



## Phenomena of Da'wah Information "Co-owner" on WhatsApp

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### **Abstract**

This research aimed at analyzing the way of information co-owner interpret the message that would be reproduced. The findings showed that in receiving the message of *da'wah* (Islamic preaching) on a *WhatsApp* group "*Jambi Mengaji*", the co-owners of information were more dominant in believing the information obtained. Then, it was followed by producing the message in their own way according to the purpose of the owners of information.

**Keywords:** Information *da'wah*; *WhatsApp*; Co-owners of information

### **Introduction**

The advanced communication technology proffers the public a way to access the information quickly. Recently, it could be carried out through the sophistication of electronic media so that it is able to connect one with others in different place and time. The existing of this sophisticated communication technology affects on consumptive pattern of society to communicate. William (1992) argues that the impact got from advanced technology is our way to communicate between individuals, groups, public, and international communication.

Internet is one form of recent communication technology sophistication that becomes a means of information media that attracts public. Internet users usually use the internet based on their awareness of the importance of the role of information and technology media that can influence on their life aspects. The data obtained from APJII's (2017) survey based on Internet User Penetration shows that the number of Internet user in Indonesia is 143,26 million people from total population of Indonesia as many as 262 million people. Accordingly, Indonesian people relish the sophisticated internet because it facilitates people in searching the information.

View data from APJII related to internet user survey in Indonesia, it can be concluded that the emergence of internet has facilitated the users. Due to the internet, the users can possibly search various information and entertainment from various part of the world by using *search engine* feature and entering the keywords needed so that internet users can directly break the limit of life dimensions, times, and spaces so the users can obtain all required information.

The emergence of internet as a form of advanced communication technology results in other sophisticated technological products, such as social media. One of internet service is instant messaging that is triggered by the needs of internet users to obtain the information and to communicate in wider space which is in personal manner through an alternative media. In Indonesia, the use of social media is greatly popular in society. Based on the survey result data from Hootsuite (2018, p.34), there were 130 million active users of social media in Indonesia. Besides, The Economist (2011) magazine concludes the result from several research on the Internet that Indonesia is the second biggest country in the world using social media Facebook in which the use of Twitter in Indonesia becomes the third. The fame of social media is because it provide some features attracted the users through digital camera platform, and android system that can make social media used by the users to show their personal life and publish it to the public. In a word, Osatuyi (2013) pinpoint that the popularity of social media in several years has become a concern for the academist to study the comsumptive pattern of the internet users.

WhatsApp is one of popular social media in society. Bouhnik & Dshen, (2014, p.14), WhatsApp is a smartphone application for instant messaging in which one unique feature is its ability to to improve communication in a group. It can be seen from the class communication between lecturer and student uses WhatsApp.

Quoted from WhatsApp site (WhatsApp.com, 2019) that explains its mission:

“WhatsApp starts as an alternative of SMS. Our product provides service to send and receive various media: text, photo, video, document, and location, and also voice call. Our message and call are kept using end-to-end encryption which means as no third party including WhatsApp able to read or hear your call. There is a purpose from each product decision, that is our hope so that the people can communicate everywhere without any limitation”.

In Indonesia based on data from Hootsuite’s survey (2018, p.52) regarding Most Active Social Media Platforms, it is stated that *WhatsApp* is the third rank as the most active social media in Indonesia with the percentage of 40%.

The most interesting part of *WhatsApp* can be seen from the privacy provided that ease the users to chat with their closest relatives in which their phone numbers has been saved in users’ cell phone so that this media is decent to recommend as a social media needed by ones who want to protect their privacy. Another unique feature is *WhatsApp* can only be used on iOS, Android and Windows phone operation system after *WhatsApp* has been downloaded. The next step is the users will be provided an option to login using email to access the features on *WhatsApp*.

*WhatsApp* leads other social media to be used for particular purpose, such as a means to communicate with relative. Instagram as one of social media becomes an effective platform as communicaton activity in sending message to the relatives. One of interesting phenomena in recent years is the use of *WhatsApp* as an effective media to broadcast the information onto group-chatting using *forward message* feature. However, there are many *WhatsApp* users abuse the features by forwarding message obtained from one group-chatting to others. Data from DailySocial.id (Eka, 2018) that tries studying the characteristic of hoax distribution viewed from the use of platform that cooperates with Jakpat Mobile Survey Platform find that hoax information are mostly found on *WhatsApp* platform with the total 56,55%.



