

# Da'wah Through Youtube in the Perspective of Millennial Society

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## **ABSTRACT**

Many studies have been conducted on da'wah through YouTube, but the researchers in this study specifically analyzed the use of YouTube for preaching from the perspective of millennial society. This descriptive research applied a qualitative approach, while the data were obtained through interviews and documentation of several millennial people who were considered representative in providing information related to research needs. The research findings showed that people like to watch da'wah through YouTube, and da'wah is delivered effectively. The advantages of YouTube in da'wah are in terms of audiovisual presentation of da'wah, flexible time considerations, and completeness of da'wah material delivered compared to da'wah through video on social media. Apart from the joy of being mad'u in participating in da'wah activities via YouTube, they also conveyed a change in mindset, attitude, and behavior after listening to the da'wah messages conveyed. This illustrates that the community has felt the benefits of using YouTube as a propaganda medium, such as in the preaching of Ustadz Adi Hidayat, K.H. Abdullah Gymnasitiar, Ustadz Abdul Shomad, Ustadzah Oki Setiana Dewi, Ustadzah Syifa Nurfadhillah who have quite a lot of followers and likes that there are up to thousands and positive comments in each of his studies.

Keywords: Da'wah, Youtube, Millennial Community

## **INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, humans have undergone a technology-based civilization that has changed humans from time series civilization to real-time due to digitalization in all aspects of life.<sup>1</sup> One aspect that has not escaped the digitalization process is da'wah activities. Da'wah, which used to only be carried out from mosque to mosque or from the *taklim* assembly to the *taklim* assembly through a face-to-face process between the dai and *mad'u*, has now shifted to the digital space. The use of information and communication technology is increasing, especially in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The history of the missionary journey explains that the process of conveying ideas or contents of da'wah had never been disseminated and conveyed quickly before the existence of newspapers, films, radio, and television.<sup>2</sup> Da'wah is getting more complex, so it demands the da'wah to be able to adjust itself so that da'wah can remain upright on this earth. The demand for da'wah so that it can be carried out and established on this earth refers to the opinion that the need for da'wah is the same as the need for food and drink that humans cannot leave behind. This is because da'wah fulfills the other side of human life, namely the spiritual needs of humans so that they can live quietly in this world and in the hereafter.<sup>3</sup>

The command to preach is a mandatory and very clear order conveyed in Q.S. Ali Imran/3: 104, which reads:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

The translation is, "And let there be a group of people among you who call on virtue, instruct those who are good and prevent those who are evil; they are the lucky ones."

Based on the command of Allah SWT. Accordingly, no matter how hard the challenges faced by the *da'i/daiah* or missionary, da'wah is still highly necessary. The ability of the preacher or preacher in preaching with the increasing complexity of the challenges of preaching makes the preacher or preacher should have a broad perspective, including in terms of the types of challenges the missionary will face. Broadly speaking, Malik Idris in Faridah conveys several types of challenges to da'wah, which can be seen as follows:

1. The challenge of da'wah from a behavioral perspective is that there is an expectation of behavior change at the target of da'wah (*mad'u*).
2. The challenge of da'wah from a transmission perspective is the hope that the message conveyed can change the attitudes and behavior of *mad'u*.
3. The challenge of da'wah in the perspective of interaction is the broadness of the association of *mad'u*, which allows the contamination of contradictory messages.
4. The challenge of da'wah from a transactional perspective is understanding the assimilation between Western and Eastern cultures.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the challenges described above, the biggest challenges experienced by preachers or preachers today are the use of media in preaching and psychological challenges from individuals who are phobic of Islam. This phobia towards Islam, among other things, occurs because of society's misunderstanding about Islam, so it should also be the responsibility of the preacher to straighten and clarify it. The existence of Islam in Indonesia is one of the social leaders and resources in building and maintaining non-violent and peaceful public spaces.<sup>5</sup> Even though the challenges of da'wah may drain energy, mind, and mental (psychic) endurance, the true preacher is still obliged to make this challenge a spark of enthusiasm to continue preaching because da'wah is a knife of analysis or a solution to the problems of the people according to the context.<sup>6</sup>

