



ISLAMIC EDUTAINMENT AS PEDAGOGICAL *DA'WAH*: INTEGRATIVE ISLAMIC EDUCATION THROUGH TELEVISION PRODUCTION

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Abstract: This study aimed how Islamic higher education institutions (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam, PTKI) in Indonesia produce television edutainment as an institutionalized form of pedagogical *da'wah* and a site of integrative Islamic education. Using a qualitative multi-case design across three PTKI media units, the research draws on in-depth interviews, participant observation, document review, and focus group discussions. It analyzes them through an interactive process of data reduction, display, and verification, combined with cross-case thematic analysis. Three findings emerged. First, television production operated as an institutionalized extension of classroom pedagogy and *da'wah* rather than as independent broadcasting, blending experiential learning with public religious communication. Second, producers translated integrative Islamic values into entertaining formats through narrative, dramatization, dialogue, and humor, guided by ethical boundaries derived from *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. Third, production remained a negotiated practice shaped by human resource instability, infrastructural disparity, and the tension between religious dignity and audience appeal. The study contributes a production-centered account of religious edutainment and reframes PTKI as active producers of religiously grounded educational media ecosystems. In practice, it offers guidance on strengthening campus media governance, student capacity, and ethical content design. The findings imply that mediated *da'wah* in Islamic higher education is best understood as moral media work, in which pedagogy, institutional legitimacy, and religious authority are continuously balanced.

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INTRODUCTION

The production of religion-based educational media currently serves as a crucial pillar in conveying the internalization of religious values to the wider public (Febrian, 2024; Kholili et al., 2024; Raya, 2024). As a complex dependent variable, Islamic edutainment media production is not merely a technical broadcasting process, but rather a form of pedagogical *da'wah* that deliberately integrates educational substance, character formation, and engaging entertainment formats (Kholili et al., 2024 and Poell et al., 2025). In the digital era, the success of managing this media production is measured by its ability to package moderate, integrative, and authoritative religious content without losing its visual and narrative appeal. Therefore, institutional effectiveness in controlling, designing, and executing visual *da'wah* content becomes the primary benchmark in maintaining the quality of religious media outputs that are responsive to contemporary needs (Abdullah et al., 2023 and Febrian, 2024). The existence of this standardized packaging will ultimately determine the extent to which the media can maintain authentic religious authority amidst the fast-paced flow of information (Suresman et al., 2025; Ummah et al., 2025; Zh et al., 2026).

Within the research object of Islamic Higher Education Institutions, there is a distinct phenomenon where campus television and audiovisual units continue to grow in response to the massive digitalization of *da'wah*. However, in their production practices, a significant gap remains regarding the fulfillment of ideal edutainment standards. Media unit managers at PTKI frequently face material constraints in the form of limited technological infrastructure and gaps in human resource capacity to produce competitive broadcast content. Consequently, media production outputs are often trapped between two extreme poles: being too rigid like a formal classroom, which lacks public interest, or too loose for the sake of entertainment, which risks obscuring the message of religious moderation and institutional academic values. This imbalance demonstrates that campus broadcasting spaces have not been fully capable of translating the noble mission of the institution into modern broadcasting aesthetics consistently.

To address these gaps, the solution proposed in this study is to conduct an in-depth mapping and reconstruction of institutional governance and organizational routines within PTKI media units through a production studies approach (Kurmanaliyev et al., 2025; Sinaga et al., 2026). Institutions need to integrate the concept of edutainment with the normative framework of Islam, specifically the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, to serve as an ethical production compass (Kurmanaliyev et al., 2025; Tahir & Elbarqi, 2023 and Tahir & Elbarqi, 2023). By understanding how integrative Islamic values are systematically translated into creative formats, PTKI can formulate a balanced standardization model for television edutainment production (Ismail & Astuti, 2023; Kustiawan et al., 2023). This institutional solution positions the university not merely as a consumer of technology (Rahman & Nuryana, 2023 and Hamdi, 2023), but as an active producer capable of navigating the tension between academic

informational functions and public entertainment demands (Herlambang et al., 2025; Orhan, 2023). Through the formulation of standardized production guidelines, campus media units are expected to generate content that is not only visually captivating but also theologically sound (Nasir et al., 2024; Suresman et al., 2025).

