

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JAMAAH TABLIGH AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji faktor-faktor yang mendorong transformasi keagamaan Jamaah Tabligh serta bentuk-bentuk transformasi yang terjadi di Kota Palopo. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan fenomenologis dan sosiologis. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara, observasi, dan studi dokumentasi yang melibatkan anggota Jamaah Tabligh serta masyarakat Kota Palopo. Data dianalisis melalui proses reduksi, kategorisasi, dan interpretasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa transformasi keagamaan Jamaah Tabligh dipengaruhi



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oleh perubahan sosial perkotaan, perkembangan globalisasi, dan penguatan struktur internal melalui musyawarah. Transformasi tersebut terlihat pada meningkatnya internalisasi nilai-nilai keagamaan di kalangan anggota yang berasal dari beragam latar belakang sosial dan profesi, serta pada integrasi aktivitas dakwah dengan peran sosial dan profesional mereka. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa Jamaah Tabligh mampu mempertahankan eksistensinya melalui penyesuaian terhadap dinamika masyarakat perkotaan tanpa meninggalkan prinsip-prinsip dasar gerakannya. Meskipun menghadapi kritik terkait metode dakwah yang digunakan, Jamaah Tabligh tetap berperan dalam pembinaan moral keagamaan, penguatan solidaritas sosial, dan pemenuhan kebutuhan spiritual masyarakat di Kota Palopo.

Kata Kunci: Jamaah Tabligh, Transformasi Keagamaan, Masyarakat Perkotaan, Dinamika Perkotaan, Kota Palopo.

Abstract

This study examines the factors driving religious transformation among the Jamaah Tabligh and the forms of transformation occurring in the city of Palopo. This study employs a qualitative method with phenomenological and sociological approaches. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis involving members of the Jamaah Tabligh and the community of Palopo City. The data were analyzed through the processes of reduction, categorization, and interpretation. The results indicate that the religious transformation of the Jamaah Tabligh is influenced by urban social changes, the progression of globalization, and the strengthening of internal structures through deliberation. This transformation is evident in the increasing internalization of religious values among members from diverse social backgrounds and professions, as well as in the integration of da'wah activities with their social and professional roles. This study also found that the Jamaah Tabligh has been able to maintain its existence by adapting to the dynamics of urban society without abandoning the fundamental principles of its movement. Despite facing criticism regarding the da'wah methods employed, the Jamaah Tabligh continues to play a role in fostering religious morality, strengthening social solidarity, and fulfilling the spiritual needs of the community in Palopo City.

Keywords: *Jamaah Tabligh; Religious Transformation; Urban Society; Urban Dynamics; Palopo City*

INTRODUCTION

Religion plays a central role in shaping human values, morality, and life orientation. However, religious understanding and practice are never static, but are always shaped by interaction with the social context in which religion is practiced.¹ In contemporary society, especially in urban areas, the acceleration of social change due to urbanization, globalization, and the development of information technology has created new challenges for religious communities in maintaining the relevance of their teachings and practices.²

Social changes in urban areas not only affect economic and political life but also impact religious practices, patterns of social interaction, and the ways in which communities engage in religious activities.³ High levels of mobility, work demands, and the development of digital technology have transformed how people participate in religious activities and build relationships with religious communities. These conditions present challenges for religious movements, including in maintaining member

¹ M Ilham, Andi Tri Saputra, and Abdul Syatar, "Abdullah Saeed's Construction of the Hierarchy of Values in the Qur'an: A Philosophical Hermeneutic Perspective," *Jurnal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.131.09>.

² Neneng Munajah, 'Agama dan Tantangan Modernitas', Tahdzib Al-Akhlaq: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 4.1 (2021), 83–92 <<https://doi.org/10.34005/tahdzib.v4i1.1433>>.

³ Abdul Syatar et al., "Religious Authority in the Age of Instagram: Unveiling the Contestation of Islamic Discourses," *Jurnal ADABIYAH* 24, no. 2 (2024), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24252/jad.v24i2a3>.

participation and the effectiveness of outreach activities.⁴

In this context, religious movements must adapt their methods, strategies, and patterns of interaction without abandoning the core values they uphold. Therefore, religious transformation in this study is understood as changes in da'wah practices, member development approaches, and forms of religious interaction undertaken to respond to the ever-evolving dynamics of urban society.⁵

In the context of urban society, characterized by high mobility, changing patterns of social interaction, and the development of digital technology, religious movements are required to adapt their methods and practices of da'wah.⁶ One movement that is particularly interesting to examine in this context is Jamaah Tabligh. This movement is known for its approach to da'wah based on direct interaction through activities such as khuruj,⁷ jaulah, and spiritual guidance in mosques. However, changes in the character of urban

⁴ Ridwan, Hamzah Harun, dan Muhaimin, 'Urban Sufisme di Era Digital dan Urban Salafi di Era Kontemporer', *AL-QIBLAH: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Bahasa Arab*, 3.4 (2024), 468 <<https://doi.org/10.36701/qiblah.v3i4.1544>>.

⁵ Alexandre Amato, "Urban Sustainability and Livability: An Analysis of Doha's Urban-Form and Possible Mitigation Strategies," *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 11, no. 3 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11030786>.

⁶ Barsihannor, "Sayyed Hossein Nasr (Sufisme Masyarakat Modern)," *Jurnal Al Hikmah* 15, no. 2 (2014): 127, https://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/al_hikmah/article/view/379.

⁷ *Khurūj*, or outreach activities carried out by the Tablig Congregation have two important objectives: not only to improve the condition of the community, but also to improve the personal beliefs and practices of congregation members. These activities can be likened to "two sides of a coin"; on one hand, they aim to improve society, and on the other hand, they aim to enhance the religious devotion of the congregation members themselves. When they successfully invite people to the mosque, they study religious knowledge together. Therefore, in addition to teaching, they also learn. Sarwan, 'Sejarah Pemikiran dan Gerakan Dakwah Jama'ah Tablig', *Jurnal Al-Hikmah*, 8.2 (2021), h. 34.

society present new challenges for Jamaah Tabligh in maintaining the effectiveness of its da'wah and the engagement of its members. Therefore, Jamaah Tabligh serves as a significant case study for understanding how a religious movement adapts to urban social dynamics without abandoning the core principles that define its identity.

