

## Islamic Perspectives on Press Management

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### ABSTRACT

In the midst of the development and rapidity of technology and communication in society, the press has a strategic position as a channel for channeling information to the public capable of shaping, educating and reporting and entertaining the public so that people can find out about various developments in their environment and within the State. The objective of the article is to portray a comprehensive picture of how press is viewed through Islamic perspective. The Islamic press is a form of contemporary Islamic preaching and plays a very important role in shaping a person's character or personality. In principle, the task of the Islamic press is to defend the weak, to speak out for the voiceless. The position and portion of the Islamic press have been studied since the beginning as a medium of information for education, entertainment and others. Apart from that, it is added with additional functions which may not be able to be replaced by other general press institutions, namely the function of education both religiously, publicly and so on so that it affects the formation of a person's character.

### 1. Introduction

The term press originates from the Dutch language. Press literally means print and terminologically it means broadcasting or printed publication. In its development the press has two definitions, namely the press in a broad sense and the press in a narrow sense. In a broad sense, the press includes all mass communication media, such as radio, television, and films whose function is to transmit / spread information, news, ideas, thoughts, or feelings of a person or group of people to others. Several known terms are radio journalism, television journalism, press journalism. In a narrow sense, the press is classified as publishing products that go through a printing process, such as daily newspapers, weekly magazines, semi-monthly magazines and so on which are known as print media. The press has two sides of position, namely: it is the oldest communication medium in the world, and the press as a social institution is an integral part of society, and is not an alien and separate element from it.

The press is any activities related to media and society at large. The activities refer to journalistic activities that are looking for, digging, collecting, processing material, and publishing it based on reliable and valid sources. The development of the variety of the press lies not only in the media used, but also in the ideology and idealism on which the press institution is based. In this case, the subject of the present research is the press which makes Islam its ideology in conveying information to the public. The Islamic press is a press that makes Islam as the basis for carrying out the functions of the press in its institutions and prioritizes the public interest, especially Muslims. It becomes commonplace and natural when there is a difference in the packaging and presentation of news, because each press has different framing or glasses from one another. Apart from providing information, press institutions also have an economic function, so that often press institutions always defend the interests of the institution's capital owners. So the question is what is the fate of Islamic preaching in the hands of the Islamic press? Then, where does the Islamic press take sides when it comes to issues of ethnicity, religion, sect or race? The fundamental difference between the Islamic press and other general press lies in the "Islamic" characteristics inherent in the body of the press institution. The label "Islam" that is used can become the fangs for the Islamic press, but at the same time it can become a thorn in the flesh when misplacing its position and contribution as the press. So that the management of da'wah in Islamic press institutions needs to be a study for us, media consumers. That is why the contribution made, revitalizing the role of the Islamic press and the issues covered in the Islamic press is very important.

## 2. Theoretical Review

### 2.1 Characteristics of Islamic Press

The Islamic press attempts to shape its characteristics following the four key characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad which consist of *shiddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh* and *fathonah*. In this case, the Islamic press must be able to emulate these key characteristics as a part of emulating the morals of the Prophet Muhammad. Explanation of the Prophet's basic characteristics and what Islamic press need to do in imitating his traits is explained as follows

#### 1. Shiddiq

Shiddiq means true. The Prophet Muhammad SAW is the bearer of truth. What he said was the truth that came from Allah SWT. As a bearer of truth, Prophet Muhammad certainly had a very honest personality. Even before he was appointed as a Prophet and Rasul, he had a very honest personality so that he got the title Al-Amin (a person who can be trusted) in his social environment. What the Islamic press should do in following this characteristic is to present honest news or broadcast content; facts and data are explained correctly, objectively, and have clear sources, then side with Islamic ideology.

#### 2. Amanah (Trust)

Amanah means that Rasulullah Muhammad SAW is a person who is very responsible for a job or whatever is assigned to him. He is a person who always carries out all the matters that become his duties and responsibilities, keeps his promises, and never betrayed. Thus, an Islamic press that exemplifies the nature of amanah is a press that works professionally, proportionally, objectively and is socially responsible.