The discourse on media and Islamic education has been widely explored by previous researchers through various perspectives. A number of studies focus on the dynamics of digital *da'wah*, celebrity preacher figures, and the shifting of religious authority due to media fluency in cyberspace (Arshad et al., 2025; Doré et al., 2025). On the other hand, international literature on entertainment-education has accumulated evidence that entertainment narratives can shift viewers' knowledge and behavior, although the majority of these studies were conducted in secular communication settings (Mohadi & Tarshany, 2023; Mohammed, 2024). Meanwhile, specific research on PTKI has so far been dominated by analyses of academic policies regarding religious moderation curricula and efforts to counter radical narratives at a theoretical level (Suhendi et al., 2025 and Poell et al., 2025). This literature mapping indicates that the managerial aspects of broadcasting studios owned by Islamic universities remain rarely touched upon by prior researchers (Arshad et al., 2025; Doré et al., 2025 and Mohammed, 2024).

Although previous literature has mapped the aspects of audience reception and curriculum policies, a distinct academic void (*clear gap*) remains regarding how Islamic higher education institutions formally institutionalize media production as part of their academic mission. The novelty of this research lies in positioning the media production process within Islamic educational institutions in the Global South as the primary object of inquiry, an area rarely touched by conventional media studies. The urgency of this research is exceptionally high given that PTKI represents the apex of the Islamic education ecosystem that oversees madrasahs and pesantrens. Therefore, this study is urgently required to fill the void of empirical data regarding the internal working patterns of Islamic academic media creators.

Based on this background, the primary purpose of this study is to comprehensively investigate and analyze the production process of television edutainment across three PTKI media units. Specifically, this research aims to deliberate how television edutainment is institutionalized as pedagogical *da'wah* within the university structure. Furthermore, this study also seeks to identify the strategies employed by producers to translate integrative Islamic values into broadcasting formats that are entertaining yet meaningful. No less importantly, this study is directed to map various material constraints and organizational routines that shape the creative process. This study aimed how Islamic higher education institutions (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam, PTKI) in Indonesia produce television edutainment as an institutionalized form of pedagogical *da'wah* and a site of integrative Islamic education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative approach with an exploratory multi-case design to understand meanings, practices, and institutional processes deeply. This case study type is selected to generate rich analytical insights by comparing the dynamics of television edutainment production across different institutional contexts (Kholili et al., 2024; Nasir et al., 2024). The research locus was purposively established within the media or campus television production units at three Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia, anonymized as PTKI-A, PTKI-B, and PTKI-C. The selection of these three locations is based on specific inclusion criteria, including the presence of active audiovisual *da'wah* production activities, the involvement of both lecturers and students, and variations in governance maturity and infrastructural capacity. Through this diverse locus selection, the researcher can capture variations in institutional arrangements without aiming for statistical generalization.

Data collection techniques in this study are comprehensively carried out through semi-structured in-depth interviews, participant and non-participant observations during editorial to post-production sessions, institutional document reviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The research data sources include documentary materials such as scripts and broadcast schedules, alongside human informants selected purposively until data saturation is reached. These informants represent principal production roles encompassing producers, supervising lecturers, campus media personnel, and students acting as scriptwriters, videographers, editors, and presenters. Furthermore, the data analysis technique applies an interactive model executed iteratively through data reduction, data display in thematic matrices, and verification, followed by content analysis of program materials and cross-case synthesis through two coding cycles (descriptive and analytical). Finally, data validation techniques to ensure the credibility and confirmability of this study are strengthened through method and source triangulation strategies, member checking of key interpretations, the provision of an audit trail, and the implementation of researcher reflexivity.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