A number of studies on Jamaah Tabligh have been conducted in various contexts. These studies generally focus on Jamaah Tabligh's da'wah methods, the practice of khuruj, the cultivation of individual piety, patterns of social interaction within the group, and public acceptance of their da'wah activities.⁸ Some studies indicate that the success of Jamaah Tabligh is largely supported by a mosque-based da'wah approach and collective social relations, particularly in rural areas and communities that still maintain strong social bonds. Other research highlights the transnational character of Jamaah Tabligh and its contribution to strengthening the religious identity of Muslims in various regions.⁹

Nevertheless, most of these studies have primarily emphasized the doctrinal aspects, da'wah methods, and religious practices of the Tabligh Jamaat as a socio-religious movement.¹⁰ Studies specifically examining how the Tabligh Jamaat has transformed in response to social changes in urban society remain

⁸ Askar Nur, 'Fundamentalisme, Radikalisme dan Gerakan Islam di Indonesia: Kajian Kritis Pemikiran Islam', *Al-Ubudiyah: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Islam*, 2.1 (2021), 28–36 <<https://doi.org/10.55623/au.v2i1.16>>.

⁹ Muhammad Rais dan Hamka Naping, 'Jamaah Tabligh: Studi Etnografi Tentang Hirarki dan Pelaksanaan Dakwah di Masjid Jami Kerung-Kerung Kota Makassar', *Jurnal JINNSA (Jurnal Interdisipliner Sosiologi Agama)*, 3.1 (2023), 43–56 <<https://doi.org/10.30984/jinnsa.v3i1.657>>.

¹⁰ Didi Junaedi, "Memahami Teks, Melahirkan Konteks: Menelisik Interpretasi Ideologis Jamaah Tabligh," *Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 2, no. 1 (2013): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v2i1.1274>.

relatively limited. Moreover, research on the forms of organizational adaptation, changes in da'wah strategies, and the negotiation between the Jamaah Tabligh's da'wah traditions and the demands of urban life has not received adequate attention.¹¹ Thus, there is an unexplored research area regarding the process of the Jamaah Tabligh's religious transformation within the context of urban societies that are continuously undergoing social change.

The city of Palopo was chosen as the research site because it possesses characteristics that differ from those of the regions that have traditionally been the focus of research on the Jamaah Tabligh. As one of the developing cities in South Sulawesi, Palopo has experienced infrastructure growth, the expansion of information technology, increased population mobility, and changes in social interaction patterns that are becoming increasingly urban in nature. On the other hand, the city retains a strong religious character as one of the centers of religious activity in the Luwu Raya region. The blend of urban modernization and strong religious traditions makes Palopo an intriguing social space to observe how Jamaah Tabligh maintains its presence while adapting to the dynamics of urban society.¹²

Given these conditions, this study offers a novel focus by not only examining the da'wah activities of the Jamaah Tabligh but specifically analyzing the process of religious transformation occurring in response to urban social changes. This study examines the forms of transformation undertaken by the Jamaah Tabligh, the

¹¹ Guruh Purnama, *Respon Masyarakat Terhadap Penyebaran Agama Jamaah Tabligh dan Saksi Yehuwa di Kota Tangerang Banten, Paper Knowledge Toward a Media History of Documents* (Jakarta, 2014).h. 54.

¹² Indo Santalia, 'K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid : Agama dan Negara, Pluralisme, Demokratisasi, dan Pribumisasi', *Al- Adyaan Jurnal Sosial dan Agama*, 1.2 (2015), 137 <<https://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/adyan/article/view/1340>>.

factors driving these changes, and their implications for the sustainability of da'wah practices in Palopo City. Thus, this study aims to enrich the field of the sociology of religion, particularly regarding the adaptation and transformation of Islamic religious movements amidst the dynamics of urban modernity.¹³

This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach to understand the religious transformation of the Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo City.¹⁴ The research lasted approximately five months and was conducted through participatory observation during the data collection process, with the researcher directly observing various Jamaah Tabligh activities, such as khuruj, jaulah, bayan, and da'wah activities in urban mosques.¹⁵ All observation results were systematically recorded in field notes containing descriptions of activities, patterns of interaction, forms of da'wah adaptation, and the community's response to Jamaah Tabligh activities.¹⁶ In addition to observation, data was also obtained through documentation in the form of activity archives, da'wah materials, and various written sources relevant to the study of religious transformation and the sociology of religion.¹⁷

¹³ Noorhaidi Hasan, *Ulama, Politik, dan Narasi Kebangsaan: Fragmentasi Otoritas Keagamaan di Kota-Kota Indonesia*, Cet.I (Yogyakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam Demokrasi dan Perdamain (PusPIDeP), 2019), hal. 63.

¹⁴ Ardyan Elia, et. al, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif dan Kuantitaif (Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif dan Kuantitatif di Berbagai Bidang)*, Cet.I (Jambi: PT. Sonpedia Penerbitan Indonesia, 2023).

¹⁵ Wardi Bachtiar, *Metodologi Penelitian Ilmu Dakwah*, Cet.I (Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu, 1997), h.128.

¹⁶ Helaluddin Hengki Wijaya, *Analisis Data Kualitatif*, Cet.I (Makassar: Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Jaffray, 2019), h. 13.

¹⁷ Muhammad Yaumi dan Muljono Domopoliji, *Action Research: Teori, Model, dan Aplikasi.*, Cet.I (jakatarta: Prenadamedia Group, 2016), h. 53.

In-depth interviews were conducted on a purposive basis with informants who had direct knowledge and experience regarding the activities of Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo City. Informants consisted of Jamaah Tabligh members active in da'wah activities, mosque administrators serving as the center of the group's activities, and members of the public who interact with these da'wah activities.¹⁸ This diversity of informants allowed for a more comprehensive perspective on the forms of religious transformation, the factors driving change, and the Jamaah Tabligh's adaptation strategies in responding to the dynamics of urban life.¹⁹ The collected data was then analyzed through a process of reduction, coding, categorization, and interpretation to identify patterns of religious transformation emerging within the Jamaah Tabligh community in Palopo City.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

THE DYNAMICS DRIVING RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION AMONG THE JAMAAH TABLIGH IN PALOPO CITY

1. Urban Dynamics in Palopo City

Palopo is a medium-sized city that has experienced rapid development since it was designated an autonomous region in 2002. Population growth, administrative expansion, and increased economic activity in the trade and service sectors have made Palopo a center of social mobility in the Tana Luwu region. This development is marked by increased population density in the city

¹⁸ Sugiyono, *Memahami Penelitian Kualitatif*, Cet.II (Bandung, 2015), h. 76.

¹⁹ Adhi Kusumastuti dan Ahmad Mustamin Khoiron, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*, Cet.I (Semarang: Lembaga Pendidikan Sukarno PressIndo, 2019), h. 48.

center, high labor mobility, and increasingly intensive use of information technology in everyday life.²⁰

Urban dynamics have a direct impact on the religious life of the community. Based on field findings, high work mobility, increasingly intensive use of digital media, and the tendency for people to focus more on personal activities have led to a decline in participation in community-based religious activities. This situation also affects the da'wah activities of Jamaah Tabligh, particularly in encouraging the public to participate in jaulah, bayan, and khuruj programs, which require direct social interaction.

