Language, Authority, and Digital Media: The Impact on the Legitimacy of Fatwas

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Abstrak: Kajian ini berupaya mengungkap posisi Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) saat ini yang secara kelembagaan memiliki kewenangan mengeluarkan fatwa. Era disrupsi dan revolusi digital membawa tantangan tersendiri bagi MUI. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang menggabungkan analisis isi dalam sebuah teks dengan analisis jaringan aktor yang memproduksi teks tersebut. Analisis isi teks dilakukan dengan menganalisis data berupa penggunaan bahasa pada fatwa MUI daerah yang menunjukkan gejala debirokratisasi fatwa. Tahap selanjutnya adalah memetakan wacana yang muncul dalam gejala debirokratisasi fatwa. Dalam memetakan aktor-aktor tersebut, penelitian ini menggunakan *Discourse Network Analysis* (DNA). Hal ini berguna untuk menjawab peta wacana dan aktor yang terlibat dalam memproduksi sebuah wacana. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa ada dua tantangan utama yang dihadapi MUI di era revolusi digital. Pertama, merupakan gejala debirokratisasi yang ditandai dengan semakin banyaknya isu nasional yang dibahas dan diputuskan oleh MUI daerah. Kedua, depersonalisasi ditandai dengan lahirnya ulama selebritas yang kerap mengeluarkan fatwa di forum-forum halakah dan pengajian yang dimiliki.

Kata kunci: fatwa; otoritas keagamaan; bahasa; debirokratisasi; depersonalisasi

Abstract: This study aims to uncover the position of the Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia or MUI) in the current institutional context where it has the authority to issue fatwas. The era of disruption and digital revolution poses challenges for MUI. This qualitative study combines content analysis of a text with actor-network analysis of the actors who produce the text. Content analysis of the text was carried out by analyzing the language used in MUI regional fatwas that indicate symptoms of fatwa de-bureaucratization. The next step is to map the discourse arising from the fatwa de-bureaucratization symptoms. This study uses the Discourse Network Analysis (DNA) tool to map the actors involved. This is useful to answer the discourse map and actors involved in producing a discourse. The study results show that MUI faces two main challenges in the digital revolution era. First, the symptom of de-bureaucratization is marked by the increasing number of national issues discussed and decided by MUI regions. Second, depersonalization is characterized by the emergence of celebrity ulama, who often issue fatwas in forums and religious gatherings they possess.

Keywords: fatwa; religious authority; language; de-bureaucratization; depersonalization

Introduction

In Islamic traditions, fatwas have a rich history and hold great significance. During the early period of Islam, when the Prophet Muhammad was alive, Muslims considered him their primary source of guidance for performing religious and social practices. They would seek his opinions or fatwas on various matters, including cases where the laws were not previously established. This tradition of seeking fatwas was carried forward by the companions (*ṣaḥabah*) and the *tābi' i al-tābi'īn*, and eventually by respected scholars who were regarded as authorities on Islamic law (al-Harrani, 2015: 25; Alnizar, 2019: 418; al-Nawawi, 1988: 77; Masud, Messick, & David Powers, 1996: 198).

There are two models of the fatwa: personal and institutional (Skovgaard-Petersen, 2015: 279; Assyaukanie, 2009: 12). Many Arab countries use a personal model by appointing one person who is considered the most pious to be a mufti. Mufti is job is to provide solutions and problems for the community. Meanwhile, in some Arab countries, the religious authority is centralized in a single individual who is considered the most pious and knowledgeable and is appointed as the mufti. The mufti's role is to provide guidance and solutions to the community on religious matters. On the other hand, Indonesia and Malaysia follow an institutional model for producing fatwas. In these countries, fatwas are not produced by individuals but rather by institutions responsible for religious affairs. These institutions are composed of scholars and experts in Islamic law who work together to produce fatwas based on Islamic jurisprudence principles and are relevant to the community's needs.

This institutional model ensures that fatwas are produced through collective decision-making and are not influenced by individual biases or opinions. It also allows for diverse opinions and perspectives to be considered in the production of fatwas, which can lead to more nuanced and relevant guidance for the community.

In the context of state institutions, the fatwa institution is known as the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI). MUI is mandated to issue fatwas on social issues that occur in Indonesia (Alnizar & Munjid, 2020: 30; Hasyim, 2020: 23). Suaedy (2018: 290) argues that MUI believes that they are a representation of Indonesian Muslims. Thus, the

issued fatwas are considered attitudes and reflections of the opinions of Muslims.

However, at certain levels of society—like at mass organizations—there are also special institutions tasked with solving people's problems. The Bahtsul Masail Institute and the Majlis Tarjih Muhammadiyah are two great examples of institutions that have the task of finding answers to questions raised by the people (Schäfer, 2019: 238; Zamhari et al., 2021: 75).