#### 3. Tabligh

Tabligh means to convey. That is, Rasulullah SAW always conveyed Islamic teachings to his people. Because of his tabligh nature Rasulullah SAW was a very communicative person. So for the Islamic press that exemplifies the nature of the tabligh of the Prophet Muhammad must always convey Islamic truths frankly and communicatively to their audiences.

#### 4. Fathonah

The prophet Muhammad SAW has the characteristics of fathonah which means intelligent. The intelligence of Rasulullah SAW can be seen from how he arranged da'wah, political strategy, war and others. Apart from having a certain nature intelligent, he is also intellectual because the teachings of Islam that he conveys is the best solution for human life. Allah SWT said which means "You are the best people who were born to humans, ordered the ma'ruf, and prevented evil, and believed in Allah. If the people of the Book had faith, it would have been better for them, among them there were those who believed, and most of them were wicked people" (QSALI-Imran: 3: 110).

The Islamic press which exemplifies the nature of Rasulullah SAW's fathonah means trying to make himself present in front of the public always providing solutions to the problems of human life.

The freedom that journalists must enjoy is the legality of those who disclose everything that is beneficial to society and becomes the concern of the majority of the community (public opinion or opinion). In addition, the positive impact can also be enjoyed by all groups (Anam, 2008: 9). From this it can be concluded that the freedom of the press in question is actually freedom that expresses public aspirations, is responsible and does not harm any party and when talking about press freedom in Islam, then we must also talk about: 1). Freedom of thought; and 2. Freedom of opinions according to the perspective of Islam. Islam guarantees freedom of thought in a concrete and real way. Because this freedom is regulated by morals and is monitored at all times by the observation of Allah. More than that, in Islam thinking, doing research and research is recommended and is a form of worship and a valid method to achieve belief in Allah. Also reveals His majesty and power. It is logical that freedom of the press (thinking and expressing), as well as other freedoms in general, are not absolutely without limits. The existence of restrictions is not to castrate creativity and freedom, but to respect the rights and freedoms of others. Islam prohibits harassment or actions that can bring someone down. As well as Islam prohibiting actions that do not heed general ethics, spreading evil through news or otherwise, or acts of hostility towards religious syi'ar-syi'ar.

### 2.2 Quranic Methodology in Responding to News

News is an urgent matter in the people's intelligence mission. If the news delivered is good and true, of course it will have a positive impact on those who receive the news. But what will become a problem is if the news that is spread is news that is not yet clear, or even news that is not true at all. The following are the methods taught by Islam in addressing the news.

#### 1. Returning to the Qur'an and the Sunnah and the Ulama

This is based on Allah's sayings which means "when news comes to them about security or fear, they then broadcast it. and if they submit it to the Apostle and ulil Amridi among them, surely those who want to know the truth (will be able to) know it from

them (apostle and ulil Amri) If not For the grace and mercy of Allah to you, of course you will follow Satan, except for some small (among you)". (Qur'an Surah An Nisaa : 83)

## 2. *Tabayyun*

*Tabayyun* is an important thing to do in receiving news. This can refer to research the Truth of the News and Knowing It Thoroughly. *Tabayyun* is to clarify, cross-check, and analyze problems carefully. We need to find the root of the problem and be wise in looking at the reasons and opinions of all parties.

### 3. The existence of Witnesses

This is based on the words of Allah which means "Why did they (those who accused it) not bring four witnesses to this hoax? Because they have not brought witnesses. Then they will be with God who lie". (Surah An Nur: 13)

### 4. not allowed to spread what you hear

This is based on the word of Allah which means "Surely those who wish that (the news of) such heinous deeds spread among the believers, for them a painful punishment in this world and in the hereafter. and Allah knows, is, you do not know". (Surah An Nuur: 19)

Based on these points, it is clear that apart from journalists who deliver news, people who get news must also be wise in responding to existing information.

## 2.3 *Islamic Press Development in Indonesia*

The development of the print media in Indonesia particularly from year to year, can be seen for the period from 1995. It is necessary to compare the state before reform and the situation later after reform. The number of daily newspapers in 1998 was 172. This is a big increase from 1995 (77 units), to 79 in 1997. While there were 425 weekly newspapers recorded in 1998, 55 weekly magazines and 104 semi-monthly magazines. By region, there were 431 printed media published in Jakarta in 1998 (see Tables 1 and 2 regarding the development of mass media).