Furthermore, the development of digital culture has altered how people acquire religious knowledge. Some members of the public, particularly the younger generation, more frequently access religious lectures and studies through social media rather than attending da'wah activities at mosques. This situation poses a challenge for the Jamaah Tabligh, which has long relied on face-to-face approaches and personal relationships in its da'wah process. Therefore, the Jamaah Tabligh needs to make various adjustments to maintain the effectiveness of its da'wah amidst the social changes in urban communities.²¹

Sociologically, the social dynamics of Palopo reflect a process of change triggered by the interaction between internal and external factors. Internal factors can be seen in the changing lifestyles of urban communities, which are becoming more rational and digital, while external factors are present through the flow of urbanization,

²⁰ Tomi Arianto, *Realitas Budaya Masyarakat Urban*, cet, I (Kab. Agam, Sumatera Barat: Yayasan Tri Edukasi Ilmiah, 2024), h. 61.

²¹ Annisa Istiqomah, "Ancaman Budaya Pop (Pop Culture) Terhadap Penguatan Identitas Nasional Masyarakat Urban," *JWP Jurbal Politik Walisongo* 2, no. 1 (2020): 47–54, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jpw.2020.2.1.3633>.

interregional connectivity, and the influence of global modernity.²² These changes require communities, including religious communities, to continuously adapt to the evolving social reality.²³

In the religious landscape of Palopo, Based on the results of observations and interviews various Islamic community organizations play an active role in responding to these urban dynamics.²⁴ Organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, Wahdah Islamiyah, Hidayatullah, independent majelis taklim, and Jamaah Tabligh have developed diverse da'wah strategies in accordance with the heterogeneous character of urban communities.²⁵ These differences in approach show that da'wah in urban areas can no longer rely on a single model, but requires flexibility and contextual adaptation.²⁶

In this context, Jamaah Tabligh occupies a unique position. Although known for its simple and traditional methods of da'wah, Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo City faces serious challenges due to high community mobility, limited social time, and the fragmentation of

²² Ahmad Diaz Syahrezyah Makmur et al., "Exploring The Interconnection Between Ethics and Religion : Its Contribution To Social Harmony," *International Journal of Islamic Thought and Humanities* 4, no. 2 (2025): 292–301, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.54298/ijith.v4i2.526>.

²³ Romlah Harniati Hapsah, Fatimah Az Zahrah, dan Muhammad Yasin, 'Dinamika Interaksi Manusia , Masyarakat , dan Budaya dalam Era Globalisasi dan Modernisasi', *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan dan Ilmu Sosial*, 02 (2024), 191–202 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.71382/sinova.v2i2.149>>.

²⁴ Darus, "Masyarakat, Wawancara" (di Kota Palopo, pada 15 Oktober, n.d.).

²⁵ Saifuddin Al Mughniy dan Rina Rembah, *Masyarakat Bergerak (Dalam Perspektif Sosiologi & Perubahan Sosial*, Cet.I (Kuningan, Jawa Barat: Goresan Pena, 2025), h. 86.

²⁶ Bagja Waluna, *Sosiologi: Menyelami Fenomena Sosial di Masyarakat*, Cetakan 1 (Bandung: PT Setia Purna Inves, 2007), h. 54.

urban living spaces.²⁷ Da'wah methods such as *Khuruj* and door-to-door visits must contend with the reality that most urban communities are active outside their homes throughout the day.

These conditions have become driving factors for religious transformation among Jamaah Tabligh. This transformation is evident in adjustments to da'wah strategies, such as flexibility in the duration of *Khuruj*, concentration of activities in urban mosques, and a more personal and situational approach to da'wah. This transformation is not a rejection of the basic principles of Jamaah Tabligh, but rather an adaptive strategy to maintain the relevance of da'wah amid the dynamics of urban life in Palopo.

Thus, the social dynamics of Palopo City serve as the structural context that drives the Jamaah Tabligh to undergo religious transformation. Rapid social change requires the Jamaah Tabligh to negotiate traditional da'wah methods with the needs of urban communities, so that religious messages can continue to be accepted and practiced in daily life.

2. Social Change in Palopo City

Social change is an inherent characteristic of community life. Every community constantly experiences dynamics influenced by internal factors, such as innovation and lifestyle changes, as well as external factors, such as globalization, technological developments, and the flow of digital information. In the context of urban communities, these changes are occurring at an increasingly rapid

²⁷ Isna Nadifah, et. al, 'Teknologi Informasi : Dampak Media Sosial pada Perubahan Sosial Masyarakat', *Indo-MathEdu Intellectuals Journal*, 5.1 (2024), 757–66 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.54373/imeij.v5i1.645>>.

and complex pace, requiring communities to continually adjust their values, patterns of interaction, and social identities.²⁸

The city of Palopo, as the center of government, education, and trade in the Tana Luwu region, is undergoing a relatively intensive process of social change. This strategic position makes Palopo more open to the forces of globalization than the surrounding areas.²⁹ In addition, the pluralistic character of Palopo's society—composed of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds—creates a rich social dynamic, but at the same time makes it vulnerable to shifts in values when changes occur rapidly and simultaneously.³⁰

The impact of these social changes is evident in the shifting lifestyles of Palopo's urban community, particularly in the city center. Increased work mobility, the penetration of digital media, and modern consumption patterns have encouraged a trend toward individualism and weakened traditional social controls. The values of kinship and mutual cooperation that were previously characteristic of Luwu society are beginning to change, especially among the younger generation and the urban middle class.

Normative changes are also evident in symbolic aspects and expressions of identity, such as clothing styles and social patterns, which are increasingly influenced by global popular culture.³¹ In the

²⁸ Muhammad Iqbal Suma, *Dinamika Wacana Islam*, cet, I (Cawang Kramat Jati, Jakarta Timur: PT Nagakusuma Media Kreatif, 2014), h. 62.

²⁹ Chica Awaliyah, Dinda Oktaviana, 'Tantangan dan Peluang Teknologi dalam Dinamika Kehidupan di Era Teknologi', *Upgrade: Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Informasi*, 1.2 (2024), 91–96

³⁰ Adon Nasrullah Jamaludin, *Sosiologi Perkotaan: Memahami Masyarakat Perkotaan dan Problematikanya*, cetakan II (Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia, 2017), h. 93.