In the Indonesian context, according to Fealy and White (2008: 194) people flock to embrace religion and make religion the way to go (Bunt 2003: 41). According to Munjid (2018) the current era creates individuals who are demonstrative with their religiosity (selfie-religiosity). It is interesting to discuss how society deals with fatwas. What is MUI's current position as an institution with the legality to issue fatwas? Is fatwa still considered sacred, mythical, doctrinal, and must be obeyed? Further, are the voices of the ulama still being heard, or are they ignored and thrown away? Moreover, does it mean that the ulama—in the context of being institutionalized- have started to lose their authority and voice in certain contexts? In the era of the digital revolution like today, is the pattern of bureaucratization of fatwas as practiced by MUI still relevant, or is it experiencing a shifting paradigm?

Method

The study explores and synthesizes two approaches commonly used in studying fatwas, including the principal religious approach and the political instrument approach (Hicks 2014: 321). The first approach is more dominant in looking at fatwas from the theological aspect, while the second tends to lead to a political tool driven by power.

This qualitative research combines two analyses, including the analysis of the text and the actors who produce the text. The contents of the regional MUI fatwa texts show signs of de-bureaucratization of fatwas. The next step is to map the fatwa discourse identified as de-bureaucratization. Then, the researchers looked at the actors who produced the discourse. This study uses the Discourse Network Analysis (DNA) tool to map these actors. This is useful for answering discourse maps and actors involved in producing these discourses.

In the DNA analysis, a text is analyzed by considering four aspects (1) actors, (2) discourse, (3) sentiment on discourse and (4) the period when the discourse is produced. This study used DNA to view discourse maps and actor networks in the fatwa de-bureaucratization process. The final expected result is the mapping of discourse networks and networks of actors who make efforts to de-bureaucratize fatwas about shifts in religious authority and fatwa institutions.

This research data is the fatwa from Regional MUI, which is useful to prove and support the hypothesis. A process of shifting religious authority indicates a de-bureaucratization of the MUI. The de-bureaucratization in question refers to the provisions in the Guidelines for determining the MUI Fatwa. Those emphasize that Regional MUI's are not allowed to respond to and discuss national issues since these are the Central MUI domain. The findings revealed that some fatwas indicate a de-bureaucratization. First, West Sumatra MUI fatwa on Islam Nusantara. Second, West Sumatra MUI fatwa regarding the law using names not by the Shari'a on food products in 2019. Third, the East Java MUI fatwa challenges the prohibition of greetings from other religions.

Fatwa, Religious Authority, and Digital Age

Kaptein (2004: 116-117) sees fatwas as a medium to spread religious authority with high intensity. Further, he evolved fatwas into three types: traditional, modern, and collective. The hallmark of a traditionalist fatwa is not mentioning the name and identity of Mustafti (the person asking the question). This type of fatwa uses common Arabic script and the Arabic pegon—for example, the fatwa in *Muhimmāt Nafāis fī Bayāni as'ilat al-hadith* (Kaptein 2004: 21).

The difference between the modern fatwa and the traditional fatwa is the identity of the mustafti or the questioner. A newspaper, Pembela Islam—one of the media used as research references—mentions mustafti's identity. However, the identity was hidden when the fatwas were recorded. This is done as a consideration that the questions asked in the media are. However, these questions are global when written in a fatwa book collection. Moreover, the real difference between modern and traditional fatwa is the language used. Around the 1930s,

a PERSIS figure, Ahmad Hassan, initiated the writing of fatwas in Bahasa Q&A in 1929-1935.

A collective fatwa is a fatwa that develops from a personal fatwa, as is the case with traditional and modern fatwas. Three mass organizations or institutions issue this fatwa: MUI, NU, and Muhammadiyah.

Religious authority is dynamic, not static, compared to the 19th-century religious authority monopolized by scholars (Mücke, 2010: 63-64). The digital revolution is marked by the opening of information channels and creating a new phenomenon: those not religious scholars also have religious authority on their terms.

The digital revolution changes people's life, including religious communication patterns (Lövheim & Hjarvard, 2019: 208), from traditional to internet-based communication that relies on openness and speed. Four circumstances influence the changes (Abdullah, 2017: 117). First, technology is one of the backbones of communication in religion. Oral-traditional proselytization *(da'wah)* is found in many social media (Akmaliah, 2020: 17; Müller & Steiner, 2018: 4). The elements of speed and brevity combined with attractive graphic packaging are the three main signs of religious technology. Social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are the arenas for contestation and the most effective da'wah media today (Aguilar, et al. 2017: 1498-1499; Nisa, 2018b: 24-25).

The second is depersonalization. The internet makes religious people's communication pattern no longer rely on charisma, character, and scholars. However, more than that, social media has undermined the reasoning that relies on personalization and character. "Authorities in the most haunted realm, religion, was no less shaken when traditional charismatic figures were pressured by celebrities who just yesterday afternoon studied religion (Redana, 2020: 10)"

Third is the phenomenon of releasing religious roots. This can be seen from the shift in the character of diversity, which was originally assumed to be a way to solve problems in a society where religion is born. Instead, it is uprooted and more interested in responding to global-Mondial issues. This is a direct effect of the increasingly limitless nature of the world. Global and global-scale issues can become the main themes in daily religious studies.