A comprehensive mapping of the variations in research loci and data source triangulation techniques across the three Islamic Higher Education Institution media production units under study. The first case, PTKI-A, displays a production profile integrated within the Islamic Educational Management study program, functioning as both a practical laboratory and a public broadcasting platform, with data sources relying on producer interviews, script observations, and program document reviews. Meanwhile, PTKI-B exhibits a theme-based collaborative governance model involving lecturers, student organizations, and campus media personnel, where data were gathered through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and sample content analysis. On the more mature end of the spectrum, PTKI-C illustrates a highly formalized production

ecosystem characterized by editorial regulations and professional equipment, with data contextualized through editorial meeting observations and broadcasting policy documents. Through these diverse typologies, the table methodologically demonstrates how data were collected across varying levels of institutional maturity to ensure the validity and depth of the cross-case analysis.

Television Production as Experiential Pedagogical Da'wah

The television production unit at PTKI-A is institutionally placed under the Islamic Educational Management study program and is operated as a non-commercial learning laboratory rather than a commercial broadcasting unit. In this studio, students practice scriptwriting, camera operation, presentation, and video editing under the guidance of lecturers. The main characteristic distinguishing it from conventional production houses lies in the integration of the television program-making process directly into the learning curriculum. Consequently, the academic experience and understanding generated during the production process are valued as equally important – and at times even exceed – the final broadcast product. Through this structural arrangement, students are guided to understand that every technical and editorial decision made in the studio always carries real ethical consequences in the public sphere.

The learning process within the PTKI-A studio applies an ethical apprenticeship mechanism, where media ethics and values are instilled through iterative cycles of discussion and script revision between lecturers and student teams. A fundamental transformation taught is shifting the style of da'wah delivery from a moralizing, top-down approach into an interactive, peer-level communication that invites the audience to reflect. Daily practices in the newsroom and recording studio demonstrate how technical aspects are strictly aligned with the message of religious moderation such as remodeling one-way sermon formats into natural narrative dialogues, halting recordings if a presenter drifts into formal religious speech styles, and debating background music selection to avoid sensationalist dramatization. This entire process crystallizes in the flagship program titled "*Ngobrol Santri Milenial: Bijak Bermedia*" (Millennial Students Chat: Wise Use of Media), which reflects polite discussion without explicit condemnation.

Although this project-based learning method is highly effective in shaping the character of producers, the model faces significant challenges regarding operational sustainability due to its heavy reliance on senior students who will eventually graduate. The transfer of technical and managerial knowledge is often unstable and prone to quality decline, particularly during academic examination periods. The preservation of expertise also remains informal and dependent on personal guidance from lecturers due to the lack of a standardized institutional system for documenting knowledge. Ultimately, the defining feature of PTKI-A lies in the fusion of the gatekeeping function with the pedagogical process, where content evaluation is not conducted by a specialized review board, but serves as the lesson itself.

Table 1. Production Provisions and Operational Guidelines (PTKI-A Student Laboratory)

Domain	Operational Provision	Implementation & Student Requirements
Production Ethics	Operationalizing <i>Da'wah</i> Ethics	Students must weigh all creative concepts (e.g., avoiding harsh satire) against the moral consequences of representation on screen.
	Stance and Moral Posture	Production teams must adopt a peer-level, conversational stance rather than positioning themselves as a top-down moral authority over the audience.
General Provisions for Media & Content	Academic-Public Dual Identity	Content must serve a dual purpose: fulfilling the formal academic curriculum of Islamic Educational Management while remaining viable for public platforms.
	Pedagogical Responsibility	Every technical and editorial choice must prioritize the representation of moderate, integrative Islam rather than commercial metrics or sensationalism.
Production Stages (Pre-Production)	Topic & Objective Selection	Content selection must focus on contemporary youth relevance (e.g., digital ethics, online behavior) and promote active reflection.
	Iterative Script Vetting	Scripts must undergo multiple cycles of collaborative revision with supervising lecturers to refine tone, register, and messaging before filming.
Production Stages (Post-Production & Publication)	Tone and Delivery Control	Presenters must use casual, invitational language ("speaking to friends") instead of shifting into formal religious speeches or Friday sermons.
	Sound and Aesthetic Vetting	Technical post-production elements, such as background music, must be restrained (quieter instrumentation) to prevent sensationalizing reflective scenes.
Contextual Attachment	Invitational Narrative Framing	Content must explicitly reject explicit condemnation or moralizing language, embedding practical peer reflection directly into the script format.

