

The Role of Salam TV as Islamic Based Television in Promoting Interfaith Harmony in North Sumatera

Andini Nur Bahri

Lecturer of Da'wah and Communication Faculty
Islamic State University of North Sumatera

andininurbahri@uinsu.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to determine the role of Salam TV in promoting harmony among religious communities in North Sumatera. This research method is a qualitative method that aims to get an in-depth description of speech, writing and behavior observed from an individual, group, community or organization in a specific setting which is studied from a comprehensive perspective. Salam TV does not produce programs that specifically feature harmony or tolerance. Salam TV's strategy in establishing harmony among religious communities is maintaining the shows that do not contain expressions of hatred that can trigger conflicts between religious communities. Institutionally Salam TV opens itself to work together in social and cultural fields to non-Muslim institutions.

Keywords: Islamic Television, Media, Interfaith, Harmony

Introduction

In today's globalized world, growing exchanges and interactions between religions and a stronger trend towards religious diversity are bringing about new opportunities and challenges to religious relations. On the one hand, as exchanges among different religions are becoming more frequent, more opportunities are provided to religions to conduct mutual learning and strengthen cooperation. In the history of all humanity, particularly in some countries and regions in the east, we have already accumulated ample experience and wisdom in regard to cultural diversity. On the other hand, challenges such as religious disputes or even conflicts are rising even as the trend towards religious diversity is driving forward exchanges and cooperation. In some countries and regions, religious distrust is growing almost as a result of religious diversification, aggravating people's worries over new religious conflicts (Zuo'an, 2013).

Of the various cases after the reformation in Indonesia, even though the conflict cases that struck parts of Indonesia were not directly related to the religious emotional root; this fact reminded us that religion is quite important in giving birth to integration or conflict in society.

Faced with opportunities and challenges, governments, religious communities and other relevant parties need to shoulder responsibilities and advocate religious harmony, resolve religious disputes and conflicts, promote social harmony, and uphold world peace.

For this reason, Muslims through existing institutions seek to unite with other religions. Religious institutions that exist among Muslims, in their thoughts, ideas, programs and actions always prioritize commitment to the realization of peace and harmony between people. It is believed that, in addition to being displayed as a mercy (rahmatan li al'alamin) Islam must always be displayed by prioritizing the tolerance (tasamuh) approach in communication with other communities (Syahrin, 2013).

Television as a broadcasting institution is expected to give new hope for better social change. Experts who are very optimistic about the positive role of television media generally argue that mass media has the ability to produce messages far more (millions of times) compared to the production of messages carried out by other entities such as social groups, communities, or business organizations. Likewise, in the delivery of the message, in a very short time distributed (diffusion) to millions of recipients of the message (communicant). Thus, TV becomes a medium that can save thousands of percent of time to convey a message thousand times fold. But on the other hand, television raises anxiety because the changes that occur tend to be uncontrollable, contrary to values, habits, and culture. One of them is caused by the inclusion of television in the era of very tight competition, not only competing for the audience with fellow television, but also having to compete with other media, like the internet. To pursue high ratings, television uses a lot of contradictory thinking grounds, television competes to make programs that are "against the current" and sometimes conflict with the principles of values, ethics and religion (Panuju, 2017).

In Indonesia, television certainly has a role in maintaining harmony among religious communities through programs that educate and do not provoke the emergence of conflict due to religious differences. Moreover, feuds that occur because of religious differences are increasingly appearing on social media which should be muted by television which is an institution that has a social responsibility in maintaining community harmony. As an institution, Salam TV also has social responsibility in promoting community harmony, especially in North Sumatera Province where Salam TV station stands. Salam TV is an Islamic TV that always puts forward programs that educate the people, propaganda programs that can improve personality of the community which certainly can have an impact on harmony between religious communities. The vision of Islamic based broadcasting media must follow the methods organized by Islam as a guideline because Islam is syumul (comprehensive). This method always emphasizes the submission and obedience to Allah SWT, teaching a person and society to be honest and committed to justice, compassionate towards others, freedom, always accompanying, promotes kindness, dignity and other positive values (Kanakaner dan Ghani, 2016).

Literature Review

Media can play a significant role in promoting peace and harmony in the modern societies by participating in tenable reporting, addressing to issues in its news, publication content, articles, audio and video news items that throw light on various perspectives. It can likewise distinguish between different perspectives, without favoring any single agency. Media has all the essential infrastructure and capability of spreading the common good (Riaz, 2017).