The boom in print media business also affected the development of total circulation in Indonesia (data recorded since 1995). The total circulation per 1995 was 13.04 million copies, and in 1998 it reached 16.70 million copies. Details of newspapers, magazines, tabloids, etc. can be seen in table 3. This rapid growth cannot be separated from the desire of investors to try to do business in the press world, hoping to reap both financial and other benefits in the information business world.

The emergence of the Islamic press began in the early 20th century, along with the birth and spread of reform ideas that developed in the Middle East, especially from Egypt. The ideas about reform at least spread through two leading Egyptian magazines, *Urwatul Wutsqo* and *Al Manar*. The spread of this idea was so wide that it reached Java, and gave birth to the *Jami'at Khair* movement. The members of this organization then spread out and founded their own organizations, such as KH Ahmad Dahlan who founded Muhammadiyah. Apart from Muhammadiyah, several other associations were also established, such as Sarekat Dagang Islam, Persatuan Islam, or Jong Islamienten Bond (Joenaidi, 1997). These organizations establish a climate of discussion for contemporary Islamic thought. On a broader scale, this gave rise to the need for an Islamic press.

The Islamic press, as part of the indigenous press aimed at spreading the spirit of nationalism and ideals of independence, was initially seen as a "partisan" media, due to its tendency to spread the ideology of its publishing group. However, after the doors of reform opened at the end of 1997 and the development of the 1998 era, the existence of the Islamic press became wider, both as a medium of preaching and as a forum for regime resistance. And this is what triggers the growing development of the Islamic press in Indonesia.

The development of the media today, allows for media competition or war. And here, the role of the Islamic press must be able to match and neutralize all the mistakes made by other media. As a medium for *da'wah*, the Islamic press should be provocative and carry out agitations that can influence its readers and this can be done in various ways and approaches. As is done by Annida who tries to approach her readers through literary channels. In its development, Annida already has its own market share, so that when it has a clear flow, religious preaching will be easily carried out. It is different with *Republika*, which is on a general line, here *republika* is required to be careful in playing its role as a media of preaching, or else *Republika* will lose its market or its readership who incidentally have a general background. The development of information media which is secular in nature is often a parasite for the Muslim community in particular. How could it not be, the media that occupy our daily time, both television and print media, often present information that is secular in nature and forms a character for the audience. Thus, it is an obligation for Islam-based media to become an information filter for the public.

## 2.4 *Islamic Press and Da'wah*

The function and role of the press have been regulated in article 33 of Law no. 40 of 1999 concerning the press, is a medium of information, education, entertainment and social control. Meanwhile, at the state level, the foundation of the press is Pancasila. In accordance with the function of the press, the Islamic press also has a function as social control and education, so it is closely related to da'wah. This is the common thread between the press and the preaching of Islam itself. In essence, the purpose of preaching is as a basis for education to others, namely religious education. So that with this relationship, the Islamic press has a strategic position in implementing education in order to build one's character.

A significant role is like the main actor in a story and drama, because the media has more power than the dissemination of da'wah with old methods such as lectures, speeches or sermons. Da'wah in this digital era will be more effective in using print and online media that are more familiar to the public. The Islamic press and Islamic preaching are difficult to separate, because the Islamic press and da'wah are like a coin that cannot be separated.

Indonesia is a country where the majority of the population is Muslim. Therefore it has become commonplace and natural with the development of the Islamic press because of the dynamics of social life itself. Talking about the Islamic press, regardless of the ideology and the initial concept of the foundation of the press institution, namely religion as an ideology, it means that this is a partisan press with an Islamic style that has a strategic portion and position in both the community and government.