Table 1 maps the production provisions and operational guidelines within the PTKI-A student laboratory comprehensively to ensure alignment between academic and public broadcasting aspects. This governance begins with the production ethics domain, which mandates the operationalization of *da'wah* ethics based on the moral consequences of visual representation and the

adoption of a peer-level communication stance toward the audience. In terms of general media and content provisions, students are required to integrate a dual academic-public identity that prioritizes moderate Islamic values (*wasatiyyah*) over commercial interests. Furthermore, the production stages are systematically divided from the pre-production phase, which focuses on selecting relevant topics for the youth and iterative script vetting, to the post-production phase, which controls the casual delivery style and limits the dramatization of visual and audio aesthetics. All of these regulations are bound by a contextual attachment that strictly rejects moralizing or judgmental narratives, thereby crystallizing an interactive and reflective pedagogical *da'wah* model.

Translating Islamic Values Through Entertainment Logic

The media production unit at PTKI-B implements a collaborative governance model that synergistically integrates the roles of lecturers, student organizations, and campus professional media staff, placing the young audience (ages 18–25) as its top priority. To convey moral messages without triggering viewer resistance, the station's broadcasting strategy is dominated by dramatization and creative narrative approaches based on reception theory, where religious content is embedded behind relevant plotlines (*narrative substitution*). Instead of following rigid academic syllabi, the content curriculum is reverse-engineered from the real dynamics of teenage life—such as friendship conflicts and digital toxicity positioning problem resolutions in a restorative and humanistic manner. Character credibility and acting authenticity are strictly maintained to preserve the message's effectiveness, as reflected in the program *Ngaji Santai: Efek Ghibah Digital*, which prioritizes guided reflection over direct condemnation.

Although this entertainment-based broadcasting strategy is highly effective in attracting young viewers, PTKI-B faces a major operational challenge in drawing a sharp boundary between maintaining the dignity of religious values and fulfilling engaging entertainment elements without appearing to trivialize the Sharia. Students and lecturers periodically engage in open debates regarding whether digital performance metrics—such as click counts and views—should be weighted as heavily as the seriousness of religious content, especially given the behavior of young audiences who tend to ignore videos with lecture-themed thumbnails. Ultimately, the defining characteristic of PTKI-B lies in its collective and deliberative gatekeeping function during weekly editorial meetings, allowing moral responsibility to be shared without being bound by rigid rules.

Table 2. Production Requirements and Audience Engagement Conditions (PTKI-B)

Domain	Production Requirement & Guideline	Target Audience & Engagement Condition
Target Audience Specification	Focuses on contemporary student life, peer conflicts, and digital habits.	Specifically tailored for late adolescents and young adults (Age 18–25).