Fourth, there is participation in the production of knowledge and religious discourse. The vast channels of information and social media allow anyone to channel their aspirations and participate in coloring debates in the public sphere. In this position, on social media, we can see how people who do not have the capacity for the religious scholarship without the burden of giving negative comments even attack the personality of a cleric (Abdullah, 2017: 119).

The digital era in the context of searching for religious reference sources is referred to by Ahyar and Alfitri (2019: 25-26) as *clicktivism activity* (Islamic clicktivism). This activity describes Islamic activism in the network, characterized by shifts in the means of da'wah, changes in actors, and changes in da'wah strategies. Islamic clicktivism, with the various elements that include it, in the context of religious patterns in Indonesia, is reflected in the propaganda carried out during the 212 and 411 Movement moments in 2017 (Nastiti & Ratri, 2018: 196). This means that the digital world, one of which relies on social media, has a strong influence on shaping religious discourse. The practice of online religious learning (Islamic clicktivism) has resulted in what is known as religious populism. Symptoms at least occur in the digital era, mainly due to the rapid growth of the pattern of da'wah through social media: "Social media has become a productive space for the development of religious populism in Indonesia" (Sholahuddin & Fakruroji, 2020: 9).

The struggle for religious authority has a very long history. For Feener (2014: 501), in modern times, ulama, as one of the owners of religious authority, place themselves in an increasingly crowded public sphere. The struggle for religious authority is carried out, among others, by conducting contemporary debates in the public sphere, which culminates and is characterized by the emergence of new, complex discursive formulations on issues of individual rights, religious belief, and practice, responsibilities, and appropriate standards of public morality. This is a sign that the mastery of discourse and media, a vehicle for conveying ideas and discourses, has an important position in the struggle for religious authority.

The relationship between religious authority, the role of ulama, and symbolic power in Indonesian society for Zulkilfi (2013) are solid. This conclusion was obtained based on a search of important literature on

Kiai, ulama, power, and religious authority. Ulamas have an important role in political, social, and economic change. Ulama has a strategic position in at least the three areas mentioned above. However, this study also finds that the religious authority of the ulama has been fragmented for a long time. The decline of clerical authority is significantly impacted by alterations in people's way of living and behavior. Meanwhile, there is competition among traditionalists, reformers, radicals, and newcomers in religious authority. From this research, it can also be proven that religious authorities can run effectively if they walk on the 'rails' of power (Zulkifli, 2013: 42).

Fatwas are not merely legal products that are doctrinal, but more than that, from an anthropological perspective, fatwas are religious products that have temporality and several other aspects from the point of view of anthropological studies. Fatwas have significant power, although they are not binding. "fatwa exercise significant authority even though they are not officially binding, while the court judgment is looked on with great suspicion despite their legally binding status" (Agrama, 2010: 56). From an anthropological perspective, it is crucial to discuss and explore the temporality of fatwas, as they are legal opinions that do not have a binding relationship with the individual who seeks advice *(mustaftī)* and have limitations regarding their duration. Failing to acknowledge the significance of this issue can lead to a decline in the authority of fatwas over time.

The dominant nature of the fatwa is elaborating past opinions or views and then grounding them with views of the present or even the future. Furthermore, the relationship pattern produced by the fatwa, namely between the mufti and mustafti, which will later give birth to authority, is reciprocal. Fatwas are legal products for certain people, in certain cases, at certain times. In this position, the fatwa will be positioned by mustafti as not only a suggestion but more than an 'obligation' and an 'answer' to the problems raised (Alnizar et al., 2021: 2-3).

The production process, methodology, and methods used in determining fatwas at the MUI are important considerations for examining the issue of fatwas (Hosen, 2004). The sources for the determination of the fatwa, the relationship between the fatwa issued by the central MUI and the regional MUI, as well as the topics

of problems that are fatwa should also be an important concern in reviewing the fatwa, especially concerning the authority produced.

Between 1975 and 1998, the MUI played a significant role as a quasi-governmental institution. During this period, MUI served as a bridge between various Islamic organizations and was often seen as a mouthpiece of the government in promoting certain attitudes and policies. The government relied on MUI to provide religious legitimacy for its decisions and actions, and MUI often played a key role in justifying government policies for the Muslim community. As such, MUI was seen as a powerful institution that helped to shape public opinion on important issues.

However, it is essential to note that MUI's relationship with the government has not always been smooth, and there have been instances where MUI has been critical of government policies. Nonetheless, its status as a respected and influential religious institution has meant that its views and opinions carry significant weight within the Muslim community in Indonesia.

Most MUI fatwas in 1975-1998 referred to fiqh books with little or no modification or further ijtihad. In the opinion of the article's author, this condition proves that MUI does not have a methodology for determining its fatwas.