### 2.5 Supports of the Islamic Press

In the world of press and mass media there are nine elements of journalism, and the second element is about taking sides. It is stated that the loyalty of all journalism is to side with the people / society and the citizens of the country (Kovach and Rosentiel, 2006). In presenting the information, a press institution including the Islamic press is required to side with the people, closer again to the people of Islam alone. Meanwhile, in these elements it is also explained that as a press institution, it must side with the truth and give voice to the voiceless (in this case, the oppressed people). Thus, it is clear, that the Islamic press is indeed required to side with the citizens, the truth and speak out for the voiceless for the sake of justice. With regard to reporting, the Islamic press should be able to cover sensitive issues as best as possible. Making sensitive issues about race, ethnicity and so on into news that creates peace, not the other way around.

Each media and press institution has its own media politics that have been conceptualized and conceived in such a way for the purposes of each of these institutions, as well as the Islamic press. In the world of journalism there are terms peace journalism and war journalism. As an Islamic press that loves peace, what should be the feature of the Islamic press is to construct news that makes the reader peaceful (does not provoke anarchism) during or after reading it, not the other way around.

Peace journalism is a journalistic practice that rests on critical questions about the benefits of violent actions in a conflict and about the lessons of conflict itself for humanitarian entities. Peace journalism preaches the conflict as it is and gives equal portions to all parties or versions that appear in conflict discourse. This journalism is more concerned with empathy for victims of conflict rather than coverage of the course of the conflict with a genre that puts forward hope and desire for peace rather than the smell of revenge and hatred on both parties. (Subdiyo,2001)

To become input for the Islamic press is how to apply peaceful journalism practices which are indeed the teachings of Islam itself, Islam is a peaceful religion. Because it is quite clear in their analysis, there are still many media that have not used the practice of peaceful journalism itself, both the Islamic press (in this example, *Republika*) and the non-Islamic press such as *Kompas*, *Suara Pembaruan* and the neutral press that has used peaceful journalism practices (Media Indonesia). (Subdiyo,2001).

The Islamic press has a more function than the press in general if it is maximized. An educating and supportive Islamic press will be able to play a role in one's personal development, of course to comply with Islamic principles. Thus, the role of the Islamic press is very important and has an urgent position considering that education (whether general knowledge, religion, morals or ethics) is very much needed by society as a whole and Muslims in general. Everything is for the development of the character of the nation's children, in order to become a nation that is superior in morals and intellectually.

The Islamic press is tasked with conveying all information related to and in favor of the public interest, especially Muslims, so that the press uses the mass media to convey information. So that the mass media are recognized for their efficacy in influencing society. Although people do not doubt the mass media to influence society, from the effect of study it turns out that the press does not have the power to directly influence the people. However, according to Elihu Katz, the American communications expert the influence of the press will double through what is called an *opinion leader* (Assegaf, 1983). The Islamic press must be able to influence leaders, in this case the concept of education in Indonesia because this *opinion leader* will influence the wider community.

Finally, as a press that is against tyranny (something inappropriate / persecuted), the Islamic press must uphold ethics in every journalistic process. This means that as an Islamic press in the country of Indonesia which is not actually an Islamic state (even though the majority embraces Islam), it must always adhere to the values of Pancasila contained in every item of the agreed journalistic code of ethics (Wibowo, 2009). Any type of press institution, which is engaged in the economic, social sector, whatever pattern it is, ethics in journalistic activities is very much needed and becomes our common ideal in realizing a better press life.

### 2.6 Professionalism of the Islamic Press

The word profession comes from the Latin word *professus*, which means an activity or work which was originally associated with a religious oath and promise. someone who has a profession that has an inner bond with his job. violation of an oath or promise against a profession is the same as a violation of the oath of office which is deemed to have violated the sanctity of that profession. (Wibowo, 2009) Professionalism means an understanding that values highly, especially professional skills, or general personal abilities. As the main tool to achieve success, the understanding of professionalism will be clearer if it is distinguished from those that do not value professionalism. A culture that does not prioritize personal skills or abilities which is not from a dishonest way. Thus, professionalism does not depend on success on its ability and following the rules that apply in the profession. They will compete through quality standards of work, service, or product because the principles of the profession are generally tested and will result in high reliability and credibility. In a company, the press is of course demanded and of course sought for resources that are truly capable in their field (Professional). The professional characteristics (Wibowo, 2009) includes

1. Have skills or abilities and have high abilities that are not owned by other people, whether it is obtained from the results of education or training that he has participated in plus years of experience he has had as a professional.
2. Any work expressed in formal, written and normative forms in various forms.
3. Having professional responsibility and high personal integrity starting in his own state which will later also become a figure towards the public, for example in terms of leadership, organization etc.
4. Highly dedicated to the community
5. Have the ability to manage an organization or have a leadership spirit (leadership)
6. Can maintain the existence of the institution that has been done.