Domain	Production Requirement & Guideline	Target Audience & Engagement Condition
Audience Engagement Condition	<i>Hiding the Message inside Stories:</i> Eradicates classroom-style preaching and uses highly engaging video thumbnails.	Prevents scrolling behavior; audiences must finish watching the narrative before recognizing the hidden lesson.
Production Ethics & Themes	<i>Reverse-Engineered Content:</i> Sourced from daily lived experiences (e.g., relationship issues, toxic social media, academic anxiety).	Ensures maximum relatability, bridging the gap between youth struggles and defensible Islamic teachings.
Narrative & Plot Provision	<i>Restorative Over Punitive Resolutions:</i> Encodes theological values into humane, peer-driven, and restorative plot endings.	Builds an inviting, less preachy environment that resonates with the psychological maturity of young adults.
Character & Delivery Standards	<i>Strict Realism and Conversational Tone:</i> Enforces mandatory retakes for exaggerated acting or formal religious registers.	Establishes character believability; if audiences cannot trust the character, the moral lesson is completely voided.
Oversight & Gatekeeping	<i>Collective Deliberative Gatekeeping:</i> Negotiates the boundary between entertainment appeal and religious seriousness via group consensus.	Distributes moral accountability evenly across all production members instead of relying on a rigid institutional code.

Table 2 maps the production requirements and audience engagement conditions implemented collaboratively by the PTKI-B media unit in a structured manner. The details within the table confirm that the target audience specification is sharply focused on late adolescents and young adults within the age range of 18 to 25 years. To attract this specific demographic, the production provisions mandate the application of a narrative substitution strategy that hides the religious message within the plot structure and prohibits the visualization of lecturing thumbnails. Furthermore, the script plotting regulations are designed to prioritize restorative conflict resolution and demand a high level of character realism through daily casual dialogue. This entire governance framework and ethical boundary setting are locked through a collective oversight mechanism in editorial meetings to generate edutainment broadcasts that are not only popular but also theologically defensible.

Editorial Governance and Religious Accountability

The media production unit at PTKI-C operates within a highly formalized editorial ecosystem by placing the institutional gatekeeping function at the very beginning of the workflow. Through this layered review mechanism, religious and scholarly accountability are systematically integrated as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that must be cleared before filming begins. The content

review process at PTKI-C periodically reshapes the substance of religious broadcasts through tone regulation and the restriction of doctrinal overreach. These strict standards are implemented to maintain visual propriety and protect academic pluralism, treating a single truth claim over contested jurisprudence issues as a fatal error. During formal editorial meetings, reviewers do not hesitate to delay script approvals for high-risk topics if the legal references are deemed unrepresentative of the diversity of opinion. This is done because any broadcasting error in the public sphere automatically becomes an institutional blunder that risks the university's reputation, thereby shifting moral responsibility from the individual producer to the institutional level.

In addition to its focus on material depth, PTKI-C formally regulates language accessibility and aesthetic boundaries by requiring repeated rehearsals to replace complex Arabic religious vocabulary with ordinary Indonesian, as well as cutting excessively playful visual transitions. Although this weekly documentation system provides solid operational stability, the layered approval bureaucracy is acknowledged to often sacrifice the unit's agility in responding to current emerging societal issues. Ultimately, PTKI-C's uniqueness in embedding moral judgment within fixed procedures completes the spectrum of campus media governance, ranging from the personal mentor model at PTKI-A to the deliberative group discussion model at PTKI-B.

Cross-Case Comparative Analysis

Table 3 summarizes these differences, which are examined in turn below.

Table 3. Cross-Case Comparison of Television Edutainment Production Across the 3 PTKI

Comparative Dimension	PTKI-A	PTKI-B	PTKI-C
Institutional location of production	Pedagogical laboratory within an academic program; the output is the formation of students	Collaborative cultural production with student organizations; output is community reach	Institutional broadcasting with professional facilities and scheduled output
Dominant mode of value translation	Dialogic pedagogy: values embedded through conversational reframing	Dramatized moral narrative; lessons carried inside credible stories	Expert-mediated explanation; commentary paired with practical illustration
Mechanism of ethical gatekeeping	Informal and in the moment, exercised by the supervising lecturer	Negotiated and collective, enacted in group content meetings	Formalized and procedural, through documented editorial review
Principal constraint and coping strategy	Volunteer turnover, peer mentoring, and lecturer continuity	Dignity-versus-appeal tension; resolved through collaborative discussion	Layered approval and slower response; absorbed by documented routines