³¹ Ahmad Diaz Syahrezyah Makmur, "Makna Cinta Perspektif Jalaluddin Rumi Dan Relevansinya Dengan Pencarian Makna Hidup Di Era Modern,"

context of Palopo society, which is predominantly Muslim, this situation has created tension between religious values and modern lifestyles. These changes are not always understood as a decline in religiosity, but as an indicator of a transformation in the way people interpret and express their religiosity in urban spaces.³²

In this situation, da'wah (proselytizing) has a strategic role as a socio-religious response to the changes that are taking place. Dakwah not only functions as the delivery of normative teachings but also as an adaptive effort to maintain the relevance of religious values amid urban social dynamics.³³ The development of information technology, despite presenting challenges in the form of global cultural penetration, also opens up new opportunities for the dissemination of religious messages that are more flexible and contextual.³⁴

Theologically, Islam views change as part of *sunnatullah*. The Qur'an emphasizes that changes in a society are closely related to human efforts to improve themselves. This principle affirms that social dynamics are not something to be avoided, but rather managed consciously and responsibly. Therefore, da'wah in the modern era is required to be sensitive to social, cultural, and technological changes so that it can guide the community in facing

Mazalat Jurnal Pemikiran Islam 7, no. 1 (2026): 22–35, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.64367/m-jpi.v7i1.61>.

³² Adon Nasrullah Jamaludin, *Sosiologi Perkotaan: Memahami Masyarakat Perkotaan dan Problematikanya*, cetakan II (Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia, 2017), h. 93.

³³ Lilik Jauharotul Wastiyah, 'Peran Manajemen Dakwah di Era Globalisasi (Sebuah Kekuatan, Kelemahan, Peluang dan Tantangan)', *Jurnal Kajian Manajemen Dakwah*, 3 (2020), 8 <<https://doi.org/1010.24014/idarotuna.v3i1.Peran>>.

³⁴ Samsudin, *Sosiologi Perkotaan (Studi Perubahan Sosial dan Budaya)*, cet I (Celeban Timur, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Belajar, 2017), h. 148.

the transformations of the times without losing their religious values.³⁵

3. Urban Muslims in Palopo

Urban Muslims in Palopo City live in a dynamic, pluralistic social context that is strongly influenced by modernity. Palopo's position as the center of government, trade, and education in the Tana Luwu region encourages high population mobility and intense interaction between ethnic and cultural groups. In this heterogeneous urban environment, Muslim religious practices are required to adapt to the fast and competitive rhythm of city life.³⁶

Muslims in Palopo face challenges typical of urban communities, such as high workloads, limited social time, and heavy daily mobility.³⁷ These conditions have resulted in a decrease in the intensity of participation in conventional religious activities.³⁸ Among the younger generation and the middle class, exposure to modern lifestyles and widespread digital access have contributed to more individualized and flexible patterns of religious practice. This situation often gives rise to a need for more practical and functional spiritual meaning in the face of urban pressures.³⁹

³⁵ Ridwa Lubis, *Sosiologi Agama: Memahami Perkembangan Agama dalam Interaksi Sosial*, cet, II (Rawamangun, Jakarta: PT Fajar Interpratama Mandiri, 2017), h. 102.

³⁶ Fathudin Ali dan Muhammad Zuhdi, 'Peran Agama dalam Perubahan Sosial Masyarakat', *Rayah Al-Islam: Jurnal Ilmu Islam*, 8.1 (2024), 286–95 <<https://doi.org/10.37274/rais.v8i1.930>>.

³⁷ Pakde Wahyu, "Masyarakat, Wawancara" (di Kota Palopo, pada 17 Oktober, 2025).

³⁸ Tomi Arianto, *Realitas Budaya Masyarakat Urban*, cet, I (Kab. Agam, Sumatera Barat: Yayasan Tri Edukasi Ilmiah, 2024), h. 61.

³⁹ Nur Rif'ah, et. al, 'Melampaui Batas Fisik : Segregasi Sosial dalam Kontestasi Ruang Keagamaan Perkotaan', *SOSIOLOGIA Jurnal Agama dan Masyarakat*, 3.1 (2024), 13–26 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35905/sosiologi.v3i1.10363>>.

These changes have encouraged the emergence of new patterns of religiosity in Palopo, where religion is not only understood as a ritual obligation, but also as a source of inner peace and spiritual resilience. People tend to seek forms of religious guidance that are applicable, relevant to everyday issues, and able to provide moral guidance in the context of work, family, and social relations in urban areas.⁴⁰

Along with this, the digitization of da'wah has become an important part of the lives of urban Muslims in Palopo. Social media and digital platforms are used as a means of acquiring religious knowledge quickly and flexibly, adapting to the time constraints of urban communities. Although it provides broad access, this pattern of digital da'wah consumption also poses challenges in the form of fragmentation of religious authority and the risk of partial understanding, thus requiring a higher level of religious literacy.⁴¹

It is in this context that the Jamaah Tabligh responds to the dynamics of urban Muslim religiosity in Palopo in a distinctive way. The Jamaah Tabligh views digital media-based da'wah as being informative but lacking in deep spiritual experience.⁴² Therefore, they continue to emphasize direct da'wah through jaulah and khuruj as a means of building social bonds and inner transformation. This attitude reflects a choice of da'wah actions that are value-oriented, not merely technically efficient.

⁴⁰ Wasisto Raharjo Jati, 'Islam Populer Sebagai Pencarian Identitas Muslim Kelas Menengah Indonesia', *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam*, 5 (2015), 139–63 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2015.5.1.139-163>>.

⁴¹ Aulia Safitri dan Salsabila Hady Ningsih, 'Crisis and Religious Conversion : The Religious Dynamics of Modern Society', *Journal of Islamic Education and Ethics*, 3.1 (2025), 89–101 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18196/jiee.v3i1.79>>.

⁴² Sapriallah, et. al, 'Kontestasi Keagamaan dalam Masyarakat Muslim Urban', *Al-Qalam*, 72, 2020, 39–56 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31969/alq.v26i1.844>>.

Sociologically, the Jamaah Tabligh choice can be understood as an effort to maintain community-based da'wah amid the rationalization of modern society. While digital da'wah reflects an instrumental rationality that emphasizes speed and reach, Jamaah Tabligh places face-to-face interaction as the primary medium for transmitting values and shaping religious awareness.⁴³ For them, technology serves as a complement, not a substitute for the essence of communal da'wah and direct spiritual experience.

Thus, the flexible, individualistic, and digitized character of urban Muslims in Palopo becomes an important context that encourages Jamaah Tabligh to adjust their da'wah strategies.⁴⁴ The religious transformation they are undergoing is not interpreted as a rejection of modernity, but rather as an effort to maintain spiritual depth and the effectiveness of da'wah amid changes in the patterns of urban religious life.

FORMS OF RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION OF THE JAMAAH TABLIGH IN PALOPO CITY

1. Religious Transformation at the Individual Level

Religious transformation at the individual level is the most fundamental change, namely the commitment of members to the activities of the Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo. This change is particularly evident in the shift in the members' life orientation, moral behavior, and religious discipline. Based on field findings,

⁴³ Andi Agustang dan Muhammad Syukur, 'Pola Sosialisasi Jamaah Tabligh dalam Meningkatkan Semangat Keagamaan di Desa Rumbia Kecamatan Rumbia Kabupaten Jenepono', *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Pendidikan*, 7.1 (2023), 269–81 <<https://doi.org/10.58258/jisip.v7i1.4223/http>>.