There is an internal problem with the MUI fatwa commission, which is not solid enough, especially during meetings in the fatwa decision process. The article's author revealed that many members of the fatwa commission were absent and reluctant to attend the plenary meeting of the fatwa commission to discuss issues that would be fatwaed. One of the fundamental problems expressed was the lack of honorarium earned, so it could not cover the need for taxi fares (Hosen, 2004: 19).

Language and the Evidence of Fatwa's De-bureaucratization

As a continuation effect of the digital revolution, we can see that there has been a phenomenon of de-bureaucratization of fatwas in recent years. This symptom is marked by one of them—the spread of "online fatwa" sites containing questions and answers between the mufti and mustafti (Bunt, 2003: 142-143: Subchi et al., 2022: 53).

This kind of practice—in the Indonesian context, especially at the MUI—has the opportunity to undermine the bureaucratization of fatwas that has existed so far.

In the Guidelines for Determining the Fatwa issued by the MUI (2012), there is a clause for determining the fatwa with a bureaucratic character. For example, there is a rule that the central MUI has the authority to decide on national or regional issues that have the potential to spread to other regions. On the other hand, regional MUI's are not allowed to decide on issues that have a national scale. This can be understood as the nature of the organization, which is generally bureaucratic.

Article 17 (1) and (2) of the Guidelines for Determining Fatwa issued by MUI (*Pedoman penetapan Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia*) indirectly state that MUI at the regional level, namely those at the provincial and district/city levels only have the authority to respond to problems of a local nature. On the other hand, the Central MUI has the authority to respond to national and local issues seen as having the potential to expand.

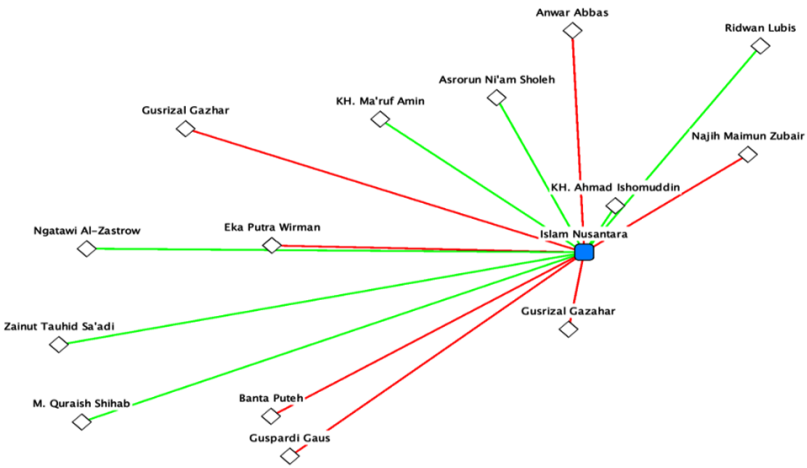
> "The Indonesian Ulema Council has the authority to issue fatwas on national and regional religious issues. Then, if a problem occurs in an area and has not been given a fatwa by the MUI, the Regional MUI has the authority to issue a fatwa. (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2012)"

Efforts to strengthen the bureaucratic character of the fatwa are also contained in Article 18 of the Guidelines for Determining the MUI Fatwa (2012). In articles 18 (1) and (2) it is stated that the line of fatwa is top-down. This means that all decisions from Central MUI are made only to be carried out by the Regional MUI.

In 2018, several regional MUI decisions (fatwas) began to respond to national-scale problems. In this case, the MUI of West Sumatra is an interesting example. The decision of the West Sumatra MUI Coordination Meeting for Harmony and Brotherhood on 21 July 2018 resulted in a decision to reject Islam Nusantara (Majelis Ulama Indonesia Provinsi Sumatera Barat, 2018; Schäfer, 2021: 3). This is a form of fatwa de-bureaucratization. The issue of Islam Nusantara is not an issue on a local scale. Islam Nusantara is an idea promoted by Nahdlatul Ulama that has a national scale. Even recently, NU has tried to bring this idea into a global context.

Although this decision has heated the debate space and provoked unequal reactions from the internal management of the Central MUI, what is important to point out is the tendency that national issues should not be decided at the national level. Regional MUI's carry out "penetration" and "improvisation" so that national issues must also become a local/regional discussion. Although there are efforts to "localize" the dictum of the decision by stating that Islam Nusantara is not needed in the Minang realm, this does not mean that Islam Nusantara is a local issue.

Figure 1. Map of actor-network analysis on the issue of Islam Nusantara



Eleven actors are actively involved in the public sphere (media) in the debate about the discourse on the introduction of the term Islam Nusantara. The eleven actors who contested the discourse on Islam Nusantara were divided into two main groups. One party expresses a pro stance, while the other expresses disagreement (con). Those who claim no problem with Islam Nusantara come from moderate circles. Meanwhile, those who argue against Islam Nusantara come from conservative circles.