This comprehensive mapping demonstrates three primary modes of translating Islamic values into media content through distinct institutional approaches. PTKI-A relies on dialogic pedagogy by shifting the communicator's posture to a peer-level stance, PTKI-B implements dramatized moral narratives focusing on audience appeal, while PTKI-C utilizes expert-mediated explanation under strict editorial supervision. The most crucial axis of variation among these three loci lies in the ethical gatekeeping mechanism, which moves along a gradient from informal to formalized structures. This oversight migrates from the scale of an individual mentor at PTKI-A, shifts to a collective group discussion at PTKI-B, and culminates in a fixed institutional procedure at PTKI-C. Ultimately, each point within this spectrum carries its own distinct trade-offs, where the flexibility of a personal mentor sacrifices systemic durability. Consequently, collective group consensus operates without settled rules, and strict compliance with formal procedures is achieved at the expense of production speed. This negotiated character of production, in which engagement was continually weighed against religious propriety, is represented in Figure 1.

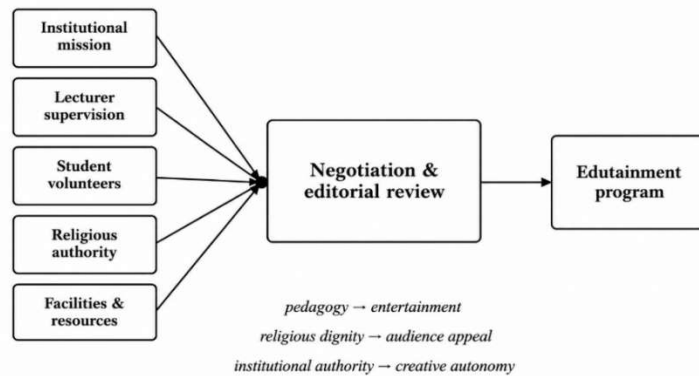


Figure 1. PTKI Television Production as Negotiated Practice

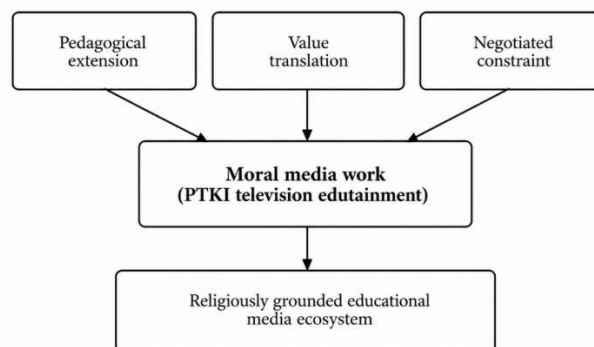


Figure 2. PTKI Television Edutainment As Moral Media Work

This cross-case analysis demonstrates that each institution manages distinct yet overlapping operational constraints in accordance with the unique characteristics of their respective organizational structures. The instability of human resources due to student graduation cycles emerges as the most acute challenge for PTKI-A and PTKI-B, which rely heavily on volunteers. This issue of technical competency regeneration is absorbed through peer mentoring

mechanisms and the continuity of guidance consistently provided by supervising lecturers. On the other hand, infrastructural disparity separates PTKI-C, which possesses more professional equipment, from the other two sites that are forced to adapt by utilizing simpler broadcast formats. Formal bureaucratic constraints are felt most heavily by PTKI-C because the layered approval system significantly extends production timelines even though it successfully safeguards content quality. Ultimately, the tension between maintaining religious dignity and fulfilling public appeal presses hardest on PTKI-B due to its strong audience orientation.