⁴⁴ Ahmad Diaz Syahrezyah Makmur, M Ilham, and Barsihan Nor, "Qadariyah Dan Jabariyah Di Era Modern : Refleksi Memahami Kehendak Dan Takdir," *Fikr Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 1, no. 2 (2025): 84–97, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.62448/fjpsi.v1i2.341>.

this transformation process occurs across social backgrounds, from the general public, marginalized groups, to the educated and academics.

Azgar Marzuki emphasizes that this change is understood as a process of *hijrah*, or migration, towards a more obedient, disciplined, and morally oriented life. This transformation does not occur on an individual basis, but rather within the framework of the Jamaah Tabligh's *da'wah* system, which emphasizes obedience to the results of deliberations at various levels, from the *mahallah* and *halaqah* to the *markaz*. According to him, the strong tradition of obedience to deliberation is one of the main factors in the sustainability of Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo, even though its members come from diverse educational and professional backgrounds.⁴⁵

This view is in line with Raihan's explanation, which emphasizes that the orientation of Jamaah Tabligh's *da'wah* is not on institutional expansion, but on individual self-improvement.⁴⁶ From the internal perspective of Jamaah Tabligh, *da'wah* is understood as a means of *ishlah al-nafs* (self-improvement), so that it is not the congregation as an institution that experiences progress, but the individuals involved in it. The focus on improving personal faith and deeds shows that religious transformation is understood as a process of internalizing values, not merely ritual participation.

Conceptually, this finding shows a connection with the idea of *tazkiyatun nafs* in Islamic thought, as formulated by al-Ghazali, namely the purification of the soul through continuous spiritual practice. Jamaah Tabligh's *da'wah* practices—such as *taklim*, *zikir*,

⁴⁵ Azgar Marzuki, (Jamaah Tabligh), *Wawanacara* (di Kota Palopo, pada 15 Oktober, 2025).

⁴⁶ Raihan (Jamaah Tablig), *Wawancara*, (di Kota Palopo, pada 12 oktober 2025).

and khuruj—serve as forms of riyadhah ruhaniyah that shape the moral and spiritual discipline of its members. Individual transformation does not occur instantly, but rather through structured collective habituation.

The strong tradition of deliberation in Jamaah Tabligh also plays an important role in shaping individual change. Deliberation functions not only as a decision-making mechanism, but also as a space for internalizing the values of collective leadership and shared responsibility. This principle has strong normative legitimacy in Islamic teachings, as emphasized in QS. Āli ‘Imrān/3:159 and QS. Asy-Syūrā/42:38, which place deliberation as the foundation of social ethics and community leadership.

Members' compliance with the results of deliberation reflects the practice of the concept of ṭā‘at li al-imām (obedience to the leader) as long as the decision does not conflict with sharia law.⁴⁷ In a social context, this pattern strengthens internal cohesion and builds social capital that enables Jamaah Tabligh to survive as a solid religious community amid the dynamics of Palopo's urban society.

This study's analysis adopts a socio-religious perspective on change that views individual transformation as the foundation of social change. This perspective aligns with Fazlur Rahman's idea, which emphasizes that societal renewal must begin with moral development, religious awareness, and individual responsibility. In the context of Jamaah Tabligh, this principle is reflected in the emphasis on self-improvement through khuruj activities, enhanced worship, the practice of a simple lifestyle, and the strengthening of

⁴⁷ Ahmad Diaz Syahrezyah Makmur et al., "Pro Kontra Ulama Terhadap Konsep Munasabah Al-Qur'an," *Al-Aqwam: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran Dan Tafsir* 4 (2025): 89–108, <https://doi.org/DOI:https://doi.org/10.58194/al-aqwam.v4i2.1924>.

commitment to Islamic values. Field findings indicate that members of Jamaah Tabligh view social change as something that cannot be achieved instantly through structural changes, but must begin with changes in individual behavior.⁴⁸ Several informants stated that the da'wah activities they undertake aim to cultivate moral character, discipline in worship, and concern for others before encouraging the community to engage in broader societal change. These findings suggest that the individual transformation at the core of Jamaah Tabligh's da'wah reflects Fazlur Rahman's concept of moral renewal—that is, social change originating from the development of individual character and moral consciousness.

Furthermore, significant behavioral changes—for example, from individuals with difficult backgrounds to more gentle and religious personalities—can be explained through Lewis R. Rambo's theory of religious conversion. This theory emphasizes the importance of intense religious encounters and community support in creating sustainable behavioral change. In the context of Jamaah Tabligh, the community functions as a safe space that supports the spiritual and moral transformation process of its members.

Based on this description, it can be concluded that the religious transformation of Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo City at the individual level is not merely an increase in ritual activity, but a process of forming a new religious habitus that encompasses theological, psychological, and social dimensions. The synergy between da'wah practices, the tradition of deliberation, and the orientation towards self-improvement shows that Jamaah Tabligh has succeeded in

⁴⁸ Barsihannor et al., "Toward An Inclusive Theology: Muhammad Syahrur's Hermeneutical Interpretation Of Religious Inclusivism Based On Al-Quran," *European Jurnal For Philosophy of Religion* 15 (2023): 105, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24204/ejpr.2021.3937>.

building a relatively stable and sustainable model of individual transformation. This transformation is an important foundation for the formation of a more ethical and harmonious social order in the context of Palopo's urban society.

2. Transformation in the Structure and System of Jamaah Tabligh Da'wah

In addition to transformation at the individual level, Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo City has also undergone significant changes in the structure and system of da'wah that they carry out. This transformation does not lead to the formation of a formal bureaucratic organization, but rather an adjustment of coordination patterns, movement mechanisms, and coaching methods in order to remain relevant to the dynamics of urban society. Thus, the changes in Jamaah Tabligh are more accurately understood as a transformation of values and da'wah work systems, rather than structural modernization in an institutional sense.

The city of Palopo has undergone social development characterized by increased economic activity, greater community mobility, and the use of information technology in daily life. These conditions have influenced the community's patterns of social and religious interaction, including limited time to participate in routine da'wah activities that take a long time to complete. Based on the results of interviews and observations, these conditions pose a challenge for the Tabligh Jamaat in maintaining congregational participation and the continuity of da'wah activities in urban environments.