It is important for Islamic based broadcasting media through the television for example, revealing the real reality that Islam cares about the real life in the world as well as in the Hereafter. These

things also had been said in the Qur'an: And there are men who say: "Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and defend us from the torment of the Fire!". (Surah al-Baqarah, 2: 201) All life related issues should be featured in a television programs for example, to emphasize that Islam is not just a ritual but also a life. For Islamic based broadcasting media to achieve perfection, the production of quality of the programs is necessary to attract Muslims and non-Muslims regardless of gender and age differences (Zakariya dan Mohamad, 2014).

There are a few opinions program outputs in Islamic TV broadcasts which include news, talk shows, documentary, music, drama, games and performances required:

- a. Comprehensive and describe Islam in a form of syumul (overall). Program broadcasts are not necessarily limited to "religious events "only, but need to summarize aspects of culture, information, for example literature based on Islamic thought.
- b. The event framework must be directed towards education and information, not solely for entertainment and material benefit only. Education needs to be extended to all age ratings such as scientific programs, increase agricultural productivity, foster national integration, and realizing cultural harmony.
- c. Islamic TV can be the main focus as it strengthens Muslim faith.
- d. Increasing Islamic awareness to the community.
- e. Spread Islamic thought and culture.
- f. Form a general view.
- g. Strengthening good values among individuals.
- h. Be a monitor for negative symptoms that damage community development (Ghani, 2016).

In the wake of recent rising conflicts among communities in the country, each and every journalist should take the responsibilities in promoting the communal harmony. And they should follow certain basic principles while writing about communal clashes:

- a. Journalists and columnists owe a very special responsibility to their country in promoting communal peace and amity. Their writings are not a mere reflection of their own feelings but help to large extent in moulding the feelings and sentiments of the society at large. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that they use their pen with circumspection and restraint.
- b. News, views or comments relating to communal or religious disputes/clashes shall be published after proper verification of facts and presented with due caution and restraint in a manner which is conducive to the creation of an atmosphere congenial to communal harmony, amity and peace. Sensational, provocative and alarming headlines are to be avoided. Acts of communal violence or vandalism shall be reported in a manner and may not undermine the people's confidence in the law and order machinery of the state. Giving community-wise figures of the victims of communal riot, or writing about the incident in a style which is likely to inflame passions, aggravate the tension, or accentuate the strained relations between the communities/ religious groups concerned, or which has a potential to exacerbate the trouble, shall be avoided.
- c. The media, as a chronicle of tomorrow's history, owes an undeniable duty to the future to record events as simple untailored facts. The analysis of the events and opinion thereon are a different genre altogether. The treatment of the two also to be necessarily different. In times of crisis, facts unadorned and simply put, with due care and restraint, cannot be

reasonably objected to in a democracy. However, a heavy responsibility devolves on the opinion of the author on the articles. The author has to ensure that not only his or her analyze is free from any personal preference, prejudices or notions, but also they are based on verified, accurate and established facts and do not tend to foment disharmony or enmity between castes, communities and races (Radhakrishnan, 2012).

Research Method

The research method used was qualitative. Directly, qualitative methods originate from ethnographic traditions, anthropological and sociological field studies (Kholil, 2005). Kirk and Miller, quoted by Syukur Kholil in the Communication Research Methodology, explained that qualitative research is a tradition in social science that fundamentally depends on human observations in their own region and relates to these people in their language and terminology. The qualitative approach aims to get an in-depth description of speech, writing and behavior observed from an individual, group, community or organization in a specific setting which is studied from a comprehensive perspective.

This study used primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources in this study will use key informants. As Burhan Bungin explained that in qualitative research, the determination of key informants is very important. Determination of the informant is done to obtain valid data on the object being examined. For this reason, people who are key informants must be taken from people who are able to provide information that is directly related to the focus of the research carried out (Bungin, 2003).

Key informants were collected in this study using a snowball sampling technique. The point is that the researcher selects respondents in a chain if needed. This was done continuously until the researcher obtained sufficient data in accordance with needs. Then the key informants as the primary data sources that we will take here is a few Salam TV figures. In this case, the figure who is the informant is Salam TV Director.

In addition to the primary data source above, the secondary data source is taken from books relating to communication. Then the researcher reads, understands and analyzes a variety of literature relating to the discussion of this study as well as other documents that support this research.