From Institutional Variation to Moral Media Work

This structured analysis of variation across the three research sites reveals a single underlying object within the Islamic campus broadcasting ecosystem, where every production unit strives to package religious education engagingly without compromising its doctrinal integrity. Despite differences in approach, all three cases treat technical, pedagogical, and religious accountabilities as an inseparable whole from the very beginning of the production process. This phenomenon is defined by this study as *moral media work*, a production practice wherein choices regarding media craft are simultaneously decisions about pedagogy and religious responsibility. This concept possesses two primary characteristics that distinguish it from conventional media production models, as technical decisions and religious representation are identical at the point of action, while also constituting a laborious, repeated work process distributed across all production stages. Through these dual characteristics, this model firmly rejects an approach where entertainment is produced first and religious value is attached afterward, making the religious character of a broadcast program an inherent property born directly from its manufacturing process.

Table 4. A Typology of Moral Media Work Across the Three Production Configurations

Configuration	Locus of Moral Judgment	Foregrounds	Characteristic Risk
Pedagogical laboratory (PTKI-A)	The mentor, in real-time dialogue	Formation of conscientious producers	Unstable continuity as students graduate
Collaborative cultural production (PTKI-B)	The deliberating group	Audience relatability and narrative credibility	Drift toward engagement at the expense of seriousness
Institutional broadcasting (PTKI-C)	The editorial procedure	Doctrinal balance and institutional accountability	Reduced responsiveness from layered approval

Table 4 presents the three sites as a typology of moral media work, summarizing where each configuration locates the practice and what each foregrounds and risks. The typology is offered not to rank the sites but to demonstrate that a common practice can be institutionalized through more than

one viable arrangement, each with characteristic strengths and vulnerabilities. Taken together, the cases indicate that the institutionalization of religious edutainment is not a single model but a family of arrangements distinguished by where moral judgment is located in the production process, whether in the mentor, in the group, or in the procedure. The value of the multi-case design lies precisely here. The three sites are best understood not as better or worse instances of one model but as distinct institutional solutions to a problem that Islamic higher education increasingly confronts as it moves into media production.

Discussion

Institutionalizing Edutainment as Pedagogical *Da'wah*

The findings of this study confirm that institutional ownership by Islamic Higher Education Institutions radically inverts the motive structure of religious media production previously documented in contemporary media studies. While prior literature on Indonesian religious media highlights the dominance of media fluency-based authority and a commercial orientation toward ratings, the findings across these three PTKI sites place academic legitimacy and religious propriety as the highest priorities (Nasir et al., 2024 and Suresman et al., 2025). This phenomenon supports the production-of-culture theory (Kholili et al., 2024 and Poell et al., 2025) claimed that media texts are heavily shaped by organizational rules and actor negotiations, while adding a new distinction that negotiations within the PTKI environment are saturated with the normative meaning of religious moderation. Through rigorous editorial gatekeeping, the institution successfully transforms the function of audience reach from an ultimate commercial end for profit generation into a mere vehicle to expand defensible Islamic education (Haditia et al., 2026; Rofiah et al., 2025; Zh et al., 2026). Furthermore, the integration of production into experiential learning curricula enriches higher education governance literature regarding how universities maintain institutional memory amidst high student volunteer turnover (Hamdi, 2023; Kustiawan et al., 2023 and Hosic et al. (2025).

The shift in value orientation from popularity metrics toward scholarly integrity is causally driven by the external mandate and institutional moral responsibility borne by PTKI to disseminate moderate Islam (*wasatiyyah*). Because Islamic universities carry the structural burden of countering radicalism and religious fragmentation in the digital sphere, all technical and aesthetic media choices are automatically conditioned to manifest this theological vision. Consequently, slow and highly bureaucratic review-laden gatekeeping models remain tolerated by practitioners because the risk of broadcasting blunders has been relocated from individual personal accountability to institutional reputational risk carrying the university's name. Ultimately, it is the non-commercial funding structures and academic culture embedded within the campus ecosystem that allow PTKI media units to withstand market pressures, enabling them to produce *moral media work* that consistently balances religious dignity and visual appeal.