In addressing these conditions, the Jamaah Tabligh demonstrates flexibility in conducting da'wah activities without compromising its core principles. Several informants explained that the implementation of da'wah activities, including khuruj and

consultation meetings, is often adjusted to accommodate members' schedules and commitments. Furthermore, da'wah coordination continues through the mahallah and halaqah networks, extending to broader levels, by prioritizing consultation and spiritual motivation over formal instructions. These findings indicate that the ability to adapt activities to the social conditions of the community is a key factor supporting the sustainability of the Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo City.

As explained by Iqra Massimpuang, this tiered system serves to maintain unity of direction and continuity of the da'wah approach, not to build organizational bureaucracy. The uniformity of values and methods of da'wah is the main binding force of the movement, enabling Jamaah Tabligh to build an extensive da'wah network without relying on formal structures. This model allows each member to act based on personal awareness and sincerity, while remaining within a coordinated collective framework.⁴⁹

Research findings indicate that relationships among members of the Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo are fostered through intensive interaction, shared religious activities, and a commitment to common values. This pattern of relationships fosters a strong sense of togetherness and solidarity among members, enabling them to continue their da'wah activities despite facing various challenges in urban life.⁵⁰

This phenomenon can be understood through the concept of *Gemeinschaft* proposed by Ferdinand Tönnies. *Gemeinschaft* describes a form of community built on the basis of social closeness,

⁴⁹ Iqra Massimpuang, *Jamaah Tabligh (Tokoh JT), Wawancara* (Kota Palopo, pada 12 Oktober, 2025).

⁵⁰ Noorhaidi Hasan, *Ulama, Politik, dan Narasi Kebangsaan: Fragmentasi Otoritas Keagamaan di Kota-Kota Indonesia*, Cet.I (Yogyakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam Demokrasi dan Perdamain (PusPIDeP), 2019), h. 72.

moral bonds, and shared values. In the context of Jamaah Tabligh, the bonds formed are not merely organizational but are also rooted in strong emotional ties and religious commitment.⁵¹ These findings indicate that the primary strength of Jamaah Tabligh lies in its ability to foster solidarity and a sense of togetherness amidst an urban lifestyle that tends to be individualistic and self-interested.

One concrete form of the transformation of the Jamaah Tabligh's da'wah system in urban environments is the strengthening of maqāmī practices, particularly through jaulah activities. Jaulah is a method of da'wah based on direct silaturahmi (social gatherings) that is carried out regularly in the neighborhoods where members live. This practice is divided into jaulah 1 (within the mosque itself) and jaulah 2 (surrounding mosques), with the aim of encouraging the community to come closer to the mosque and strengthening religious awareness. As explained by Haris, jaulah is understood as a means of reviving the function of the mosque and strengthening socio-religious relations.

In the urban context of Palopo, jaulah has undergone adjustments in terms of timing and implementation patterns. This activity is generally carried out from Maghrib to Isha, in accordance with the busy schedules of city dwellers. These adjustments show that the transformation of Jamaah Tabligh's da'wah is not static, but rather adaptive to social realities without changing its basic principles. The establishment of daily, weekly, monthly, and annual schedules makes jaulah a regular and sustainable form of da'wah.

Sociologically, the effectiveness of jaulah can be understood as a form of rationalization of da'wah activities. Although driven by spiritual motivation, its implementation shows a systematic and

⁵¹Fahrudin Faiz, *Nalar Keislaman dan Keilmuan*, Cet I (Jakarta: PT Elex Media Komputindo, 2024), h. 59.

planned pattern. On the other hand, jaulah also serves to revive the spirit of *Gemeinschaft* in urban communities by building direct interaction, emotional closeness, and social trust. The simple, non-confrontational, and non-coercive approach makes da'wah more acceptable, especially to the general public.

From an Islamic perspective, the jaulah method is in line with the principles of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil) and strengthening *silaturahmi* (social ties) as the foundation of a faithful social life. This gentle, consistent, and humane form of da'wah (proselytizing) grounds Islamic values in the daily lives of urban communities. Thus, jaulah is not merely a routine of da'wah, but a socio-spiritual strategy that bridges Islamic teachings with the needs of modern society.

Overall, the transformation of the structure and system of Jamaah Tabligh's da'wah in Palopo City shows that the sustainability of this movement does not rely on the strength of formal organizations, but on the integration of traditional values, charismatic leadership, and a solid community character. The flexibility of the da'wah system, which remains consistent with its basic methodology, allows Jamaah Tabligh to adapt to urban dynamics without losing its religious identity. This is what has enabled Jamaah Tabligh to remain relevant and active in the religious landscape of Palopo society to this day.

3. Transformation in the Synergy of Da'wah and Profession

One form of religious transformation of the Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo City can be seen in its ability to integrate da'wah activities with the professions and social roles of its members. Members of the Jamaah Tabligh come from various professional backgrounds, such as police officers, academics, government employees, traders, and entrepreneurs. This condition shows that the religious practices of

Jamaah Tabligh are not exclusive or separate from professional life, but are integrated with the daily activities of its members.

Field findings indicate that members of Jamaah Tabligh continue to carry out their da'wah activities without neglecting their social responsibilities as workers, heads of households, or members of the community. This is evident in their efforts to coordinate their da'wah activities with their work schedules and family obligations. Gunawan, a police officer who is active in Jamaah Tabligh, explained that jaulah activities and religious guidance are conducted outside of working hours so as not to interfere with his professional responsibilities.⁵² According to him, the values of Jamaah Tabligh's da'wah actually support the fulfillment of police duties, particularly in fostering discipline, a persuasive approach, and social responsibility.

This situation demonstrates flexibility in the practice of Jamaah Tabligh's da'wah. Amid the fast-paced, time-constrained lives of urban communities, da'wah activities are not rigidly enforced but are adapted to members' circumstances and schedules. This flexibility serves as a key adaptation strategy for Jamaah Tabligh to sustain its da'wah efforts in urban settings, as it allows members to remain active in religious activities without having to abandon their jobs, families, or social roles in the community.

From an Islamic perspective, this practice reflects a balance between worship, social responsibility, and professionalism. Deepening faith does not stop at individual piety, but is manifested in work ethics, discipline, honesty, and public responsibility. In the context of policing and other formal professions, the spirituality built through Jamaah Tabligh contributes to strengthening moral

⁵² Gunawan, (Jamaah Tabligh), *Wawancara* (Kota Palopo, pada 14 Oktober, 2025).

and work ethics, thereby positively impacting the quality of service to the community.

From a sociological perspective, the Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo can be understood as a functional religious community that is, a religious group that not only plays a role in nurturing the spiritual lives of its members but also influences their social behavior in daily life.⁵³ From the perspective of the sociology of religion, religion functions not only as a belief system but also as a source of values that guide individual actions and strengthen social solidarity. Research findings indicate that members of the Jamaah Tabligh strive to apply religious values in their work, family life, and social interactions. Thus, religious activities do not stop at ritual worship but are also reflected in tangible social practices.

