



Religious Television Management in Indonesia (Study on TV9 Nusantara as Islamic Television)

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ABSTRACT

Advances in technology and communication in television media are an important part of the dissemination of information to the public. The media, especially television, has a dominant influence in the life of Indonesian society. The emergence of television is capable of being a very effective medium. Nowadays television can be said to have entered almost all time and space in human life. Television is in development, this media does not only function as entertainment, but is also used by religions to spread da'wah messages. TV 9 Nusantara is a media developed by *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), one of the largest mass organizations in Indonesia. In the broadcast, many displays on the field of da'wah and Islamic studies are characterized by *Ahl sunnah wal jamaah* with traditions. Its presence as a religious television is interesting to study as an effort to find an institutional form as an Islamic television. This study aims to find out about TV 9 Nusantara in terms of collective work that produces broadcast products, financing, values that are practised as an effort to strengthen the status and identity of the NU organization. This study shows that as an Islamic television, TV 9 Nusantara works in the spirit of the struggle for Islamic ideology with the traditions of the NU organization which is supported by economic power and collective work between religious leaders, members of NU mass organizations and non-Muslim communities, to spread the identity of NU mass organizations in the context of Indonesian society

Keywords: *Television, Islam, Nahdlatul Ulama, Management.*

INTRODUCTION

Mass media is an interesting theme to always be studied and discussed, both in the capacity of scientific discussion and in a light discussion style, which is usually done

casually through cynical satire or even with jokes. Television is an effective medium for conveying various information because television messages or information can reach the audience by a very wide range. Television is also very effective to be used as a medium for delivering da'wah messages because of its ability to cover a very wide area. Television media has a unique appeal, namely in the form of audio and visual results simultaneously.

After the end of the New Order and moving into the Reformation Order, Changes have occurred in various fields. The media sector is no exception, especially television. The growth in the number of TV stations in Indonesia continues to grow rapidly. Television is still the main attraction for the public, conglomerates, and even religious organizations.

Television as a conventional medium in Indonesia still exists against the onslaught of new media. The results of a survey conducted by Nielsen that television is still in the first position of the media that is often accessed. The increase in television stations, both national and local, from year to year, followed by an increase in the quality and quantity of broadcasts is proof of the existence of television broadcasting media. (Rizca Haqqu, 2020)

The institutional perspective will be used as an approach in this study. As an institution television involves many other elements that become its strength. Littlejohn and Karen Foss (2005) assert that no media is free from the power ideology that stands behind it. The existence of the media is not only a means of information but also an institution and a vehicle for battle ideology (Foss, 2005, p. 292). As a media institution, television also involves various elements such as politics, economy, culture and even religion, which are not inseparable from all of them (Stafford, 2003, p. 89). Meanwhile, Jean Baudrillard sees that political and economic forces are two forces significant that determine the direction of the speed of a media (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 45)

The elements that have been mentioned such as politics, economics, technology and religious doctrine, it is found on religious TV. It means a religious TV also involves all the elements above as the basis of its strength. Not only that's all, but also determines the direction and orientation of religious television. From there Islamic TV will be seen. The existence of local television in many areas in Indonesia is one of the forms of media democratization that is focused on the diversity of content and ownership (Sudibyo, 2004)

The television industry in Indonesia is growing quite rapidly. In the New Order, public broadcasting institutions such as TVRI became the monopoly and dominant media in conveying development messages, but in this reform era, that role began to shift along with the emergence of a number of national private televisions. such as RCTI, SCTV,

ANTV, Indosiar, Metro TV, Trans TV, TV One, Global TV. Even in the last 10 years, several television stations such as Trans 7, Kompas TV, RTV, and Net TV.

The same thing happened in East Java. Based on data from the Regional Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPID) of East Java, there are 46 Private Broadcasting Institutions (LPS) in East Java. 10 of them are local private television broadcasting in the city of Surabaya. For example: JTV (Jawa Pos TV), SBO TV, Arek TV, Surabaya TV, BBS TV (Bama Berita Sarana TV) which is currently changing its name to BIOS TV, and TV 9.