The moderates contesting the discourse of Islam Nusantara are from Nahdlatul Ulama and its network. These actors include KH. Ahmad Ishomuddin (Rais Syuriah PBNU 2015-2021), Ngatawi Al-Zastrow (Lecturer at the Nahdlatul Ulama University of Indonesia,

Jakarta). In addition, those who agreed with Islam Nusantara outside NU included M. Quraish Shihab from the Pusat Studi Quran and Ridwan Lubis from UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta (Figure 1).

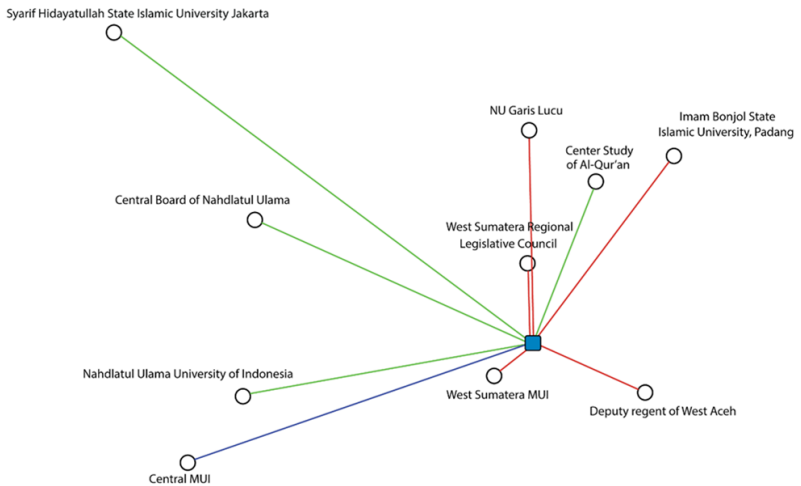
The parties against the discourse of Islam Nusantara come from groups with opposing views to Nahdlatul Ulama, such as Najih Maimoen Zubair, a figure in NU Garis Lurus. Apart from that, the rejection actors also came from a network of agencies that had relations with the West Sumatran MUI, such as the West Aceh Regent, West Sumatra DPRD, and UIN Imam Bonjol (Figure 2).

The Central MUI's position on the issue of the Islam Nusantara discourse was divided. While the Secretary-General of MUI from 2015-2020, Anwar Abbas, supported the rejection of Islam Nusantara, others such as KH. Ma'ruf Amin (General Chairperson of MUI), Zainut Tauhid Sa'adi (Vice Chairperson of MUI), and Asroun Niam Sholeh (Secretary of the MUI Fatwa Commission) considered the rejection of the term to be a misunderstanding. According to Zainut Tauhid Sa'adi, the denial of Islam Nusantara did not reflect the MUI's function as a big tent for Muslims, which is meant to protect the aspirations of Muslims. The MUI serves as an essential platform for Muslims to come together and discuss important issues, and all voices must be heard and respected within this context. While there are differing opinions on the Islam Nusantara discourse, it is clear that the MUI plays an important role in shaping the discourse around Islam in Indonesia. Its position on important issues can significantly impact public opinion and policy-making in the country.

Differences in organizational backgrounds affect the perspectives of MUI officials for the 2015-2020 period, such as KH. Ma'ruf Amin, Zainut Tauhid Sa'adi and Asroun Niam Sholeh from Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and Anwar Abbas from Muhammadiyah.

NU was Indonesia's most prominent Islamic mass organization in 2015, when it held the 33th NU Congress in Jombang, making the Islam Nusantara issue the main theme (Kato, 2021: 110-111). In fact, as a follow-up to academically formulating the concept of Islam Nusantara, the East Java PWNU held a *Bahtsul Masail,* precisely one of the topics was the conceptual definition of Islam Nusantara.

Figure 2. Map of actor institutional network analysis on the issue of Islam Nusantara



The Bathsul Masail Forum, held on 13 February 2016 at the State University of Malang, decided that Islam Nusantara as a reference for NU includes Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah Islam, which is practiced, propagated, and developed in society. This principle aims to anticipate and protect the ummah from radicalism, liberalism, Shi'a, Wahhabism, and other ideologies that are not in line with Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah. Second, the da'wah strategy is carried out politely and peacefully, considering the Indonesian population is multiethnic, multicultural and multi-religious (PWNU Jawa Timur, 2016).