Field findings indicate that members of Jamaah Tabligh who work as merchants, employees, or business owners strive to apply the values of honesty, discipline, patience, and responsibility in their work. Several informants stated that their involvement in Jamaah Tabligh encourages them to use their professions as a means of *da'wah* through exemplary attitudes and behavior. This aligns with Ferdinand Tönnies's concept of *Gemeinschaft*—a community built on shared values, moral solidarity, and close social bonds. In the context of Palopo, the religious bonds fostered by Jamaah Tabligh not only strengthen internal solidarity but also influence the social and professional behavior of its members. Therefore, Jamaah Tabligh functions not only as a spiritual community but also as a

⁵³ Suryo Adi Sahfutra dan Agus Himmawan Utomo, 'Sharing Spaces Between Majorities and Minorities: Negotiations of Muslim Communities in North Sumatra in Shaping a New Multiculturalism from a Social Philosophy Perspective', *Ilmu Sosial KNE*, 49.1 (2025), 92–116 <<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i1.1345>>.

space for the formation of values and social change at the community level.

THE DIALECTICS OF MODERNITY IN THE JAMAAH TABLIGH IN PALOPO CITY

1. The Religiosity of the Jamaah Tabligh Amidst Urban Modernity

Modernity is often associated with a materialistic, individualistic, and secular lifestyle. However, in Palopo City, modernity has become a new space for spiritual transformation through the Jamaah Tabligh. Instead of being marginalized, this movement offers a religious alternative that can balance the anxiety of urban communities caused by a void of meaning.

According to Azgar Marzuki, the Jamaah Tabligh missionary activities serve as a medium of hijrah that touches various social strata, from the general public and thugs to academics. The transformation that occurs is not only superficial, but also penetrates internal aspects such as obedience, discipline, and gentleness of character, thus having a real impact on urban social dynamics:

*"The transformation within Jamaah Tabligh members occurs in all circles, from the general public, thugs, to academics, towards obedience, discipline, and gentleness, providing a positive impact on social dynamics."*⁵⁴

This shows that the spiritual transformation of Jamaah Tabligh takes place systematically through tiered deliberation, not free activities without direction. Raihan added that the strength of

⁵⁴ Marzuki, (Jamaah Tabligh), *Wawanacara* (di Kota Palopo, pada 10 Oktober 2025)

da'wah lies in improving the quality of individual faith and deeds, not organizational growth:

*"Da'wah is for self-improvement, and indeed its essence is for oneself."*⁵⁵

The dialectic between the religiosity of Jamaah Tabligh and modernity can be seen in the movement's ability to provide spiritual answers to the crisis of values in modern society. Modernity, which often causes existential emptiness and psychological pressure, makes urban communities need religion as a source of peace. Jamaah Tabligh comes with simple practices oriented towards everyday life, thus becoming a "place to return" for those seeking spiritual stability.

The interview results indicate that involvement in Jamaah Tabligh not only leads to an increase in religious practice but also influences the mindset and social behavior of its members. Several informants stated that after actively participating in khuruj, bayan, and musyawarah activities, they became more disciplined in fulfilling their religious obligations, more organized in managing their time, and more active in building positive social relationships. The research informants came from various social backgrounds, such as merchants, employees, police officers, students, and community leaders. These findings suggest that Jamaah Tabligh serves as a space for moral development accessible to diverse social groups amidst the changes of urban life.

These findings can be understood through the perspective of Anthony Giddens, who explains that modernity often forces individuals to confront rapid and complex social change. In this context, Jamaah Tabligh provides a social and spiritual space that helps its members rebuild their religious orientation and forge

⁵⁵ Raihan (Jamaah Tablig), *Wawancara* (di Kota Palopo, pada 12 oktober 2025).

stronger social bonds. Furthermore, as explained by Peter L. Berger, religion serves as a source of meaning that provides a sense of order and certainty in life. The practices of deliberation, da'wah activities, and interactions that take place regularly within Jamaah Tabligh demonstrate the community's role in fostering solidarity, reinforcing religious identity, and maintaining the social stability of its members amidst the dynamics of urban society.⁵⁶

Thus, the dialectic between Jamaah Tabligh and modernity is harmonious. This movement remains relevant and enduring because it can read the anxieties of urban society and provide spiritual answers through a simple, consistent approach that touches on the deepest needs: peace, social connection, and meaning in life.

2. The Religious Practices of Jamaah Tabligh and Criticism of Modernity

Although Jamaah Tabligh has gained widespread acceptance in Palopo, modernity has led to criticism of their methods of preaching, which are considered traditional and insufficiently adaptive to technological developments and the needs of urban communities. Darus, for example, believes that Jamaah Tabligh's preaching is irrelevant if it does not utilize digital media such as videos, online articles, or social media to reach urban communities who access information primarily through electronic devices:

"I see their preaching as inappropriate/irrelevant. They should keep up with developments. Nowadays, people mostly use cell phones, so if they preach through cell phones, it will be easier for people to access

⁵⁶ Eva Yulianti, 'Ekstrakurikuler Keagamaan terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Religius Peserta Didik di Kota Majapahit', *Pedagogik: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 05.02 (2018), 193–208 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33650/pjp.v5i2.380>>.

or understand, and people can also repeat it so that it is easier to understand."⁵⁷

The informant's statement indicates a shift in how people access and understand religious teachings in the digital age. Whereas religious outreach was previously conducted primarily through in-person meetings, people now also acquire religious knowledge through digital media such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and messaging apps. This phenomenon aligns with the concept of digital religion, which explains that religious practices and experiences are increasingly intertwined with digital technology. In this context, some people believe that religious outreach will be more readily accepted if it utilizes media that has become an integral part of their daily lives.

This finding can also be understood through the concept of the mediatization of religion, which refers to the process by which the media becomes a key vehicle for the dissemination and shaping of religious experiences. Criticism of Jamaah Tabligh is not merely a rejection of the teachings they convey, but rather a critique of their da'wah methods, which are seen as not yet fully adapted to the changing communication patterns of urban society. While Jamaah Tabligh continues to prioritize face-to-face da'wah through jaulah, taklim, and khuruj, some members of the public are more accustomed to forms of online religiosity that is, the practice of learning and accessing religious knowledge through digital platforms. This finding highlights a disparity between the conventional da'wah model upheld by Jamaah Tabligh and the increasingly prevalent patterns of digital religiosity in urban society.

