

# Contemporary Religion and Culture: *Hijra* Phenomena

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**Abstract:** *The diversity of cultures, customs, and understandings in Indonesia is seen to be complex in a religious context. This study is aimed at describing the phenomenon of hijrah as a contemporary religious phenomenon. This research which applied a descriptive qualitative method by using Jacques Lacan's psychoanalysis took place at Al Lathif Mosque Bandung where the hijrah youth movement conducted its dakwa activities. The findings showed that the youth hijrah movement is a new fundamentalism movement that uses young people language through new religious symbols. The implication of this research resulted at the emergence of a new religious typology that is more suitable for young people.*

**Keywords:** *Religion, Contemporary Culture, Hijrah*

## Introduction

The diversity of Indonesia's cultures, languages, customary principles, art and ideology expression is interrelated to religious practice. This interrelation makes religion most complex in Indonesia (Pilliang & Jaelani, 2017). People's enthusiasm to show Islamic identity within their attributes and dressing is getting explosive (Addini, 2019; Prasanti & Indriani, 2019; Rojaya, 2017; SARI et al., 2019; Syarif, 2019; Yusria et al., 2019; Yusuf, 2019). The word hijrah emerged and developed into the phenomenon of religious populism (Nashir, 2019). These phenomena indicate a religious passion shown in verbal and ritual intensity which is getting stronger and wider among Muslim people by their own ways and movements in big cities in Indonesia, especially in Bandung city. Bandung is a pioneering city for a lot of movements, both political movements and religious movements (Rosyad, 1995). At this present time, a religious movement that shows its existence is the hijrah youth movement in Bandung city. Moreover, the hijrah youth movement known as SHIFT (Quinton, n.d.) which is centered in Bandung has become a distinctive phenomenon in society for its religious dakwa practices young people style and approach.

There are some previous studies related to the phenomenon of youth hijrah movement: (1) persuasive communication strategy for the *hijrah* youth movement managers in dakwah. Solihat's study examines the phenomenon of dakwa movement of youth *hijrah* in recruiting young people to have religious awareness through a creative approach, namely persuasive communication strategy. This research applied a qualitative approach with case study. The results show that through persuasive communication strategy young people can understand religious materials well without any distortion to the essence of religious teachings, (Solihat, 2016); (2) creativity of dakwa participative communication in Bandung shift. This study elaborates the creativity of dakwa movement that involves community direct participation and on-line participation in social media. The object of research is dakwa Shift movement which targets young people to have more active participation in religious practices. Through Shift method, *hijrah* youth uses a creative dakwa approach in the fields of sports, music, visuals and social media. Shift invited mosque people and netizens in the implementation of their dakwa strategy (Ghassani Nur Sabrina, 2018); (3) adolescent perception to the *hijrah* youth movement through instagram social media in Bandung city. This research focuses on the intensity of the dakwa activities of *hijrah* youth movement in

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Instagram in Bandung. Dakwa in Instagram can give a positive impression among adolescents on dakwa of *hijrah* youth movement (Faujiah, 2018); (4) communication of *hijrah* youth's dakwa among young people in Bandung city which is intended to take a look at the well-organized preached messages of *hijrah* youth movement and the messages and attitudes of the *hijrah* youth dakwa recipients respond to the Islamic messages they convey (Ernowo, 2018); (5) communication behavior of *hijrah* actors (phenomenological study of *hijrah* actor's communication behavior in the shift of *hijrah* youth movement in Bandung city). This study attempted to elaborate the communication behavior of *hijrah* actors who were in the *hijrah* youth movement shift in Bandung city. This study aims to reveal the communication behavior by taking a look at youth's behavior, the way they interpret it, and the way they make interactions with family and friends after doing *hijrah* (Sari, 2018); (6) Da'i's impression management in dakwa activities among *hijrah* youth. This study reveals the impression management of Ustad Handy Bonny. In his dakwa he has different characteristics and approaches but accepted among young people. He has a newer and more innovative method of dakwa that makes his dakwa more attractive (Fatoni & Sari, 2018); (7) Contribution of the *hijrah* youth community in building social behavior of adolescents: A descriptive study of the youth of Al Lathiif Mosque in Cihapit Village, Bandung. This research departed from the phenomenon of the young people *hijrah* in Bandung city. This study examines the contribution of a community in building adolescent social behavior (Setiawan, 2017); (8) descriptive study on self-control on the shift board of *hijrah* youth movement of Al Lathiif Mosque in Bandung. This study intends to examine the self-control portrait of the managers in the shift youth community in Bandung city. The research method is descriptive method with 30 research subjects. Data collection applied questionnaire measuring tool made by researchers based on the type of self-control from Averiiil. The results stated that the self-control of the *Hijrah* youth shift administrators in Bandung is in high category (Sulaeman et al., 2018); (9) life style phenomenon of the *hijrah* youth community in Bandung city, (Bandung, Pasundan University 2017). This study aims to uncover the ideas that underlie the lifestyle of *hijrah* youth community in Bandung. The method in this study is a qualitative approach with phenomenological analysis. Data collection techniques cover literature studies and in-depth interviews of five participants who stated that they were active members of *hijrah* youth (Elistiawan, 2017); (10) *hijrah* youth of Al Lathif: Effectiveness of Study Al Lathif Mosque in the enhancement of Religious Awareness of Bandung Brigez Motorcycle Gang. This research was conducted to find out the method of dakwa, religious awareness and the effectiveness of *hijrah* youth recitation in enhancing religious awareness of Bandung Brigez motorcycle gang (Muttaqien et al., 2018).

