those that have surfaced in the last two decades, have been studied by many parties including academics. Islamic issues such as zakat, waqf, nikah, or hajj have great magnetism. Apart from being related to aspects of worship, these issues are also inseparable from other processes such as political, social, economic and others. So that since the study, the preparation of regulations or socialization after becoming a policy always invites polemics.

Although there are many Islamic issues that emerge into the public sphere, to explain the studies on public communication and social representation related to Islamic issues, in this paper, the author chooses two main bases of study, namely from two dissertations at the Graduate School of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (UIN) that have been booked. In this study, the two dissertations chosen are respectively entitled *Internalization of Religious Values Through Public Policy: Structural Da'wah of Bandung Agamis* by Tata Sukayat. This dissertation takes a case study of religious policies carried out by the Bandung City Government during the leadership era of Mayor Dada Rosyada (2003-2008 and 2008-2013). The second study is a dissertation by Amrullah Ahmad entitled *Islamic Da'wah System: An Analysis of the Da'wah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW*. Amrullah's dissertation was examined in 2008.

To facilitate the systematics of writing and discussion, researchers separate it into two explanations. The first study will elaborate on the dissertation of Sukayat Sukayat or called study 1. Then continued with the dissertation of Amrullah Ahmad with the mention of study 2.

a. Study 1

Sukayat's dissertation is motivated by the religious phenomenon in Bandung, especially when Dada Rosyada became mayor. In his research, Sukayat uses a qualitative method which focuses on analyzing the concept and practice of public policies related to the internalization of religious values .

As for getting strong data, Sukayat used a two-model approach. First, literature study with the aim of being able to get the basics that are closely correlated to research from the theoretical aspect. Second, with a direct observation model in the field to fully capture the phenomena and social realities that occur. Data collection studies are also carried out quite completely, namely with documentation studies, observations, and interviews. From this dissertation, Sukayat conducted direct interviews with a number of very interested parties, such as Mayor Dada Rosyada and the regional secretary (sekda).

Since taking the lead in the first period (2003-2008), Dada seems to pay great attention to the religious field in his programs or in Sukayat's language is a form of internalization of religion in a public policy. The real form of Sukayat's great attention to this internalization is evidenced, among others, by the selection of the diction 'Bermartabat' in his city vision 2003-2008.

Referring to the 2003-2004 Bandung City Strategic Plan, there were four major programs that Dada carried at the beginning of leading the region. They are Bersih Bermartabat, Makmur Bermartabat, Taat Bermartabat and Bersahabat. These four programs are encompassed in one vision of Bermartabat (Clean, Prosperous, Obedient and Friendly). The internalization of religion is evident in the mayor's program to rid Bandung of immoral activities, such as gambling, prostitution, drugs and so on. In fact, the mayor explicitly tried to cleanse his citizens from the aspect of polytheism.

The emphasis on religious aspects is also evident in the third point, Taat Bermartabat. At this point Dada Rosyada targets citizens to have high obedience in religion. In addition, the people of Bandung City in the future are expected to be obedient to their leaders as per

Islamic principles. In full, the efforts to internalize religious values that Mayor Dada Rosyada attempts to do through his various policies are as follows.

Table 1. City policy as an effort to internalize religious values

| Program Name | Program Realization Plan |
|-------------------------|--|
| Clean with Dignity | Clean the city from garbage Clean government officials from corruption Clean from immoral activities such as gambling, prostitution, drugs, etc. Clean from idolatry and others Clean from various pollution such as air, water, soil, and sound |
| Prosperous with Dignity | Prosperity is the foundation of harmony Prosperity is the basis of harmony Prosperity is the foundation of security Prosperity is the foundation of physical and mental health |
| Obedient with Dignity | Obey the teachings of each religion correctly Obey the rules and laws/discipline Obey a just leader |
| Be friendly | Striving to always maintain the values of good relationships that complement, protect, fulfill, promote and make happy Efforts to precede each other in doing good |

(Bandung City Strategic Plan 2003-2004)

Looking at the data above, it is clear that Dada Rosyada's program is heavily influenced by religious aspects. Even in 2004, Bandung City was ordained as a Religious City, where the mayor tried to make his people not only more devout in worship, but also strengthened with other supporting programs such as infrastructure, places of worship, regulations and others.

Sukayat's dissertation illustrates that Islamic issues have a strong allure in Dada Rosyada's leadership. In fact, this issue continued to be strengthened in the next leadership period, 2008-2013. The phenomenon in Bandung is interesting because as a large and pluralist city, the mayor pays considerable attention to programs that tend to have an Islamic religious aspect.