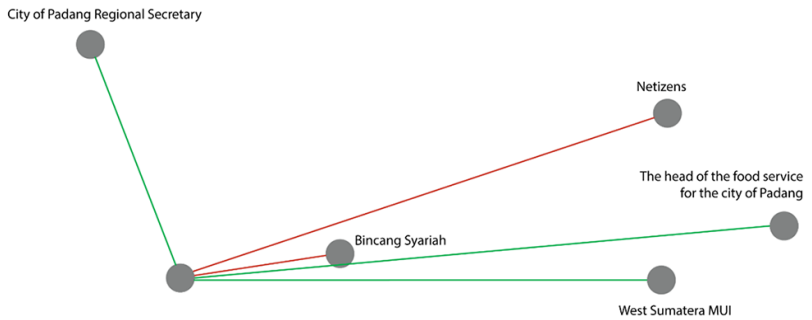
Institutionally, through DNA, it can be seen that there is a map of discourse between those who are pro and those who are against. Those who are pro with the discourse of Islam Nusantara come from the Nahdlatul Ulama institutional network or at least those who come from institutions that have moderate views, such as the Center for Quran Studies, which Quraish Shihab manages. Meanwhile, the opposing opinion appeared from parties affiliated with the West Sumatran MUI, including the West Sumatra DPRD, the Deputy Regent of West Aceh. In addition, the discourse against Islam Nusantara also emerged from a group of people who called themselves NU *Garis Lurus* (straight lines). NU Garis Lurus tends to have close views and affiliations with several non-moderate religious groups. *"NU Garis Lurus"* activists are

also known for their close alliance with activists from conservative Islamist groups, including Islamic Defenders Front (*Front Pembela Islam, FPI*) and Indonesian Mujahidin Council (*Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI*), bypassing the theological divide that sharply distinguishes NU from these groups (Arifianto, 2017)".

The same thing happened to the West Sumatra MUI fatwa, which was decided at the Regional Coordination Meeting forum in Bukit Tinggi, 19-21 July 2019. The forum prohibits *(manhiyun anhu)* using names that do not follow Islamic law on food, cosmetics, drinks, medicines and other clothing products. In more detail, these decisions are divided into two categories. The use of names that contain elements of principles and creeds in Islam is haraam. Meanwhile, if the term used is limited to moral elements, then the law is makruh (Majelis Ulama Indonesia Provinsi Sumatera Barat, 2019).

For instance, culinary names such as *sambel setan* (devil's chilli sauce), *mie iblis* (devil's noodles), *rawon setan* (devil's rawon [a beef soup dish]), *es pocong* (a ghost ice), *es genderuwo* ([a mythical creature, also known as a tall ghost] ice) are haraam. However, terms such as *ayam dada montok* (plump chicken breast), *mie caruik* (curly noodles), and so on are makruh. The issue of using names as above does not only occur in West Sumatra. However, in almost all regions in Indonesia, the names categorized above are easy to find, especially in the culinary treasures. The use of these names is easy to understand as a national phenomenon because the culinary roots of the Indonesian people are closely related to the nuances of eroticism and mysticism (Alnizar, 2020: 96).

Figure 3. Map of actor institutional network analysis on the issue of prohibition of naming restaurants with terms that are not following Islamic law



It can be concluded that using certain names as product labels for culinary, fashion, pharmaceutical, and cosmetic products has become a national issue. However, just like the case of the Islam Nusantara fatwa, this matter has been discussed and decided upon by regional MUI's. Based on DNA analysis, those who oppose this decision are mostly ordinary netizens who believe this issue is not significant enough to be discussed and turned into a fatwa.

> "……..as long as the food doesn't come from illegal substances or uses illegal means to obtain it, it doesn't become haram. Or most importantly, things like that don't need a fatwa, just up to the level of advice (Irsyadi, 2019)"

On the other hand, those who support the fatwa come from the local government in West Sumatra. The Padang City Government, through the Food Service, issued a letter numbered No. 526/281/DP-Padang/2019 regarding the naming of restaurants. The letter stated that the city government asked the restaurant owners to replace the names of extreme restaurants with names that are more in line with Minang norms and customs. In this context, the letter was issued based on a reference to a decision or fatwa that the West Sumatra MUI had issued in the Regional Coordination Meeting forum in Bukittinggi.

This shows the power relations between the MUI of West Sumatra and the local government. The West Sumatra MUI fatwa was used as a reference basis for issuing a decree prohibiting restaurant names deemed not to reflect the local culture.