In recent years the dissemination of hoax, hate speech, and the issue of *anti-Pancasila* have often been spread on social media. Especially in Indonesia, such information is a powerful weapon to dissolve a group, and even bring down a person or group by making a factitious news or issue. It is worse when there is a lot of news spread on social media, Indonesian people are very easily influenced or believe in that news. The dissemination of hoax, , hate speech, and *anti-Pancasila* issue have also spread to several regions in Indonesia. Based on the news written on nu.or.id (2016), the Jambi Provincial Government has detected four cities and regencies indicated in terrorist activities caused by radicalism. The four districts are Tebo Regency, Sarolangun, Muaro, and Jambi City. The indication is based on the incident of raising the ISIS flag in the courtyard of the Jambi Governor's Office conducted by high school students. Not only in 2016 there have been cases like this, but also in 2018 based on news written on news.okezone.com (2018), it stated that the arrests were carried out by the Team of the Jambi Regional Police Special Criminal Investigation Directorate (Ditreskrimsus) against three students from a University Country in Jambi. They allegedly spread the hate speech towards Muslims by uploading hate speech posts on one of the Facebook groups intentionally. According to the Anti-Defamation Society of Indonesia (Mafindo), this phenomenon is inseparable from the low literacy culture of Indonesian internet users (Tempo.co, 2017). This makes Indonesian people easy to accept and believe the information circulating is true from their views without confirming it or seeking reliable information data.

*Da'wah* is an activity to ask and invite people to have good attitude and not to do bad action. The essence of *da'wah* on social media tends to bad action since it is used for certain purpose. It should be based on the original purpose of *da'wah* to ask others to the kindness and usefulness based on Surah An-Nahl: 125.

أَحْسَنُ هِيَ بِالتِّي وَجَادِلْهُمْ ۖ الْحَسَنَةُ وَالْمَوْعِظَةُ بِالْحِكْمَةِ رَبِّكَ سَبِيلٌ إِلَىٰ الدُّعَىٰ  
بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ أَغْلَمُ وَهُوَ ۖ سَبِيلُهُ عَنِ ضَلَالٍ بِمَنْ أَغْلَمَ هُوَ رَبُّكَ إِنَّ

Meaning : “Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is (rightly) guided.” (Tafsir, 2018)

The method of *da'wah* on social media Instagram is more preferred because instagram users can do *da'wah* without any difficulty. Using the existing *da'wah* video, people are considered doing a *da'wah*. In the case of co-owner reposts and makes it popular contains a forgettable thing, that is the copyright of the information of video. The information copyright of the video is usually on Youtube feature called Creative Commons License. According to creativecommons.org (2017), Creative Commons License is a means to balance in traditional setting on copyright law. It gives everyone both individual creator and large company and institution in a simple and standard manner the permission for their copyright of their creative creation.

The Creative Commons license is very important to know by the *co-owner* as an information producer and *owner of information* as the owner of the message because by knowing this license every role of each user of social media Instagram such as the owner of information of *da'wah* video can know his role as a copyright owner so that all contents of the video are their responsibility. Then the Producer (Co-owner) who is the successor of *da'wah* video information which will be disseminated can understand that the importance of Copyright. So, the producer when commercializing the *da'wah* video should ask permission first to the information owner and they are also required to include credit to the information owner.

Some studies show the impact of self-disclosure carried out by social media users, one of the research is conducted by Fife, LaCava, & Nelson (2013) who explore how students communicate to family members through Facebook. The research findings show that students experience their discomfort when making self-disclosures on Facebook. This is caused by interference from the *co-owner of information* that reveals student's personal information on the Facebook page that is different from the co-owner version in which co-owner then give the information to the student's family so that the family has a different understanding tended to be negative. This causes turbulence of the messages expressed by students on the Facebook page, and accordingly the students change their privacy settings to limit the access to their profiles. This study shows that in the use of social media so as not to hit the privacy rules of social media users, it is necessary to adjust or change privacy rules. The findings of the study conducted by Child, Petronio, Agyeman-Budu, & Westermann (2011) suggest to maintain privacy on social media, readjust, modify, change, and delete their privacy rules to meet evolving privacy needs related to display management trigger, identity security, relational management, and fear of legal punishment and discipline. This is carried out to regulate the practice or direct action of privacy rules that occur as a reaction to the display management needs and security needs of social media user identity.

Based on the background of the research, there is a problem concerning the spread of *da'wah* information carried out by the co-owner of information when they get the message conveyed by the owner of information. In this study, researchers will use the theory of Communication Privacy Management (CPM) as a basis to discuss the phenomenon of co-owner of information. However, the researchers do not discuss in terms of how CPM theory provides settings to open and close information based on CPM theory. The researchers highlight the phenomenon of the Rights and Responsibilities of the Co-owner of Information in sharing back the information they got.

## **Methodology**

This study used a text analysis method by observing the data found on *WhatsApp* group 'Jambi Mengaji' in the period November-December 2018. The research was conducted in that period because the researchers found many *da'wah* activities posted on social media that were motivated by the phenomenon of artists who did *hijrah* (moving from bad or negative situation or personality to good or positive one). The discourse raised in the research was *da'wah* information related to religious lectures containing the Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore in the study, the researchers found how at the text level the co-owner of *da'wah* information addressed the meaning of the message they reproduced?