The many challenges of da'wah, especially in this era of globalization, should allow the preacher to adapt so that da'wah can continue to exist until the end of time. For this purpose, the ability of preachers or preachers to adapt to today's times is increasingly demanded because, in this era, anyone who has a passenger mentality and only waits will experience displacement and make his business or service business die. Disruption causes the effect of destruction or shift that occurs to become faster. So that in this era, humans, including preachers or preachers, must change, or da'wah will become extinct.<sup>7</sup> Responding and following up on the phenomenon of disruption today, people with various professions

have utilized communication technology, including social media, to adapt to changing times. One of the most widely used social media is Youtube. According to Faiqah, Nadjib, and Amir, generally, the videos on YouTube are video clips, movies, TV, and videos made by the users themselves.<sup>8</sup>

Youtube users who are also widely found today are preachers, so it can be said that Youtube today has become one of the media used in preaching. The busyness of society today has made da'wah via YouTube an alternative choice for listening to religious studies. It becomes interesting to study how to use Youtube in preaching and its implications. The research results are expected to be a scientific contribution in the field of da'wah and communication and become a reference in the use of YouTube media in preaching.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This qualitative descriptive research proceeded through interviews with several informants related to using YouTube in preaching and collecting documentation related to research data. The research data were obtained from two types of data sources, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources consist of informants whom researchers consider representative in conveying research data, namely the use of YouTube in preaching. The secondary data source is in the form of writings related to research data. Researchers collected research data through interview techniques with several informants conducted randomly to prevent bias toward research data. Researchers also carry out documentation techniques, namely collecting data from various sources, such as writings relevant to the study, especially the use of YouTube in preaching.

Data analysis was carried out in several steps, starting from collecting data and then carrying out data reduction, namely selecting, grouping, and removing unnecessary data, then organizing and grouping data according to the next focus, displaying data or presenting data, and finally conducting data verification. More data would be added if necessary or incomplete.

## **Da'wah and Millennial Society**

Da'wah is a means of media for disseminating Islamic teachings. The existence of da'wah from time to time is very much needed. Related to the current context, one of the things that require the presence of da'wah is a millennial society with various life problems amid limited time. Islam as a mercy to the universe must be conveyed through da'wah. The many conflicts happening today, which are considered to be the impact of the intolerant behavior of Muslims, require a big role in da'wah. It is important to convey that Islam has enormous capital in encouraging a harmonious life because the Qur'an explicitly explains the importance of making piety an energy of tolerance. Differences in ethnicity, nation, and gender should not be an issue to achieve a better life tomorrow.<sup>9</sup>

According to Qodir in Anja Kusuma Atmaja, Islam is a dynamic religion. This is marked by the many religious organizations acting in the name of Islam.<sup>10</sup> This is also one of the reasons for the emergence of many da'wah movements with different patterns and styles. Islamic da'wah is divided into individual da'wah and organizations or movements.<sup>11</sup> In its implementation, da'wah does not escape the digitalization process. Digitalization and changes in the world of da'wah provide convenience in religious access. The digital community can listen to lectures on the bus, train, in the room, in the kitchen, wherever and whenever needed. In addition, the digital community can choose the lecture themes they need or what they want only by using a cell phone or gadget smaller than radio and TV. Religious activities such as listening to and viewing lectures at one time through a device can be done. Current technological developments make it very easy to access religious activities, especially religious lectures, without attending the activity directly at the venue.<sup>12</sup>

## Youtube

Today the world has entered the third wave. This indicates that humanity is in the information age. The information age is an era in which a global electronic community is when humans can easily access all services and information without borders and build their communities, interacting not based on geographical distance but because of common interests.<sup>13</sup> The birth of a communication society was caused by the presence of communication technology that has changed how humans communicate.<sup>14</sup> The characteristics of the information society are people who are exposed to mass media and global communication, they are aware of information and obtain sufficient information, they make the information a commodity of economic value, they relate to other communities in the global community system, and they access information super highway or high speed.<sup>15</sup>

The characteristics of the information society described above present the idea that the current stage of human life marked by the soaring use of communication technology, has changed humans from a time series civilization to real time. Access to this very high information requires technology related to the internet. The internet has made it possible to achieve progress in the fields of health, education, transportation, religion, commerce, which is healthier, and much more. The internet allows the rapid development of activities in all aspects of life.<sup>16</sup>

Steve Jobs, the founder of America Online (AOL), who was one of the figures influenced by Toffler, divided the world of the internet into three waves:

- a. 1st batch (1985 - 1999) from zero to one with the characters Jobs, Gatos, Case, Moore, Scott McNeally, and Grove, they produced products to open access such as basic, modern software, microprocessors, hardware and networks that allow their work to be connected.
- b. 2nd batch (2000 – 2015) application and commercialization in this era is rife with the development of social media or social networks that have the potential to organize ourselves. The virtual era ranging from video games, and maps to travel and communication, belongs to 3rd batch (2016). In the era of the Internet of Things, the Internet lives independently, and no longer belongs to the writing company.<sup>17</sup>

In the internet era, the presence of new media in the midst of society is in line with the public's need for information. New media gave rise to many media, including social media, including YouTube. Flalinger, B, Owens in Mahmuddin, and Kusnadi convey that YouTube has become a phenomenon and is influential in all corners of the world which only have access to the internet.<sup>18</sup> YouTube was founded in February 2005 by three former PayPal employees: Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim.<sup>19</sup> Youtube is a social media that is most in demand by society today. Its popularity is projected to continue to increase along with the number of users. Previously, YouTube recorded 1.5 billion logged-in monthly users in mid-2017.<sup>20</sup>

The name YouTube itself was inspired by the name of a pizza parlor and Japanese restaurant in San Mateo, California. 2005 was the starting point for the birth of the video upload site YouTube.com. By 2006 YouTube.com had become a fast-growing site by uploading as many as 65,000 new videos and reaching 100,000 videos as of July 2006 to the YouTube video site. The record penetrated the 5 most popular sites on the site Alexa.com, far beating the MySpace.com site. In June 2006, the YouTube video site entered into a marketing and advertising partnership with NBC. Early in entering the international market, in October 2006, Google purchased the YouTube video site shares with a value of USD 1.65 million. At this time, the YouTube video site began to develop and reach a period of stability at the international level. At the beginning of the establishment period, the YouTube video site was awarded by PC World magazine and was named nine of the ten best products in 2006.<sup>21</sup>

Flalinger, B, Owens in Arif Ramdan Sulaeman, et al. stated that YouTube has become a phenomenon and influential in all corners of the world that only have internet access. Youtube is an effective means of communication in conveying information to all groups in various forms of material packaged according to the interests of each YouTube user. In addition, according to Faiqah et al., Arif Ramdan Sulaeman et al., YouTube as a social media is a popular video-sharing website where users can load, watch and share video clips for free. Generally, the videos on YouTube are movie clips, TV, and videos made by users.<sup>22</sup>

On mobile, YouTube has reached more viewers aged 18-34 and 18-49 than any other cable television network in the United States. YouTube is translated into over 88 countries and accessible in 76 languages (which make up 95% of the internet population). According to data released by We are Social Singapore, the most frequently used social media in Indonesia is YouTube, with a percentage of 49% with unlimited duration.<sup>23</sup>

In addition, YouTube provides a mechanism for social interaction to get opinions and views from visitors through comments, voting, ranking, selecting favorites, sharing referrals, viewing referrals, as well as positive and negative comments given by users. This information is important and useful in studying the treatment of users and the public for videos and impressions on social media such as YouTube. Social interaction mechanisms can be grouped into the structure of sentiment analysis on YouTube videos. Based on this structure, an analysis of the popularity level of videos and channels on YouTube can be carried out, including sentiment analysis. Not only can it analyze the comments given on videos, but it also include all aspects of interaction that exist on YouTube, which are obtained through video views. Therefore, public sentiment towards information, both positive and negative, can be collected through video analysis of studies on certain themes. Even from this analysis, we can conclude the negative or positive impact that the video can cause.<sup>24</sup>

Today the YouTube site or application has become the largest database of all video content around the world. On YouTube, there is a variety of content that is useful or not for all people, such as da'wah content, education, music, economics, tutorials, and various other videos, both from personal activities and from other sources. The point that can be understood is that everyone can be a part of uploading video content on YouTube.<sup>25</sup>

The advantages that YouTube as compared to other social media make YouTube chosen by many professions to use YouTube as a medium for smoothness, convenience, development, and success. Observing the times and the characteristics of YouTube as a social media popular with contemporary society, YouTube is highly recommended as an alternative media for today's da'wah.