Other aspects that have been criticized are the scientific capacity of the preachers, the excessive use of religious expressions,

⁵⁷ Darus, (Masyarakat), *Wawancara* (di Kota Palopo, pada 15 Oktober).

and the lack of attention to the cleanliness of mosques, which is considered incompatible with the standards of professionalism and aesthetics of urban society. Zadli highlights the Jamaah Tabligh's interpersonal approach, which sometimes appears coercive:

*"Sometimes their preaching uses coercion; if we do not follow what they say/preach, they sometimes show their displeasure."*⁵⁸

This criticism reflects the clash between the logic of *Gemeinschaft*, which emphasizes emotional closeness and shared values within the community, and the logic of *Gesellschaft*, which is more individualistic, egalitarian, and values privacy (Tönnies).

However, criticism does not always mean total rejection. Wahyu emphasizes that the Jamaah Tabligh's invitation is still relevant for awakening the spirituality of urban communities:

*"What the Jamaah Tabligh brings is quite good; its invitation is always to practice religion, but of course it must be done in a good way because urban communities have different characters."*⁵⁹

Public criticism of the Jamaah Tabligh da'wah methods indicates a shift in how people access and receive religious information. Some informants believe that da'wah would be more accessible if it utilized digital media, which has become an integral part of daily life for urban communities. These findings suggest that technological advancements and changes in communication patterns have influenced public expectations regarding how da'wah is delivered.

This phenomenon can be explained through Anthony Giddens's theory of structuration, particularly the concept of reflexive modernization. According to Giddens, social change prompts individuals and groups to continually evaluate long-

⁵⁸ Zadli, (Masyarakat/Imam), *Wawancara* (di Kota Palopo, pada 15 Oktober).

⁵⁹ Wahyu, (Masyarakat), *Wawancara* (di Kota Palopo, pada 17 Oktober, 2025).

standing practices. In this context, public criticism of the Jamaah Tabligh's da'wah methods indicates a demand to adapt their approach to da'wah in line with ever-changing social conditions. Although Jamaah Tabligh continues to maintain face-to-face da'wah as its defining characteristic, field findings indicate that they are beginning to face the need to consider the use of digital media as part of their da'wah strategy in urban communities.⁶⁰ Thus, the emerging criticism is not merely a rejection of da'wah traditions, but reflects a process of adaptation between religious traditions and the social changes taking place in the digital age.

Paradoxically, as Peter Berger explains, modernity actually increases people's need for spiritual space. Jamaah Tabligh remains a counterbalance to rational and materialistic urban life, even though it faces criticism as part of the process of adapting and renewing its methods of preaching to be more relevant to urban communities.

3. The Resilience of Jamaah Tabligh in Facing the Challenges of Modernity

Amidst the tide of modernity characterized by rationality, efficiency, and technological dominance, Jamaah Tabligh offers a religious approach based on the heart, faith, and spiritual experience. This approach differs from modern thinking, which emphasizes logic as the standard of truth. Raihan asserts that religion is rooted in belief and the heart, not merely rationality:

⁶⁰ Elok Maria Ulfah, 'Dinamika Masyarakat Urban (Kajian Perubahan Pola Keberagamaan dan Sosial-Budaya Masyarakat Urban di Penampungan Tanggul Rejo Sidoarjo dalam Perspektif Pengembangan Masyarakat)', *Dirasah : Jurnal Studi Ilmu dan Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 4.1 (2021) <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.29062/dirasah.v4i1.118>>.

“Religion does not fit into logic and cannot be understood by the mind; religion belongs in the heart. It is our faith and belief.”⁶¹

This shows that Jamaah Tabligh emphasizes a spiritual dimension that cannot be replaced by modernity. Amidst the pressures of materialistic urban life, their message of peace of mind and self-improvement is considered relevant because it offers a meaning of life that modern logic cannot provide.⁶²

The effectiveness of Jamaah Tabligh's preaching is also reflected in the moral transformation of former thugs who are now gentler and more compassionate. Raihan said, “Many thugs or troublemakers who joined the Jamaah, who used to cause trouble, now love and care for people.” This change shows the ability of their preaching to touch segments of society that were previously marginalized, while supporting social harmony and urban security.

The continued existence of Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo is also supported by the involvement of various segments of society, including government officials, academics, police, and former thugs. Haris stated: *“In Palopo, the congregation is indeed commonplace, widespread, and integrated with the community.”⁶³* This widespread acceptance demonstrates the Tabligh Congregation's ability to adapt to the local social structure without losing its da'wah identity, reflecting a form of resistance to the pressures of modern rationality, as explained in Max Weber's framework of rationalization.

The Tabligh Jamaah emphasizes religiosity based on faith and heartfelt experience, which serves as an answer to the “spiritual

⁶¹ Raihan (Jamaah Tabligh), *Wawancara*, (di Kota Palopo, pada 12 oktober 2025).

⁶² Muhammad Andryan Firyansyah, “Perceptions and Attitudes of Urban Muslim Youth towards Modernity and Globalization,” *Al-Madinah Jurnal Of Islamic Civilization* 1, no. 1 (2024): 95–108, <https://doi.org/Perceptions and Attitudes of Urban Muslim Youth towards Modernity and Globalization>.

⁶³ Haris, (Jamaah Tabligh), *Wawancara* (di Kota Palopo, pada 17 Oktober, 2025).

void" left by modernity. This movement does not reject progress, but rather provides existential peace and fulfillment of spiritual needs that modernity cannot provide.

Communally, Jamaah Tabligh also bridges the gap in urban social interaction. Referring to Ferdinand Tönnies, urban communities tend to create impersonal *Gesellschaft* relationships. Jamaah Tabligh, on the other hand, offers a warm *Gemeinschaft* atmosphere based on shared values. Emotional bonds and support among members provide a "home" for people who often feel alienated.

The social impact is also evident in the moral transformation of former gang members. They become more compassionate and religious individuals, reducing the potential for conflict and presenting peaceful figures in the community. Thus, Jamaah Tabligh not only shapes individual morals but also supports the social stability of urban communities in Palopo.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the religious transformation of the Jamaah Tabligh in Palopo City is a form of adaptation to the social changes occurring in urban society. This transformation is evident in the flexibility of their *da'wah* activities, the strengthening of community networks, and the members' ability to integrate religious values into their social and professional lives. The research findings also indicate that Jamaah Tabligh members from diverse social backgrounds have experienced changes in religious practices, discipline, and social relationships, which in turn have strengthened the community's internal solidarity.

Amid the dynamics of urban life and the development of digital technology, Jamaah Tabligh continues to maintain the

character of da'wah based on direct interaction, yet simultaneously faces demands to adapt its da'wah methods to shifts in societal communication patterns. Although there are various criticisms of the da'wah approach used, this study found that Jamaah Tabligh still plays a role in fostering moral development, strengthening social bonds, and meeting the spiritual needs of a segment of the Palopo City community. These findings indicate that the sustainability of Jamaah Tabligh is supported by its ability to uphold the movement's core values while adapting to the social changes occurring in the urban environment.

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