## **Results and Discussion**

At this text level, the researchers present various *da'wah* information available on *WhatsApp* group 'Jambi Mengaji'. The kind of *da'wah* information was selected based on kind of information shared in the group in the form of articles, videos, websites, PDFs, and sound recording of Islamic religious preaching. The data text obtained inform that there were 192 preaching information shared by information co-owner into the group during the period of November-December 2018. Among the 192 information, 38 were in the form of articles, 47 videos, 7 website links, 2 PDF files, and 7 voice recordings. Meanwhile, in December 2018 there were 29 articles, 56 videos, 3 website links, and 3 PDF files shared by co-owner. Of the data distributed during November-December, the researchers took 30% of preaching information in this case we only took 58 information from *WhatsApp* group "Jambi Mengaji".

The consideration for choosing the information was because it fulfilled the criteria based on three audience positions as the message recipient (*dominant-hegemonic position, the negotiated position and the oppositional position*) to interpret the received message in accordance with Stuart Hall's communication model. In addition, the basis of the information selection was the way the information co-owner distributed the messages, by means of forwarding or not, sources of *da'wah* messages, and adding messages or sharing *da'wah* messages in accordance with the intention of the co-owner by cutting the *da'wah* a part of the messages.

After analyzing how information co-owner interpreted *da'wah* information in response to the messages they would reproduce from the period of November-December 2018, the researchers then present their findings as follows:

### 1. *Da'wah Information Is Reproduced by Forwarding*

*Forward* is a feature available on *WhatsApp* which enables its users to share information to other users whether it is individually or in group. The data were obtained by observing information delivered to a *WhatsApp* group "Jambi Mengaji". The researchers found that information was frequently distributed by forwarding the news. As it can be seen, forward feature is easy to use, but it contains potential treats when it is misused. For example, when it is used to distribute hoax, hate speech or the news that lead to disintegration. After observing *da'wah* information circulated in the group, the researchers assume there is possibility that the information co-owners decided to forward the information since they considered they get the news from trusted sources. So, when it is shared, the group members do not need to think about the information sources. This assumption is based on the observation of group members' responses when they received the information. There are two types of responses that can be observed. First, group members replied the information by showing agreement to the information shared by co-owner by giving agreed comments or by giving emoticon to show agreement. Secondly, when *da'wah* information was shared there was no response at all from group members which implied members' agreement to the information.

### 2. *Da'wah Information Is Not Reproduced through Forwarding*

*Forward*, a feature of *WhatsApp* helps users share information directly and easily. However, sometimes information can also be shared not by using forward feature. In this research, the researchers found that there were many *da'wah* messages sent into the group not by forwarding the messages. The researchers assumed two possibilities why group members did not do forwarding. First, group members are the owner of the information, so they produce it directly. Second, group members who share *da'wah* information are the information co-owners who only share *da'wah* information. But, after examining the case thoroughly, having observed the details of the first possibility, it is not possible to occur, since based on data found when group members share *da'wah* information without forwarding, the information shared in the group has a source of information either in the form of article links, or including the owner of *da'wah* information. So it is likely that the second possibility happened and was carried out by group members acting as the co-owner of information from the group Jambi Mengaji.

### 3. *Does Not Include Information Sources*

Mentioning sources of particular information is a must when someone takes or quotes someone else's work as an appreciation to the writer. Including information sources is a common practice among academics when writing their paper. During this study, the researchers observed there were many information co-owners who did not mention information sources in their posts.

This triggered the researchers to verify the truth of the information so that the researchers can find out if the *da'wah* information is produced by group members or they are only information co-owner. The researchers found that most of information co-owner did not mention information sources in their posts. They usually took the information from several websites which provide *da'wah* information and some information was obtained from *Telegram* groups which also provide *da'wah* information.

#### 4. *Including Website Link Promotion, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Group, and Telegram*

Observing article shared in *WhatsApp* group 'Jambi Mengaji', the researchers found that at the end of the article there was information attached in the form of website promotion, *instagram*, *facebook*, *WhatsApp Group*, and *telegram*. The researchers considered that the promotion aimed at informing or offering group members who interested in seeking *da'wah* information by referring to the links as attached in the articles. More interestingly, when the researchers investigated the articles by rechecking the information deeper on Google search engine, there was basically no information attached in the original sources. So, there was a possibility that the information was reproduced with the addition of promotional links.

#### 5. *Providing an Explanation of the Da'wah Information*

Regarding *da'wah* information in the form of video shared in the group 'Jambi Mengaji', when there was no information sources attached, the information co-owner usually added explanation of the content of the video in the form of a title. Thus, the researchers assumed that the information co-owner did this with the intention of giving their own title according to their interpretation of the video content.