Result and Discussion

Moreover, media being the agent of communication and representation can help strengthening normative values in society and therefore can play a role of virtual mentor thus assisting in discouraging deviant tendencies that are detrimental to social equilibrium. Many empirical studies have shown the efficacy of prescribed proposition by justifying scientifically the relationship between individual's behavior and respective media exposure. It can be concluded that media can be an instrument for peace and harmony, which advances messages and techniques that can prompt mutual understandings and tolerant conduct in a given society. The part of media in struggle has expanded its place out in all spheres. characterized as the utilization of "radio, TV, and printed reporting, to advance peace, to propagate positive statistics or exchange ideas that could turn open debates into diversity of opinions". Peace media specialists should be flexible and fair-minded

while portraying the divergent views, yet not be partial with regards to spreading commonly agreed views, with prime focus to quell any quarrels.

Wolfs Feld holds that media from various perspectives can help in reshaping the course of actions. Case in point, media can spread the benefits of peace building and propagate to gather people required for peace activities. Media can also pass on the inverse sort of messages to the general population. Yet all peace forms need survival, though news media require maneuverability to balance out all sides. This is definitely the impact of balancing power of media, which needs deeper understanding on the part of general populace. Wolfs Feld calls this sort of relationship between peace process and news media as a 'static model' (Riaz, 2017).

11 Saqib

Based on the results of the interview, Salam TV does not have a special program designed to promote harmony among religious communities in North Sumatera, but to maintain harmony between religious communities Salam TV conveys its missionary message about the importance of establishing harmony among religious communities through programs that have good religious themes in the form of lectures or talk shows. Through Salam TV's lecture programs try to convey the verses of Allah about how to treat your fellow countrymen who have different religions, because in fact in the Quran and Hadith, Islam teaches to respect each other despite different religions, ethnicities and cultures. These programs are expected to be a reminder for Muslims who watch to always practice the verses of the Quran, so that Muslims who are targeted by Salam TV audiences can implement it in daily life and expected it can have an impact on harmony among religious communities in the community .

Salam TV also produces programs that can not only be enjoyed by Muslim audiences, but also for all religious adherents. These programs are general, informative and inspiring. It is expected that by watching these shows the viewers from non-Muslims will feel an emotional closeness to Salam TV and the shows are certainly framed in an Islamic way so that viewers of other faiths can recognize the teachings of Islam which actually teaches tolerance between religions.

Description of Salam TV Show Program which can be enjoyed by various religious adherents:

Sifat

Definition: Is an educational program related to human traits and how to overcome and control those traits. Each episode of discussion of different traits will then be given an explanation by a psychologist and given an explanation from an Islamic point of view by an Ustadz.

Bincang Sehat

Definition: Is a Talkshow Program that discusses about health issues. The theme of the discussion that has been determined by the production team will be discussed starting from the most basic discussion to a more detailed discussion. The message will be conveyed through the doctor's explanation of the questions asked by the Host. The incoming messages and through the Callers from Salam TV viewers attract more than 10,000 viewers every month.

Speaker (Doctor) is a person who is an expert in their field. The speaker is quite knowledgeable from both medical and religious sciences. The themes discussed are always Up to Date every episode. Because the program content is about health, this program has a strong competitiveness and is always in demand.

Dapur Abi

Definition: A cooking program that is presented with menus and national dishes with the aim of entertainment and education for Salam TV viewers, especially housewives and generally for viewers who want to add a collection of menus for business or for home. This program was presented to attract the attention of mothers to be interested in watching Salam TV, as a splash of Qolbu, occasionally slipping the message of preaching relating to culinary and cooking world. Messages are conveyed through the host's chat with Chef and through good visuals so that viewers will like watching this event.

In addition to cooking, occasional messages are also inserted Da'wah related to culinary and cooking world of cooking.

Assalammualaikum Indonesia (ASI)

Definition: A news program that is packaged interactively and guided by two hosts, aired live from Studio 1 Salam TV. Besides delivering local, national and international news information. The program also shares health information and useful tips for everyday life. Information is delivered in a variety of ways, in addition to being directly interactive with sources from various locations of the incident, but also sometimes bringing speakers directly to studio. Besides delivering local, national and international news information.

Kabar dan Peristiwa

Definition: A Buletting News Program, Summarizing News and Events for a week that occurs in the Local, National and International regions from various sources. The Tapping Production Program is hosted by a host.

Tajuk Berita Sepekan

Definition: It is a dialogue program related to discussion of polemics or problems that are currently hot in the community. Discussed deeply from the perspective of Islam with an Ustadz who a guest speaker was and guided by a host.