The Islamic Logic of Value Translation

The findings of this study demonstrate that the translation of Islamic values into entertaining media formats resolves the classic tension between information and entertainment within a distinctively religious framework aligned with *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* principles. While conventional edutainment literature views narrative and enjoyment as mere instruments to carry instructional content, the PTKI cases reveal a religiously structured practice where media form and moral value are co-created simultaneously (Lahmar, 2024 and Rofiah et al., 2025). This institutional approach directly challenges contemporary debates on online preaching that emphasize individual authority rooted in performative media fluency (Harahap & Ritonga, 2023; Liana, 2023). Instead, PTKI media re-anchors religious legitimacy within formal, scholarly, and institutional structures that deliberately check the pursuit of audience engagement against explicit parameters of permissible benefit (Darojat et al., 2025; Hadiyanto et al., 2025; Herlambang et al., 2025). Consequently, this model offers an instructive counter-weight to the documented fragmentation of religious authority by showing how a higher education institution can actively participate in the digital attention economy while fully preserving its scholarly accountability (Idham et al., 2026; Jackson et al., 2023; Poell et al., 2025).

The heavy investment by campus producers in meticulous topic selection, presenter conduct, and rigorous editing is causally driven by the reality that these craft decisions function as the primary sites where integrative religious values are actively enacted. The imagined youth audience serves as a foundational design principle that fuses pedagogical theories of learning with *da'wah* assumptions regarding how to effectively reach the hearts of young people. This specific configuration occurs because PTKI institutions bear a structural mandate to project a credible yet engaging public religiosity capable of competing with unverified online content. By anchoring media production within an established academic framework, the university successfully prevents the surrender of religious authority to purely performative external figures in the digital sphere.

Moral Media Work: PTKI Television Edutainment

The central contribution of this study lies in conceptualizing *moral media work* as an integrated production practice where technical, pedagogical, and religious accountabilities function as an inseparable whole. This concept successfully bridges separate analytical frameworks by demonstrating that a single production choice such as calibrating a comedic scene simultaneously constitutes a creative, pedagogical, and theological judgment (Arnold & O'Brien, 2025; Vilasís-Pamos et al., 2024). Practically, the study outlines a strategic agenda for institutions to build sustainable media capacity by establishing structured training programs, ensuring staffing continuity beyond volunteer cycles, and formalizing explicit ethical guidelines to replace high-pressure, case-by-case decisions. Furthermore, streamlining layered editorial reviews can effectively safeguard institutional legitimacy without stifling

creative execution. While these insights are derived from Islamic higher education (PTKI), this integrative framework remains highly transferable to other educational ecosystems like madrasahs and pesantrens that utilize audiovisual media for character development and spiritual formation.

Scientifically, the research contributes a production-centered and normatively attentive account of religious edutainment that extends production-of-culture and entertainment-education scholarship into a Muslim-majority educational context, and it offers moral media work as an analytic tool for future studies. Practically, it suggests that PTKI can improve the quality, continuity, and ethical grounding of their media by strengthening production capacity, investing in infrastructure where it matters most, and clarifying the ethical boundaries that guide the use of humor, dramatization, and popular forms.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this study is that television edutainment in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education Institutions functions as an institutionalized form of pedagogical da'wah, integrating Islamic values, character formation, spirituality, and modern media practices beyond the classroom. Scientifically, this research contributes to understanding religious media production as a process shaped by educational, ethical, technical, and institutional considerations, while practically it shows how PTKI television can serve as a credible and structured medium for promoting religious moderation and preparing students to face globalization and multiculturalism. A key strength of the study is its qualitative exploration of production practices across three institutional cases, supported by triangulation of participant accounts, observations, and documents; however, its findings are limited by the small number of cases, the potential bias of self-reported data, and the absence of direct audience-reception analysis. Future research should therefore involve more institutions, examine audience responses, compare different digital platforms, and investigate how the media and ethical competencies developed through PTKI production are applied by graduates in professional media and da'wah contexts.

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