The function of mass media can be divided into five, a) Surveillance, b) Interpretation, c) Linkage, d) Dissemination of Values (Transmission of Value), e) Entertainment (Entertainment). (Habibie, 2018). He put forward some basic assumptions about the importance of mass media as follows:

a) Media is a changing and growing industry that creates jobs, goods and services and revives other related industries. A concrete example can be seen that since the 1998 reformation, many new media institutions, such as the number of televisions, have increased rapidly. On the other hand, the invention of the internet and the emergence of digital magazines made Newsweek magazine lose many readers, and finally decided not to publish anymore.

b) Media is also a separate industry that has rules and norms that link these institutions to society and other social institutions. For example, media coverage is sometimes biased or emphasizes an issue and ignores other issues because this issue is considered a hot issue and important for many audiences to know.

c) Media is a source of power because it can be used as a control tool, which can be utilized as a substitute for power or other resources. For example, the media can be used as a tool to protect democracy because it plays a role in presenting various public opinions.

d) Media is a forum that increasingly plays a role in presenting events in people's lives, both at national and international levels. For example, we often know more about election activities in the US in early November than we know about election campaign activities that took place in other provinces in Indonesia.

e) The media often acts as a vehicle for cultural development, not only in terms of developing art forms and symbols, but also in terms of developing procedures, modes, lifestyles, and norms.

f) The media has become the dominant source not only for individuals to obtain images and images of social reality, but also for society and groups collectively. The media also present normative values and judgments that are mixed with news and entertainment.

However, in fact, it is very rare for the television broadcasting industry to place these functions proportionally. For the most part, the entertainment element occupies a larger portion. Moreover, as a business entity, both national and local private television, still have try to get an 'advertising cake' to support the institution so that it does not go out of business. One of the efforts undertaken, namely competing to offer broadcast programs, which are able to get viewers to continue to like or watch the broadcast program. In this context, the number of viewers becomes a very important factor. Because, it will correlate with income from the advertising side.

Television as a broadcasting electronic media, which is sold is the content in the form of broadcast programs. The sale, except for paid broadcast content, is done indirectly through advertisements placed by consumers. In paid broadcast programs, the public pays for the broadcast programs they subscribe to, while in broadcasting institutions broadcasting *free to air*, access to these programs which is accumulated into the number of viewers on the program is a measure of the price of a space or time in the media. Space and time in the media are sold to advertisers whose price is determined by the number of viewers on each media program (Rusadi, 2015, p. 40)

In Surabaya, there are 22 television stations broadcasting. Some of them are based in Jakarta, also in Surabaya which have networks in several places, and some are independent as local television stations that do not have networks and only broadcast in Surabaya. Televisions Jakarta-based RCTI, SCTV, INDOSIAR, Trans, TRANS7, ANTV, TVOne, Metro TV, MNCTV, Global TV and TVRI National Programe. Later, that number increased with the broadcast of Kompas TV, RTV and NET.TV. While in television based in Surabaya and has a network in some areas are JTV, I-News TV/MHTV, Surabaya TV/Bali TV, TV9 and BBS TV. Televisions that are stand-alone in Surabaya and do not have a network, Only Arek TV.

All of these televisions are still broadcasting in accordance with the provisions of the legislation. The programs arranged are also increasingly varied, including Islamic da'wah programs that are broadcast on several television stations. In general, programs about Islamic da'wah on television have been included in the proposal for submitting a broadcasting permit from the start. But there are also televisions that don't.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In Turkey, (Kocamaner, 2017) mentions that Islamic broadcasting institutions, Islamic television, have a role to help the state in fighting social problems through their

programs. Furthermore, the awareness of Islamic television practitioners strengthens Muslim families due to the religious moral imperative in providing services.

As a television set up and managed by the East Java PWNU, this television has a mission to spread the notion of *ahalussunnah wal Jamaah annahdliyah* to people in areas where broadcasts can be received well. However, if traced, the origin of the establishment of this television actually departed from the emergence of the phenomenon of private Jakarta television networked in the regions. These private televisions are considered unable to accommodate the interests of NU's da'wah as the majority Muslim community. They even tend to corner them. In addition, the incessant currents of globalization and liberalization also have an impact on the increasingly marginalized content of programs da'wah. Programs that are nuanced in the interests of the liberal economy are increasingly being produced and broadcast. Thus, the spiritual aspects have less place in these broadcasting media.