Different from some previous studies, this article reveals the phenomenon of contemporary *hijrah* with Jacques Lacan's psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis can describe how powerful the language of young people with their specificities is and how strong the youth movement can attract million people to emigrate and adopt a new culture of contemporary religious expression.

### **Research methodology**

This research is qualitative in nature which aims to understand and elaborate the phenomenon of the *hijrah* youth religious movement in Bandung using the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan. The source of data in this study include all data in qualitative research which cover documents, records, archives, interviews, direct observations, physical devices such as videos and pictures. Moreover, this study has two types of data, namely: (1) primary data; and (2) secondary data. Primary data includes data about *hijrah* youth originated from its official website and previous studies. Meanwhile, secondary data is supporting data that helps researchers get a complete portrait and understanding of the phenomenon of this study. The supporting data is referred to the other studies of religious movements in addition to *hijrah* youth movement which derived from journals, print and electronic newspapers. In this study, data collection will be firmly selected; not all data must be collected, but the data which are relevant to this study. As previously mentioned, the research data applied in this study include verbal data, observational data, and mediation data; in other words, data collection procedures cover the following ways: (1) documentation; (2) observation; and (3) interview.

### **Result and Discussion**

Religion and Culture are seen to be two inherent sides of human life that influence each other. Religion defines culture, and in turn culture frames religion. In the historical development of religion, humans understand religion in accordance with the culture in which they grow and develop (Ghazali, 2004). Contemporary culture is the most secular and religious as well (George M. Thomas, n.d.; Tapscott & Wiiliam, 2106). The trend of contemporary society religion always changes, so that religion (Loy, 1997) and religious identity follow the change too (Simpson, 2007). Contemporary

society with its global culture creates new religious movements (Arwick, 2007), religious identity, and new meaning of life (Castell, 2010). The boundaries of life increasingly fade, in which one aspect with another aspect seems vague. The complexity in religion and culture interrelation is getting apparent. Moreover, a new religious identity makes a new religious movement, from which how religion is understood, believed, responded to and practiced (Pilliang & Jaelani, 2017).

In the history of Islam *hijrah* was the event of Muslims' migration from Mecca. The first *hijrah* was done from Mecca to Abbisinia, and the second *hijrah* was from Mecca to Medina. Nowadays, some people who want to make changes in their behavior from stupidity (jahiliyyah) behavior to the Islamic behavior popularize the term *hijrah*. In the terminological context, the meaning of *hijrah* is different from the *hijrah* of the Prophet and his companions. The today's *hijrah* has a meaning redefinition. *Hijrah* is currently defined as moving from old behavior to new behavior, from old mindset and to new mindset. *Hijrah* has become a popular movement trend that covers not only actions change but also physical changes. For example, men let their beards long or women change their casual veil to long-coverage veil. *Hijrah* people are divided into two groups, the well-established (old) group and the (young) people group who seek for identity (Abdurakhman, 2019). On the other hand, *hijrah* can literally means to move. *Hijrah* actually has two types, namely *makani hijrah*/physical *hijrah* (one place to the other place) and *ma'nawi hijrah*/spiritual (behavior and attitude) such as moving from lazy to obedient, or from obedient to be more obedient (Rojaya, 2017). In sociological perspective, *hijrah* can be interpreted as transformation, social change toward the possibility for a better life. The transformation here is related to the mental attitude which is linked to the socio-cultural dynamics, and the interaction in *hijrah* mean not only mental, reasoning and emotional movement but also geographical movements as that the Prophet ever did (Salahudin, 2017).