In Indonesia, the government, as explained by Azyumardi Azra in his book entitled *From Harvard to Mecca* (Azra: 2005), often utilizes Islamic issues to create its public policies. Azra gave examples, such as regulations on the opening hours of entertainment venues during Ramadan, the Religious Courts Law, the Waqf Law and the Zakat Law. In a more global context, the United States itself has also used religious considerations in its policies several times, as George Bush and John Kerry did (Azra, 2005).

Burhanudin (2012) expressed a similar view. Based on historical studies, since the 17th century the tradition of integrating Islamic traditions in political spaces has emerged in the Nusantara era. Even with the study of two texts, namely *al-Mawahib* (*al-Mawahib al-Rabbaniyah an al-As'ila al-Jawiyah*, a book written by Muhammad bin Allan bin Allan at the request of the ruler of the Banten Kingdom in the 1588-1647 era) and *Taj Salatin* (by Bukhari al-Jauhari around 1603 in Aceh), Burhanudin said, the condition of the kingdom at that time was thick with symbols, traditions and behavior based on Islam. In other words, at that time the politics of the kingdom were increasingly Islamized (Burhanudin, 2012).

Likewise, in this dissertation, Sukayat concluded that religion and the state (government) have a fairly close relationship to a public policy. In Sukayat's language, both have a 'symbiotic' relationship, which is a reciprocal relationship, complementary and beneficial.

More interestingly, this dissertation revealed that efforts to internalize religious values practiced in Bandung City were generally accepted by the community. Sukayat even confirmed that the vision, mission and programs run by the bureaucracy under the control

of Mayor Dada Rosyada did not cause much controversy, tension and community rejection. This portrait is different from what happened in several other regions in Indonesia.

This research and study from Sukayat offers something new because the absence of rejection of the internalization of religious values illustrates that there is good socialization by the government towards its citizens. It is clear that the policies that were born were able to be packaged in such a way that the community was able to understand in the midst of new awareness (new consciousness) the need for them to live a more religious life.

This dissertation can be a strong foothold for conducting other studies, especially those related to the practice of life based on religious issues in Indonesia. Although conducting research by choosing the issue of structural da'wah approach, Sukayat's dissertation is a valuable contribution to the enrichment of da'wah studies. It is even deeper to find out what factors influence the issue or internalization of religion so easily practiced in Bandung. Is it influenced by communication patterns, leadership, bureaucratic management, social life, aspects, culture, law and so on.

b. Study 2

The dissertation entitled *Islamic Da'wah System: An Analysis of the Da'wah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW* written by Amrullah Ahmad is a research with qualitative methods. For reference data sources, Amrullah collected from verses in the Koran then hadiths and various historical books. The data is then read through the general system theory approach. From this approach, an object or event is interpreted as not standing alone (system). Instead, the object is understood as a holistic part of a system (subsystem) that is interconnected and interacting (Ahmad, 2007).

In more detail, researchers divide the subsystem into several fractions. Including inputs, processes (conversion), outputs and feedback controls. The target or object of da'wah in this study is the Arab community. The data is collected using the method of tafsir mau'dhu'i, tahrij hadith and historical search.

Amrullah's dissertation departs from the researcher's initial assumption that da'wah is another form of communication activity (tabligh). This researcher's assumption stems from a number of studies of existing literature such as Abdul Karim Zaidan, (*Ushul Al-Da'wah*, Baghdad, Dar Al-Wafa', 1992, p.5) which explains that the subsystem or elements of da'wah consist of the object of da'wah, da'i, da'wah recipient (mad'u), method (uslub) to media or platform (wasilah). Another study that has stated so is from Sai'id Ibn Ali Al Qahtani, (*Al Hikmah fi Al Da'wah ila Allah Ta'ala*, Riyadh, Jam'iyah Ibn Sa'ud Al-Islamiyyah, 1318 H, pp.116-130).

On the other hand, this dissertation also seeks to respond to the phenomenon of Islam, especially in the era of globalization and technological developments that are considered to override aspects of the constancy of the ummah. In fact, not a few da'wahs have triggered the division of the ummah. This portrait contrasts with the era of the Prophet Muhammad SAW who made da'wah as a unifying space for the people.