Mengenal Lebih Dekat

Definition: The program is almost the same as the hafiz child profile program, only the difference is that the hafiz child profile raises eloquence in memorizing the Qur'an, while Getting to know more closely raises more about the daily life of the narcissist, for example about how to maintain his fitness to stay fit, what are his hobbies , how was his journey to become a public figure or idolized figure, what about his childhood, did he ever dream of being like what he had achieved

before. By packaging in the form of Semi Documentary shows that are delivered casually according to the emotions of what the resource person feels when delivering it. It must still be flavored with feelings of sadness, pleasure, annoyance and anger when it is felt in conveying the narrative's past story. This emotion aims to make the audience interested in what is conveyed by the narcissist where the words conveyed must contain inspiration and of course motivation. Each episode always presents famous figures, be it officials, artists, religious teachers or ordinary people who become viral in social media because of their generosity, etc. The *saiang* is quite high because the program material is not only high quality and the resource persons are also very well known.

Kata Pakar

Definition: This is a direct investigation program to the resource person by visiting the location concerned to discuss the conversation around a predetermined theme. General themes around disaster management education, transportation, building construction and so on are in accordance with the current needs of the community. Guided by a Host with the tagline looking for information from the Expert side. This program is a direct investigation program to the resource persons by visiting the location concerned to discuss the conversation around a predetermined theme. General themes around disaster management education, transportation, building construction and so on are in accordance with the current needs of the community. Displaying Information from Expert Resources.

Ngopi

Definition: It is a drama series that is packed with concepts that are close to young people. Tells a central figure of Ade who has a coffee shop business whose people are pious and have broad religious insight. Each episode is always faced with problems brought by the visitors of the Coffee shop and you have the responsibility to provide input and resolve the problems faced by the visitor. Discussion of this problem is guided by the Qur'an and Hadith. The production process is carried out in a Coffee Shop which is the main setting of this series.

Then Salam TV also seeks to create harmony and tolerance by paying close attention to the contents of the program both public events and programs specifically for Muslims. Based on the observations of researcher, the contents of the Salam TV program do not contain elements of SARA (ethnic, religious, racial and intergroup) which can trigger conflicts between religious communities. Likewise, the utterance of hatred and others that can break up unity has never been shown in all programs that aired Salam TV. All content including creativity in it is always strived so as not to offend any party.

In the broadcasting of the News and Events program which is one of the Salam TV news programs also does not contain hoaxes or lies that can adversely affect harmony between religious communities, moreover the public is facing periods of elections that are very vulnerable and sensitive to issues religion. But of course, this requires further research to prove these shows do not contain hate speech and hoax news. Then for ad serving, Salam TV does not limit non-Muslim clients, everything is run according to the Standard Operational Procedure (SOP). Apart from the production of shows, Salam TV also opens itself to work together in social and cultural fields which are carried out directly with the community such as social services and others, but to work

with non-Muslim institutions has never been done. But according to Director of Salam TV, they will not refuse if there are offers of cooperation from various agencies or non-Muslim institutions. However, in terms of establishing cooperation in the field of education with other parties outside the production of Salam TV programs, the program is limited to Islamic institutions. Activities or cooperation carried out together with the general public including non-Muslims are training and sending student programs. The training provided is training related to media such as journalistic training and broadcasting training where Salam TV comes directly to educational institutions that have built cooperation with Salam TV. Besides that, in the field of education also Salam TV accepts students who want to learn practice directly both in the short term such as study tours and long periods of time such as practical work programs (PKL) or internships.

Salam TV has a rule that Salam TV does not accept non-Muslim community visits to come directly to the Salam TV studio. The reason given by the Director of Salam TV is because Salam TV is Islamic Da'wah TV. Da'wah in the form of direct lectures delivered by the clerics organized by Salam TV is also not specifically designed to establish harmony among religious communities because this lecture is a routine lecture that conveys various topics about Islamic teachings. Salam TV also uses internet media such as websites and social media such as Instagram and Facebook to support the mission. Also not used maximally to spread information and messages about harmony among religious communities. However, based on the observations of researchers, Salam TV social media also does not contain expressions of hatred that can damage relations between religious communities. The content or material presented on social media is all about Islamic da'wah, as well as the YouTube channel. Salam TV only shows videos which are shows which are Salam TV television programs.

In determining the communicator to convey messages of harmony among religions Salam TV has set a communicator based on expertise and ability in mastering science, especially religious knowledge, namely the scholars, and academics. In the community, the scholars who are also community leaders certainly have a role that is respected by the community. Then the scholars also have a good personality and can be used as an example. Thus, in setting Salam TV communicators have considered the conditions that must be met.