Of these six characteristics, it is certainly quite rare in this country, especially because there are still many press employees who violate the rules such as, are willing to accept bribes so as not to spread negative information to the public and the many scandals that have occurred, but not all of that happened.

### 2.7 The existence of the Islamic Press as Part of Mass Media

Felder (1978) suggests three existence of mass media which can be measured by the following: 1) The Mass media are the Instrument of communication 2) Because of the large audience the media are enormously powerful, 3) The media are business and to survive and retain their independent and to earn profit. (Bill and Tom, 2006)

Media is a tool of mass communication. A communication that is shown at the time regarding mass matters, even what must be underlined is how the message will arrive on target, meaning that the presence of the media is very important.

When talking about the existence of the Islamic press as a mass media, of course it has a very important role, why is that, because various information will always be desired by the public in fulfilling their wishes and to obtain the right to obtain information about the development of Islam that has occurred in the State at large and can even access info that is worldwide. There are many benefits contained in the Islamic press, because it is undeniable that it can also be used as a medium of preaching and with honest information of course. As we all know that da'wah has many dimensions, including those classified into 4.1). Remind people of the value of justice and honesty both in real and orally, 2). Communicating Islamic principles and containing positive information that can be consumed by the Muslim community at large, 3). Give exemplary examples

The condition of Muslims in Indonesia in consuming media, most of them are more interested in television. This is related to the people's low reading interest, the people who are the customers of the Islamic press *plural society, santri*, and organizational activists. They become customers of the Islamic press because of their sense of solidarity and the price is cheaper. Meanwhile, the middle class and above, who live in cities mostly less interested in the Islamic press, may feel less prestigious in reading the Islamic press, and think the Islamic press is not interesting to read or too difficult to be read.

Referring to the above view, it seems that the Islamic press needs to segment the market according to the classification, including intellectual segmentation and also refers to Surah An-Nahl verse 125 which contains methods of da'wah with

wisdom, mauidhoh hasanah (good advice) and with *mujadalah bil lati hiya ahsan*. (good debate) and of course also must act creatively, make interesting innovations and must be sensitive to market desires, so that the existence of the Islamic press in Indonesia is undoubted.

### 3. Conclusion

Press and da'wah activities are two activities that seem far different yet united at one common point, namely Islam, which means that the Islamic press and da'wah activities are two inseparable things. The Islamic press is a form of contemporary Islamic preaching and is very instrumental in shaping a person's character or personality. Even though Indonesia is not an Islamic country, the majority of the population is Muslim. This has become commonplace and is a necessity for the dynamics and development of the Islamic press in Indonesia from time to time. Every press must take sides, although in principle it must always be cover both side and not biased or one-sided. However, taking sides may and is precisely required, namely taking sides with citizens, society and of course taking sides with truth and justice. So that in principle, the task of the Islamic press is to defend the weak, voicing the voiceless. Peaceful journalism is a journalism practice that promotes peace in news framing, so that the news will not cause the readers and the public to become inflamed or commit anarchist acts. Peaceful journalism is very much in accordance with the concept of Islam, Islam which is a religion of peace. The Islamic press should not make news that is provocative and not create news that further worsens the situation of the conflict. In responding to sensitive issues related to ethnicity and other differences, the Islamic press should use the best diction and frame the news. Meanwhile, the position and portion of the Islamic press have been studied since the beginning, namely as a medium of information for education, entertainment and others. In addition, it is added with additional functions that may not be able to be replaced by other general press institutions, namely the function of education, whether religious, general and so on, so that it affects the formation of a person's character. Ironically, press that provide education to their audience, on average, do not survive long. The lack of financial support used for production is one of the contributing factors, so that recently the media have taken a lot of financial advantage from the information published. Further research needs to be conducted to investigate how big the impact of financial benefits on the content of the press.

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