By presenting Abdurrahman Abdul Khalik's study through his book *Fushul min-Siyasah Asy-Shar'iyah fi al Da'wah ila Allah*, (Kuwait: Jam'iyah Ihya' Al-Turats Al-Islami, 1983, pp.11-12) about Islamic da'wah influenced by political aspects, Amrullah assessed that da'wah in its development was different from the principles and elements taught by the Prophet. The indication shown is the weakening of the practice which is then followed by the decline of faith and thought. Based on such facts, it is necessary to have a long-term political strategy of Islamic da'wah in order to have a strong endurance again.

This research shows that the Islamic da'wah system of the Prophet's era was built from a strengthening process through various subsystems. Uniquely, among the subsystems can correlate with each other or be able to provide input. Not only that, the output of a subsystem is also able to provide to other subsystems. Thus, there is a series of inputs that actually have a direct relationship. Generally, this relationship is described as symbiotic or mutually supportive and complementary.

The Prophet Muhammad's da'wah system collaborates various inputs, both main (raw), means (instrumental) and environment (environmental). The main input in the form of material consists of the Koran, Assunnah and the results of ijtihad. While input from the human side, namely da'i (messengers) and mad'u (message recipients). Then for input facilities include methods, da'wah information maps, da'wah funds, and da'wah facilities. For environmental input generally comes from problems that arise, pressure, belief, psychological, intellectual, social, cultural, political, economic, military to physical.

In full, the mutually reinforcing subsystems are described by Amrullah on page 118. Through this diagram adapted from Schoderbeck et.al, it can be seen that the process of da'wah is intertwined between input, process, output and feedback. Each system consists of several subsystems and is interconnected. The key to the success of a da'wah that can produce changes in society is the existence of systems and subsystems whose conversion can run optimally in transforming inputs into outputs.

3.4 Pros and cons of public communication theory and social representation in islamic studies

As far as the author knows, the use of public communication and social representation theories that specifically examine Islamic issues in Indonesia is still very minimal. Studies that have been conducted generally only rely on one theory, either public communication or social representation. This is what is illustrated from the study of the two dissertations above, where more explore the extent of the role of the environment, objects or communicants in the field of Islamic da'wah or policy.

In the conclusion of dissertation 1, it can be explained that Islamic issues are actually seen to be able to run even though they are only structurally based, namely by prioritizing a bureaucratic approach, in this case the policies of the Mayor of Bandung Dada Rosyada. While the opposite is seen in the study of dissertation 2, where the phenomenon of da'wah is less binding in the minds of Muslims today because of the failure in managing the da'wah itself. Imitating the da'wah carried out by the Prophet Muhammad, there are actually many subsystems that need to be considered, including the extent to which the preacher (da'i) fully understands the environmental conditions that are targeted. This subsystem, like the work of social representation theory, presents a participatory pattern from the audience. The two studies above are even more interesting because the application of this theory is not always directly proportional. This means that with the same issue about Islam, the approach to the da'wah or communication model is different and results in different formulations. From here it can be seen that behavior and social situations have a big influence in the study of religion studied from a phenomenological approach (Conolly, 1999).

Moreover, in the midst of technological developments and the complexity of the problems faced by people today, da'wah or public communication cannot only rely on linear patterns. In order for the message to be delivered to the right target and be able to bring real change (effect), the approach of public communication theory and social representation can be an option.

There are several positive sides to the use of public communication theory and social representation, especially in relation to responding to various Islamic phenomena today. First, despite their interdisciplinary nature, theories of public communication and social representation can be used to explain various social religious phenomena that continue to change from time to time. These two theories, among others, examine public behavior with the approach of various disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, communication and others, all of which are correlated in Islamic studies. Second, these theories are very general so that they are not limited to the object and area of study. Likewise, in Islamic studies, the two theories can be used to analyze various religious phenomena in Indonesia such as the optimization of waqf, zakat, hajj funds and so on. Third, because they are based on phenomenology, studies using the two-theory approach also produce new and diverse conclusions. Thus, indirectly this also enriches the treasures of Islamic scholarship.

Beyond the above advantages, there are certainly many other positive potentials from the implementation of these theories. However, because this theory is based on social phenomena, the results of the study are not absolute. It is very possible that the results of the study between one theme and another do not correspond. This is especially true if the study is conducted in a different region, time, or object.

4. Conclusions

Public communication and social representation theories offer a strong framework for studying and understanding Islamic issues. Good communication and appropriate social representation can help build positive narratives and increase public participation and understanding of Islamic issues. This approach also shows the importance of community feedback and active participation in communication and public policy processes.

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