However, setting up a television broadcaster and running it is not an easy thing. The world of broadcasting is a new thing for the community *nahdliyin*. Moreover, it guarantees the continuity of TV9 broadcasting all the time. The organizational management that was mostly carried out by the East Java PWNU on NU institutions did not contribute much in running TV9. The broadcaster, after all, is an industrial entity. It is a business that must be maintained. This is very different from the spirit of the East Java NU regional administrator who has been managing the largest mass organization in Indonesia with a social spirit and sincerity without calculating how much economic and benefits business are generated from activities at NU. This condition is a challenge for the management of TV9, which is entirely filled with personnel *nahdliyin*. This is even more so in the face of competition with Jakarta's private broadcasters networked in areas including Surabaya.

In broadcasting media, management and skills are needed managerial that can direct the company to the main goal, namely profit. The accompanying factors are also many and complex.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method used is qualitative which intends to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc. holistically and by means of descriptions in the form of words and language in a special context that is natural and with utilizing the scientific method (Moleong, 2001, p. 16) The type of data in this study is primary data, namely by means of interviews with key informants and strengthened by documents and scientific books.

Researchers look for data through informants as a source of obtaining data for this study. Using a sampling technique that is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling or

sampling based on purpose is a sampling technique of data sources with particular consideration, namely the person is considered to be the most know about what we expected, or perhaps him as ruler that will allow researchers to explore object / social situation under study (Sugiyono, 2009, pp. 53-54) The researcher conducted interviews with the director of TV 9, namely Mr. Sururi and also Hakim Jaily, he is a member of the board of *the Nahdlatul Ulama* region in the East Java region and also the owner of TV 9

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The phenomenon of the emergence of Islamic television shows at least two things. *First, the* emergence of religion in the public sphere. The idea of the public sphere, originated from Jurgen Habermas, German philosopher and sociologist. Related to the emergence of new arenas where people from various groups and different backgrounds can discuss freely, express complaints and feelings, express opinions and criticism of government policies and others. The existence of this public space reflects the participation of the community in a democratic government system, being part of civil society, and therefore cannot be controlled and intervened by the government (Moors, 2006). In this regard, religion appears in the public sphere, religion is taught, broadcast and discussed through various media, especially television. Not only broadcasting religious programs, but also religious entities managing television management.

Second, the emergence of contestation of religious ideology in the broadcast realm. Television is used as a vehicle for the spread of ideology, which is in accordance with the religious style and style adopted by the owner of the media. Television is used as an ideological propaganda tool. The contestation occurs not only with other Muslim groups, but also with popular culture that is thriving through various media, including television.

TV 9 Nusantara is a local television station in East Java, which has the nuances of Islamic da'wah which is run by PT Da'wah Inti media, a company owned by KH. Moh. Hasan Mutawakkil Alallah, and social organizations *Nahdlatul Ulama* for the East Java region and PT Siantar Top. This television was officially launched on January 31, 2010, right at the celebration of *Nahdlatul Ulama's* 84th birthday. Tv 9 broadcasts focused on religious programs with Islamic nuances. TV9 also has a strategic position, namely as a local television and religious television. As a local television, the coverage of TV 9 shows comes from events in the East Java area, such as various religious events that often receive special attention. Especially the traditions of the Muslims who are identified with *Nahdlatul Ulama*. Besides aiming to provide spectacles and demands so that the messages of the Islamic religion can be absorbed by viewers, the programs presented are also to maintain and cultivate the identity and traditions of Muslims in a cool manner.

Television Nine was chosen as a representation of the nine stars of *Nahdlatul Ulama*, with the translation 1 being the prophet, 4 being the companions of the prophet and 4 being the sects, 9 also symbolizing the number of wali songo (9 of the greatest scholars who spread Islam in Indonesia). Nice manners is the tagline of TV 9 Nusantara as the identity of all broadcast programs, both program production and news, must be based on this principle. Likewise, the behavior of leaders and employees must not depart from these principles. Courtesy is a philosophy taken from the principle of rahmatan lil alamin, a gentle and moderate method of da'wah. Cooling politeness was developed into a Brand proposition presenting unique, Islamic, entertaining, educative shows and always on the path of da'wah. TV 9 Nusantara uses Brand Positioning as the unique relax traditional Moslem tv station. Traditional Muslims as a sociological fact for NU residents who are the main target of TV 9 Nusantara (Jayli, 2013)

There are three principles that are firmly held by TV 9 Nusantara, these three must be integrated into the TV 9 Nusantara platform, besides having to carry out a mission as a business institution. The first is as a medium of da'wah, which invites viewers by means of wisdom (soft, non-verbal messages but full of effective meaning), *Mauidzah hasanah* (descriptive messages, directing, descriptive, verbal) *mujlah* (messages *argumentative-persuasive*, equivalent, dialogue), participatory, not patronizing) as in Surah An-Nahl verse 125.