#### 6. *Does Not Take the Information from Official Information Account*

The information source shared by information co-owner on *WhatsApp* group 'Jambi Mengaji' was mostly taken from unofficial owner information account. The researchers got this data from the observation of information shared in the group. Most of videos shared are taken from Youtube and Instagram. The researchers also verified that the video shared to group members containing the content of lecturing which had been taken and reproduced by other co-owners.

#### 7. *Including Chained Information Links about Da'wah*

Including chained information link means information co-owner shares an information link, but in order to reach the information, the users should access other link in order to access the first information source. For example, an information co-owner shared a video link in the group where the video was taken from Youtube. When video link was clicked, it directed the user to Youtube page, and the user should watch the video on Youtube.

#### 8. *One Article Contains Various Information Sources*

The finding of the data on the *WhatsApp* group 'Jambi Mengaji' also showed the case where an article of *da'wah* containing various information sources which were considered related to the topic. The data contain a website link that addresses topic to be studied by group member. This allows group members to access themselves if they need the information. But, the

researchers found that information co-owner only forwarded the links. In other word, the information was reproduced by forwarding the production of other information owners.

### 9. *Taking Da'wah Information from Telegram Group*

The data obtained inform that there are so many information forwarded into the group taken from Telegram group, such as Manhajulhaq, Mulia dengan Sunnah, and Koin Arab. The interesting fact about information sources on Telegram group is that this group functioned as *da'wah* information bank. There are several types of information sources available in the group, namely videos, articles, or pictures. From the data, the researchers conclude that group members of 'Jambi Mengaji' shared *da'wah* information into the group by copying and pasting it from Telegram group.

### 10. *Cutting Information Retrieval*

By studying the group of 'Jambi Mengaji' the researchers discovered that there was only partially shared information. This was evident when the researchers tried to verify the article from the original source. It was found that there was a cut in information that made the article incompatible with the original source. The researchers assume this happened because information co-owners only wanted to share the core or main part of the *da'wah* article or else the information co-owners wanted to share the information which was of their interest.

### 11. *Different Sources of Article*

Another finding from this study is the existence of articles with complete incompatibility between the contents and the information links. After going through the links, the researchers found that information co-owner did not share articles in their posts, but link of the official account which also disseminates *da'wah* information.

## **Theory implication**

The theory implication of the findings will be associated with the message acceptance theory of communication model by Stuart Hall. According to Hall, there are three positions of information receiver in interpreting messages they received. So that, messages received by the group members of 'Jambi Mengaji' will relate to the three audience positions, namely dominant-hegemonic position, the negotiated position, and the oppositional position.

### 1. *Dominant-Hegemonic Position*

The form of receiving message received by *da'wah* information co-owner found in WhatsApp group 'Jambi Mengaji' can be investigated from the way the information co-owner shares *da'wah* information into the group. There are two ways used by the co-owner in sharing *da'wah* information, first by forwarding and second without forwarding. The researchers assumed that before spreading the information into the group, information co-owners had first screened the information trustworthiness and they felt that it was worth it sharing the information into the group. The data finding also indicates that all information co-owners address the *da'wah* messages they received in a *dominant-hegemonic position*. It was not only the information co-owners who responded the information in a *dominant-hegemonic position* but also most of the members of 'Jambi Mengaji' group. The responses from group members can be seen when they received messages, they would ask for permission from information co-owner to re-share or forward the information.



## 2. *The Negotiated Position*

*The negotiated position* was not found in the action carried out by information co-owners when they shared information into the group. What interesting is that researchers found the negotiated position in members' responses when they received information from co-owner of information. The responses can be seen when co-owner distributed *da'wah* information. The members requested co-owner to include information sources in his post. This means when group members receive in the form of article shared by co-owner group members receive the information in a dominant manner. But, when the message received from *da'wah* article has been received predominantly the group members act to follow up the message by giving a reproof as an exception.

## 3. *The Oppositional Position*

*The oppositional position* has similarities with *The negotiated position*. Based on the observation, the oppositional position could not be seen since there was no opposition attitude performed by co-owner in sharing information. However, this position can be observed in the responses of the members of Jambi Mengaji. It was observable on the *da'wah* video shared by co-owner where it was responded with refusal by giving a cross emoticon in replying video. This means that group members accepted the information shared by co-owner, but when the information was in contrary to their ideology and religion understanding, group members tended to deny the information.

## **Conclusion**

The results showed that the message of *da'wah* information received by the co-owner of information on WhatsApp group 'Jambi Mengaji' has undergone an acceptance process in the dominant majority, meaning that the message is approved and believed to be correct so that when the message is reproduced, it is worth readed by new message recipient. Whereas when the message from *da'wah* information has been received by the co-owner of information, the co-owners produce messages in various ways that are suitable for their purpose to disseminate *da'wah* information.

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