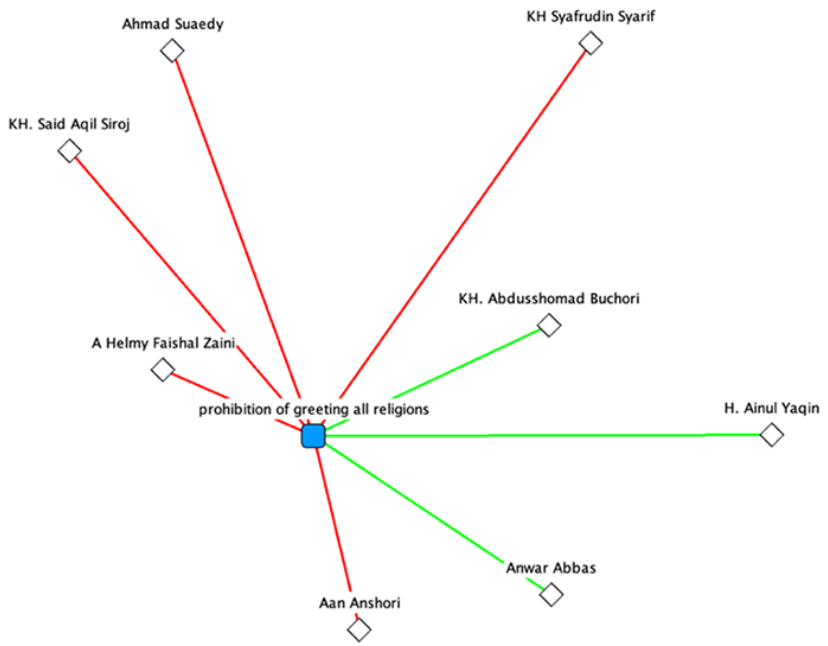
Another example that illustrates the symptoms of de-bureaucratization of fatwas is the issue of the recommendation for Muslim government officials not to greet greetings from other religions. The East Java MUI conveyed this decision on 8 November 2019. The East Java MUI said that "giving greetings from all religions carried out by Muslims is a new thing which is a heresy that has never existed in the past. At least it contains the value of doubt that should be avoided" (Majelis Ulama Indonesia Provinsi Jawa Timur, 2019). The issue of using interfaith greetings is a national issue. Many officials at the central level, even the President, often convey greetings using greetings from various faiths.

There are eight points in the letter 110/MUI/JTM/2019. The decision

regarding the prohibition of greetings for all religions is contained in the eighth and ninth points, which read as follows:

> "Giving greetings from all religions carried out by Muslims is a new act which is a heresy that never existed in the past, at least it contains the value of doubt that should be avoided. The MUI Leadership Council of East Java Province calls on Muslims and policymakers so that the matter of opening greetings is carried out following the teachings of their respective religions. For Muslims, it is enough to say the sentence, "Assalaamu'alaikum. Wr. Wb." Thus, Muslims will be able to avoid doubtful acts that can damage the purity of their religion."

Figure 4. Map of actor-network analysis on the issue of prohibiting greetings of all religions

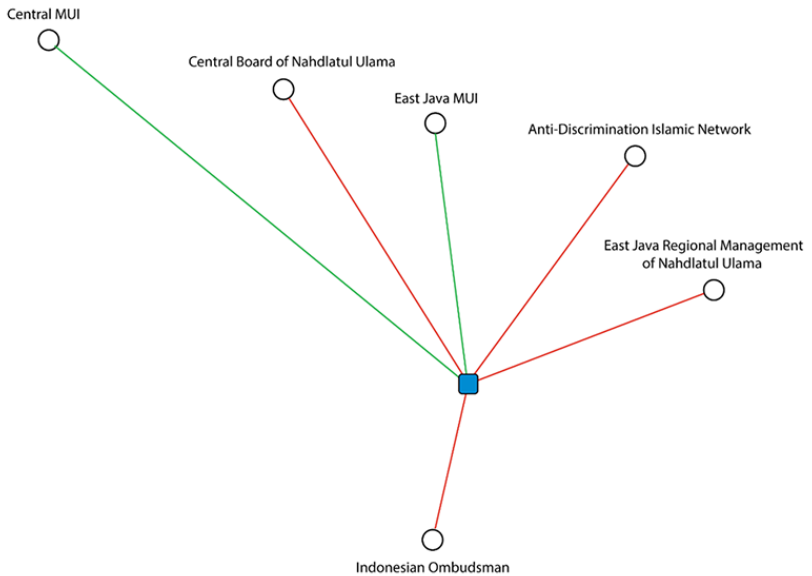


Based on discourse mapping through DNA analysis, it is evident that the advocates against the prohibition of greetings from all religions during speeches are mainly associated with the MUI network. The fatwa producers, particularly the East Java MUI and the Central MUI, tend to support this view. Conversely, those who hold the opposing view tend to believe that greeting all religions is a way of showing respect for different religious beliefs. This perspective

has emerged from moderate groups like the PBNU and the Islamic Network Anti-Discrimination.

> "As a national greeting, which of course all figures or leaders intend to unite, as far as I have seen from various forums, no one has the intention of insulting, harassing, or tarnishing (Zaini, 2019)"

Figure 5. Map of actor institutional network analysis on the issue of prohibiting the greeting of all religions



The national issue discussed locally also occurred in the MUI fatwa in Palu, Central Sulawesi, prohibiting Muslim women who are already wives from posting photos on social media. The issues raised in this fatwa are national and even global. In this context, the MUI Palu cut down the "bureaucratization of fatwa" formally included in the MUI fatwa guidelines, and conventions were used as a reference for issuing the fatwa.

In the current era of disruption, four leading indicators tend to be cheaper, simpler or more accessible, and faster (Kasali, 2017). These four indicators are things that the current generation should not miss. The fast-moving world condition—which, in the language of the industrialized world, is called VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity)- impacts the development of religious patterns. The

boundaries between global, national, and local issues are blurry. In the context of fatwa production in Indonesia, this condition is an essential factor that triggers the symptoms of fatwa de-bureaucratization.