The phenomenon of *hijrah* youth's *dakwa* movement in recruiting young people to have religious awareness applied a creative approach, namely persuasive communication strategy. Through persuasive communication strategy young people can understand religious materials well without any distortion to the essence of religious teachings (Solihat, 2016). The combination of religious language and everyday language of young people has effective influence, such as the use "hang out with *ustadz*" to replace the recitation term, "sharing night", "ngabuburide", and some other terms. Additionally, this movement introduces religious activities that are integrated with the usual activities of young people, such as outdoor activities *ulin* (hang out), and some other religious activities designed in line with popular culture of young generation. This movement, in practice, uses various media based on information and communication technology through the use of certain digital applications to popularize its activities and attract young people who indeed use a lot of this kind of media and technology-based applications. Therefore, this movement usually appears on various social media or in offline activities where young people always gather. the *hijrah* youth movement is inviting young people to return to their religion and the religious values practices. One who pioneered this movements is Hanan Attaki. In many occasions, his *dakwa* emphasized that the younger generation are now very vulnerable follow the rapid changes of values or culture that may make them away from the Islamic teachings. For *hijrah* youth, this condition is very crucial because it will make community as whole and the younger generation in particular go further astray. However, they the *hijrah* youth fully realize that it is not a simple job to invite young people to study religion because they have been involved and accustomed to free lifestyle and conflicting social interaction, or have been trapped in the flow of popular cultures which in many ways are against religious values. To deal with this, the *hijrah* youth movement always uses methods or approaches of *dakwa* that are appropriate to the characteristics of young people (Suceno, 2018).

In order to make in-dept elaboration, this article tries to explain the outline of Lacan's theory, especially regarding the triadic concept of human subconscious. Lacan has a broad theory about psychology or mind that covers three different categories. This realm of mind consists of imaginary, symbolic and real realms. These three minds are related to one another in one knot. Imaginary realm covers images, concepts and imagination. The nature of symbol has to do with language or markers. According to Lacan, the real nature not narrative or concept of reality or objective world, the "real" is that live in the mind and which is expressed in words and actions and is repetitive so as to form its own distinctive pattern (Lacan, 2013).

The *hijrah* youth movement has special term that applies in its own environment that is different from other *dakwa* movements, such as the use "hang out with *ustadz*" to replace the recitation term, "sharing night", "ngabuburide". This paper attempts to interpret the terms previously mentioned "hang out with *Ustadz*" to replace the recitation term, "sharing night" to replace *mabit* term, "ngabuburide" to replace the term *ngabuburit* by using Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic approach, so that it can be interpreted and re-presented with different meaning and nuance. Jacques

Lacan's thoughts is interesting because he combines Freudian psychoanalysis with semiotics and linguistics approaches. Therefore, with Lacan's theory we can understand the condition or subconscious thought that manifest in the behavior of a particular person or community by looking at the used language or symbols in the community.

In addition, this realm of mind includes imaginary, symbolic and real realms. These three minds are linked to each other in one knot. Imaginary world has three realms: images, concepts, and imagination. The symbol of nature is dealing with language or markers. The real nature in Lacan's view is not narrative or concept of reality or objective world; meanwhile, the "real" is something that is always alive in mind, expressed in words and actions and repetitive so in order to make its own distinctive pattern.

Referring to Lacan's theory, as previously mentioned, the imaginary realm of *hijrah* youth consists of the following images: for the hijrah young this world has divine rules and sympathy. The rule is shown within the hijrah youth who highly respect religious symbols, especially language symbol, by not removing religious substance but replacing the common terms that Muslim people use in their religious activities. Adopting Van Peursen's term, (Peursen, 2000) the *hijrah* youth remains at the functional stage, where they do very functional acts to the environment that is constantly changing due to technological developments. However, the functionality of social change is not in line with Van Peursen's term, rather humans must always follow social change and respect their social environment. The *hijrah* youth keep following this view even though they have their own term for their dakwa activities. This is proven in the big scale religious gathering (pengajian) that many young people joined in Bandung.

Regarding the concept of imaginary realm of *hijrah* youth, the symbolic nature according to Lacan's view is that meaning is essentially a concept that has to do with language, words and symbols. *Hijrah* youth interpret their lives with a variety of dakwa movements that are accompanied by various kinds of youth activities, such as sharing night, as a symbol (embodied in recitation) that hijrah youth applied in terms of their fictional nature. For example, starting their religious gathering, they used to make greeting terms familiar to young people by saying brothers and sisters.

## Conclusion

The psychoanalytic of Lacan can reveal the power of young people's language with its uniqueness that becomes a youth movement that can attract millions of people to make *hijrah* and becomes a new culture of contemporary religious expression. The research on youth hijrah in this paper highlights that the selection of diction in the hijrah youth community is the key success of this community who still exists until today and embrace many followers. However, this is not the only factor, there are still other factors that need examining.

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