In carrying out its strategy in establishing harmony between religions, Salam TV does not use the method of redundancy that is affecting the audience by repeating so that the audience pays attention to the message. This method is very important so that the message delivered can hit the audience. If Salam TV produces tolerance and harmony-themed programs that are broadcast routinely once a week or even once a month, of course the public will be able to more easily remember and practice the messages of harmony such as one of Salam TV programs titled Say No To Riba which aired regularly able to inform and even motivate the public to leave usury because the information is continuously obtained. Programs such as lectures are very common programs that are not delivered on an ongoing basis, then have the disadvantage of limited audience.

The contribution of Salam Tv social media

In the eye of technology devices development, social media shows a fascinating and rapid development. The problem is such acceleration almost neglect the development of system and professional work pattern. Proven in the effort of social media development, there are no effort to regulate the responsibility of information spread. As if society no longer cares upon their social community interests. Social community becomes a media to share hatred, persuasive media for consumptive

According to the observations of researcher, Salam TV does not maximize the use of Facebook as a medium that can establish harmony between religions. Facebook can also be a potential propaganda media by utilizing its advantages, namely media that can spread information to millions of citizens and Facebook is a media that is in demand by many levels of society, especially young people and students. Through Facebook Salam TV can spread the values of harmony by writing both directly on the Facebook wall by the admin group as well as writings on harmony in an Islamic perspective, the importance of harmony or even conflict prevention methods specifically uploaded so that it can be read by giving from the group. But based on the results of the study, Facebook Salam TV is not actively used to preach at all, especially propaganda to establish harmony. The posts uploaded are not many, Salam TV tends to use Facebook to inform about Salam TV's agenda or activities such as the arrival of guests to Salam TV and so on. Questions submitted by Facebook members are not answered or ignored by the Facebook admin or manager.

The Salam TV website, according to observers of this website, is also not used maximally to spread messages about harmony. On this website the writings provided are dominated by writings on Islamic teachings in general such as history and Islamic laws, besides also containing the latest news related to the development of Islam and Salam TV. In addition, there are profiles, agendas and photos of Salam TV activities. While writing about harmony between religions was not found by researchers on their website. The writings on the website, Facebook will provide cognitive influence to the audience, Salam TV should be able to exploit the potential of these media to spread harmony messages, where this media can also embrace non-Muslim communities who can easily read Facebook and websites and radio Salam TV.

Conclusion

Salam TV does not plan and prepare strategies specifically programs that can establish and maintain harmony between religions. That is because Salam TV wants to focus more on specific Islamic teachings for Muslims such as learning the Qur'an and Hadith through programs. But according to Salam TV's Director, going forward he will design programs that are useful not only for Muslims but for everyone. The role that Salam TV carries out to promote harmony among religious communities is to maintain, control and ensure that all Salam TV programs do not offend other religious communities. Based on the observations of researcher, Salam TV's shows do not contain hate speech or other elements that can cause conflicts between religious communities.

REFERENCES

- Bungin, B. 2003. Analisa Data Kualitatif: Pemahaman Filosofis Kearah Penguasaan Model Aplikasi. Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada. Page 23.
- Ghani, Z. A. 2016. Islam, Komunikasi dan Teknologi Maklumat. Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publication dan Distributors. Page 62-64.
- Harahap, S. 2011. Teologi Kerukunan. Prenada. Jakarta. Page 159
- Kanaker, O. and Ghani, Z. A. 2016. Islamic Television Broadcasting: A Longstanding Aspiration. Bandar Baru Nilai: USIM Press
- Kholil, S. 2005. Metodologi Penelitian Komunikasi. Bandung: Cita Pustaka Media. Page 32.
- Panuju, R. _____. Sistem Penyiaran Indonesia. Kencana. Jakarta. Page 32
- Radhakrishnan, B. 2012. Role of Media in Promoting Communal Harmony National Foundation for Communal Harmony (NFCH) 2012. Page 6.
- Zuo'an, W. 2013. Religious Harmony: A Fresh Concept in the Age of Globalization. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 77. Page. 210 – 213
- Riaz, S. 2017. The Role of Media in Promoting Peace and Harmony. Issra Papers. Page 113
- Zakariya, N. and Mohamad, A. D. 2014. 'Media Sebagai Wasilah Dakwah' in Jurnal Hikmah, Jilid 6, Page 53. Bangi : Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.