Religious Authority in the Age of Depersonalization

Depersonalization in the context of religious authority becomes a complex phenomenon. It can reflect a democratization of religious knowledge and authority, as more individuals can access religious texts and form their interpretations of religious teachings. This can lead to the emergence of new religious leaders who may not have the same traditional credentials or training as established religious authorities.

On the other hand, the rise of "celebrity Ustaz" or charismatic clerics who have gained popularity through social media and other online platforms can also lead to a certain degree of depersonalization of religious authority (Shuhufi et al., 2022: 839; Rusli et al., 2020: 513). This study argues that people must evaluate religious leaders based on their knowledge, expertise, and adherence to established religious principles rather than on their popularity or charisma. At the same time, it is also essential for established religious authorities to be open to new ideas and interpretations and to engage with the concerns and questions of their followers in a meaningful way.

According to Hosen (2019: 84), social media create a lawsuit opposite to traditional religious authorities. Social media can portray a person who has good communication skills and is attractive to become an Islamic scholar. They confidently offer religious advice (Hew, 2018: 79; Nisa, 2018: 43; Whyte, 2022: 3).

The era of social media that produces "new Islamic scholars" is a relic of the Halakah and taklim periods—either from house to house or via television (Burhani, 2020: 175)—which in the previous era had been followed by urban communities dominated by the middle class. The difference is if, in the past, the subject had to go to Halakah, recitation, and taklim, then in this era of social media, the subject is visited by the contents of the Halakah, recitation, and taklim through a series of notifications that can be arranged via mobile phones.

However, on social media, like Instagram and Youtube, religion is presented concisely and tends to be "fast food." In their recitation

activities, many lecturers give fatwas "on the spot." This is one of the main characteristics of social media, which is a place to find entertainment and express joy and expression of life (Miller et al., 2018: 194-195).

The practice of da'wah on social media, such as what happened in the case of Ustaz Abdul Somad, Evie Effendi, Syafiq Riza Basalamah, Felix Siauw, Adi Hidayat, and so on, the pattern of recitation is carried out with a question and answer model. An Ustaz reads out the questions that come from the audience. Generally, the answers (fatwas) are short by referencing quotes from the Koran and hadith. The da'wah pattern of presenting concise answers is prevalent among urban middle-class Muslims. This happens because of the influence of the world's nature in the digital revolution era, which tends to rely on speed, conciseness, and practicality. Preachers who use social media understand how to present da'wah more lightly without losing substance. They present religion with a da'wah pattern that tends to be entertaining (Hew, 2018: 80; Millie 2008).

This condition further makes depersonalization symptoms where audiences see "what" rather than "how". They tend to get the desired answer, not "how" the answer process or formulated. Ultimately, black and white fatwas with the level of answers "may and may not" become the main menu favoured over long, systematic, analytical answers, even though logical and argumentative (Qudsy et al., 2021: 114).

In addition, in this era of disruption, depersonalization is also supported by the consequences of new ways and approaches to proselytization (da'wah). This is because the consumer audience and the landscape are changing. Popular opinions (mu'tabar) are considered to have scientific authority because they are compatible with certain networks and cannot stem other viral opinions on social media (Suryana, 2019: 81-83). This condition also provides new challenges for the validity of a scientific transmission, a scientific tradition that has deep roots in Islam.

Although in specific contexts, the finding indicated that state that the development of digital proselytization patterns cannot be pulled out from the traditional religious framework (Solahudin & Fakhruroji, 2020: 10-12), this is a serious challenge because the basis of the argument rests on the assumption that traditional religious

authorities are still the main actor in the contestation of da'wah on social media. The conditions that occur show the opposite symptoms. Digital da'wah tends to break away from traditional religious authority. Scientific transmission is no longer a major issue in digital da'wah. The ability and scientific competence of the preacher is also not a significant issue.

Conclusion

Evidently, the digital revolution has significantly impacted authorities and communication patterns, creating institutional fatwas. This impact cannot be avoided as it has made it easier for anyone to access information. However, the efforts of MUI to strengthen their authority and bureaucratic fatwa, such as establishing the Fatwa Commission, as mentioned by Alfitri (2020: 394), are facing serious challenges in this era. The first challenge is de-bureaucratization, characterized by increasing national-scale issues becoming the topic and subject of regional MUI fatwas. This trend is evidence that the bureaucratic tradition that the Central MUI has practiced is now being threatened.

The second form of opposition brought about by the digital revolution is depersonalization, which involves questioning established religious authorities and turning to newer ustadz who provide entertainment-style da'wah. This ustadz often issues fatwas through question and answer sessions on online forums.

The concepts of de-bureaucratization and depersonalization represent significant impacts of the digital revolution. Religious institutions and authorities, especially in fatwa production, face the challenge of responding to both changes. To do so, they need a precise and measurable approach.

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