Second, as a proponent of the basic principles of NU, there are three things in this basic principle. 1) trying to make the community the best by using the best human principles (*Mabadi Khaira Ummah*), 2) making the ulama as leaders, must be respected and followed, because heirs and successors to the prophet's mission (*warsatul andiya*). Illuminator of worldly life (*syurujud dun*) Model lantern in the hereafter (*mashabibul Akhirah*), 3) NU social attitudes: *Tawasuth* (middle line, not radical) *Tasamuh* (moderate, gentle), *Tawazun* (balanced, meeting point, equal), *I'tidal* (principled, firm, *istiqomah*).

Thirdly, as a media, TV 9 Nusantara is bound to the four functions of the press, namely *to inform* (*lil-isy'ar*) to provide information, news, *to educate* (*lil-tarbiyah*) to provide education to the wider community, to entertain and provide entertainment through broadcasts. And the last is social control and criticism of the practice of everyday life in order to increase the benefit of the ummah.

The Propaganda Strategy of Aswaja TV 9 Nusantara

Ahlusunnah wal jama'ah or better known as ASWAJA, in language comes from the word Ahlun, which means family, group or followers. *Ahlussunnah* means people who follow the Sunnah (words, thoughts or deeds of the Prophet Muhammad). While al jama'ah is a group of people who have a purpose.

TV 9 uses the concept of a religious program, this cannot be separated from the facts in the community which show that people prefer to visit the *kiai* for spiritual advice.

This fact shows that relaxation does not have to go to entertainment venues such as cafes, discotheques, clubs, or karaoke like urban communities. This concept is actually used by the management of tv 9 as television by having religious content. The characteristics of television in its entertaining function do not have to be filled with entertainment with the concept adopted by western society which tends to have fun. Tv 9 offers a program of coolness and inner peace as a relaxation solution for the fatigue of daily tasks and activities. According to Sururi, the editor-in-chief of TV9, the difference between TV9 and other television stations lies in the teachings of the Islam-based religion of *AhluSunnah Wal Jama`ah* (Aswaja) Annadhliyah (NU), which differs from several religious TV stations that carry Shia, Salafy, Muhammadiyah, MTA views. In addition, TV9's segmentation is very clear by targeting Nahdliyin Muslims as the main audience base and TV9 maintains the culture of the archipelago which can indeed be a medium for Rahmatan Lil Alamin's Islamic da'wah. TV9 incorporates the values of *Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah* in every da'wah. TV9 is one of the potential strategic strengths of the management in expanding the influence of the values of Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah in society, especially in the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) community.

The existence of TV9 is a vision of fighting for the values of *Ahlu sunnah wal jama'ah* namely *jama'ah, at-Tawazun* (balance), *at-Tasamuh* (tolerant), and *at-Tawasuth* (moderate). The Islamic principle of *Ahlu sunnah Wal Jamaah* ala Nahdlatul Ulama was then incorporated into the TV9 principle, which is a necessary strategy to overcome existing conflicts and defuse when things are unexpected. In the face of changing times, absolute change exists for the sake of smooth preaching. TV9 in practice further strengthens Islamic content. By keeping abreast of existing developments. It is not easy to maintain a television based on religion.

There are many forms of TV9's strategy in navigating the rigors of television competition. To get a loyal audience of course. Furthermore, changes in NU society itself as the TV9 audience base have also changed, therefore it is necessary to have a variety of programs that can be enjoyed by various layers. There are many forms of TV9's strategy in navigating the rigors of television competition. To get a loyal audience is certainly not an easy matter. Moreover, presenting programs that are of interest to audience. This requires a high level of creativity. As stated by Sururi that interesting and quality programs that are liked by many people depend on the following aspects: 1) The program must be filled by people who are popular in the community such as Habib Syech and Cak Nun in the Shalawat and Banawa Sekar. 2) The presentation concept is good and creative. 3) Then program variations such as news that informs NU activities.

Modern Broadcasting Management

As an organization with the largest number of followers in Indonesia and almost a century old, NU has not been recognized as an organization that has good management. NU and *pesantren* are two things that cannot be separated. Talking

about NU means talking about *pesantren*. Because the administrators and leaders of NU are *pesantren* people and have *pesantren*. It also has an impact on organizational management within NU. In the organizational structure of traditional *pesantren*, the role of the kyai is very prominent. The leadership style of a kyai is one of the characteristics or even becomes a part, to borrow Gus Dur's term, the *subculture of a traditional society (pesantren)*. In contrast to other, leadership styles Islamic boarding school kyai often occupy or even be placed as the sole leader who has advantages (*maziyah*) that are not owned by society in general (Wahid, 1979, p. 168). Paternalistic charismatic leadership tends to show the weight of the kyai's sense of responsibility which is quite large attention, personal to his followers. Thus, the kyai can provide the best protection for the sake of maintaining the unity and integrity of the community groups he leads.

Weaknesses appear when this leadership style is continuously adopted. These weaknesses are the lack of certainty about the development of the *pesantren* because everything on the leadership's depends decision. In addition, there are doubts and even the lack of courage of creative workers who help run the *pesantren* organization to take an active role in contributing their creativity. There is also no systematic planning in the process leadership change (generally leadership changes are caused by natural factors, such as death), and there is no improvement in leadership quality as the influence of sang kyai increases from local to regional, or even national levels. Hakim Jayli also admitted that most of his human resources come from Islamic boarding schools and have an NU background. This was done in order to have the same vision in the fight propaganda NU. In addition, there are technical matters that only *pesantren* and NU circles understand and are accustomed to doing, such as selawatan, istigasah and so on. He told me that he had recruited presenters from general university graduates who were not among the trending messages and were not from NU residents. It turned out that there were many incorrect terms and pronunciations when *on-air*. Even to recite "Nahdlatul Ulama" is not correct.

However, in the last few years, since the collaboration with PT Siantar Top, TV9's management has begun to improve and apply broadcast management principles. The Head of TV9's Operational Division, Sururi, explained that management improvements were carried out continuously. Especially in conforming to the principles of broadcasting management. Thus, the implementation of TV9 production and management is now carried out professionally. He gave an example of a fixed procedure (protap) in making programs, activities and so on.

However, the role of the kyai and administrators of the East Java PWNU cannot of kyai and East be ignored. For matters of content and resource persons, a number Java PWNU administrators still intervened. For this purpose, TV9 created a program called "Hujjah Aswaja", which is a program *talk show* that discusses activities and issues at the East Java PWNU. Most of the informants were the administrators of the East Java

PWNU or the Body Autonomous and Institutions under the auspices of NU.

Sururi also explained that the implementation of modern management in TV9 has an impact on the salary system for its employees. Now, the monthly salary is never late. And all employees are paid according to their workload and responsibilities, all of which are measured by the company.

Sururi then told the management process that was being implemented. For example, an event program begins with planning. Then arranged in such a way related to who does what (the organization). And then it is carried out (*actuating*) and the last is the mechanism control and evaluation that is always carried out. In fact, starting in 2019, the management of TV9 began to implement a measuring tool in the form of a balanced scorecard (Namely a tool used to measure the performance of a business viewed from four perspectives). The four perspectives consist of financial, customer, internal business processes and growth and perspectives learning. The goal is for TV9 to become a healthier and growing company.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

First, although it is owned and managed by NU, as a business entity TV9 also aims to pursue profit. TV9's management is managed with the aim of getting the largest market share from Muslims (*urban*). Especially residents *nahdliyin* who are the largest audience in the city of Surabaya and its surroundings. TV9, which is a local television station, tends to be watched by people from all economic circles (multi-segment). For this purpose, TV9 recruits employees from Islamic boarding schools and NU circles to be able to design programs with the characteristics and interests of residents *nahdliyin* so that they get positive reception. TV9 also guarantees to advertisers that the production of the show and its shows will not be rejected by the Nahdlatul Ulama community, especially in East Java and its surroundings

second, the preaching process that entertains as well as educates by displaying famous ulama figures is more in demand and enjoyed by the public. The speakers of the event that were displayed were preachers from the NU circles who had Islamic boarding schools, many students and were influential in the community. This is the main consideration for TV9 management to make, da'wah programs that are packaged flexibly lightly but do not leave the substance of da'wah. The management of TV9 adjusts the production of the program according to the interest and spiritual ritual activities of the audience *nahdliyin*. The programs that are made are those related to the religious practices of NU residents. Among them are attending recitations, selawatan, *istigasah*, *tahlil*, reciting books and so on. In fact, TV9 is also pursuing moments that NU residents have been waiting for, such as events for the great khaul ulama and *wali*.

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