Meanwhile, the internet is a new media that has emerged in Indonesian society in this reformation era. This new technology has brought changes to landscape media in Indonesia. The spread of ideas about Islam and the attention of Muslims frequently grows with the conditions around them and in accordance with their ideological background.<sup>26</sup> This has strengthened even more in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic. All elements of society are forced to be digitally literate because everything is done network-based, and all aspects of life use digital technology or electronic devices. This is known as new media. Today, it is undeniable that new media technology greatly influences daily needs and has become a lifestyle for every individual.<sup>27</sup>

New media is media that emerges in line with the development of digital technology, which has several characteristics expressed by Denis McQuail: their interconnectivity, access to individual audiences as message recipients or senders, interactivity, diverse uses as different characters, openness, and everywhere.<sup>28</sup>

The development of communication technology has had a huge impact, especially in the pandemic era, an era that requires innovation, as stated by Renal Ghazali in his disruption theory. The phenomenon of disruption is something that cannot be avoided, but it is a new opportunity so that every element of society should prepare itself. The basis that is needed is digitization using thorough data analysis. This action requires good literacy skills, both old literacy which includes *calistung* skills (reading, writing, and arithmetic), as well as new literacy skills, which include:

1. Data literacy skills is the ability to read, analyze, and make thinking conclusions based on the data and information (big data) obtained.
2. Technological literacy is the ability to understand how machines work, apply technology, and work with technology-based products to get maximum results.
3. Human literacy, namely the ability to communicate, collaborate, think critically, creatively, and innovatively.<sup>29</sup>

The preacher should have this literacy ability so that his preaching can be truly effective. Mark Zuckerberg stated that success depends on our ability to align between interaction, innovation, and disruption.<sup>30</sup> In relation to this, it was stated that the preacher should be able to strengthen literacy strengthening which integrates with strengthening scientific competence and expertise or profession so that it can be said that a preacher must be able to combine three fields simultaneously, namely old literacy, new literacy, and scientific literacy.<sup>31</sup>

The preacher's ability to integrate skills in literacy will produce innovations needed in da'wah activities. One form of innovation that is carried out is by adjusting between da'wah media and the context of da'wah implementation. According to Arifuddin Tike in Faridah, media is a tool used to transfer messages from the source to the recipient of the message, which consists of three, namely media in the form of speech or sound (the speaking word), media in written form (the printed writing), media in the form of live images (the audiovisual media).<sup>32</sup>

Of the three types of media described, live images (the audiovisual media) are included in new media such as social media, in this case, YouTube and the like. The use of YouTube to preach today is very widespread. Many preachers have taken part in using YouTube as a propaganda medium. This is very encouraging to see that the existence of YouTube as an audiovisual media today has caught the attention of the ummah, so for da'wah, the use of YouTube is very worthy of consideration.

Da'wah, according to Syekh Ali bin Salih al-Mursyid, is a system that functions to explain truth, virtue, and (religious) guidance, as well as uncovering various evils and their techniques and methods through a number of techniques, methods, and other media.<sup>33</sup>

The analysis related to the definition of da'wah indicates that da'wah activities require several elements that can deliver da'wah activities to the achievement of da'wah objectives in accordance with those formulated. One of the elements that play an important role today is the media in preaching. The phenomenon of using media as a means of preaching is now increasing and developing along with developments in communication technology, especially with the internet (online-based).<sup>34</sup>

The internet ushered people into the digital era, which is now effective in conveying da'wah messages because it uses social media. The existence of social media makes it easy for users to communicate without space and time limits. Social networking applications such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram allow users to choose how to communicate and share information.<sup>35</sup>

Related to the existence of the internet in communication technology, social media is a type of communication technology in a new type of media widely used as a medium for preaching. To better understand social media, there are several broad categories in the division of social media, including social networking media, online journals, simple online journals or microblogs, sharing media, social bookmarks, and content media.<sup>36</sup>

Based on this division, media sharing is considered the most appropriate because it is a type of social media that facilitates users to share media ranging from documents (files), videos, audio, images, and so on. Among the examples of this type of social media is Youtube.<sup>37</sup> Based on these assumptions, it can be concluded that Youtube is an alternative media for today's da'wah that is most suitable for da'wah's needs.

Some things that need to be considered in da'wah on Youtube are that the mad'u faces are heterogeneous *mad'u*, so it is necessary to consider the characteristics of *mad'u* in receiving the information conveyed. There are three types of mad'u based on how they obtain and process the information received. This type should be a concern for the preacher in conveying his da'wah through YouTube because there is no direct face-to-face interaction which could be a forum for understanding feedback.

The three types of *mad'u* are based on how to obtain and process information. The visual type are those who prefer to obtain information through sight. The auditory type prefers hearing, and the kinesthetic type prefers words that are related to feelings.<sup>38</sup> The use of Youtube as a medium of da'wah today has the potential to achieve the goals of da'wah, as research results show in the following Chart 1:

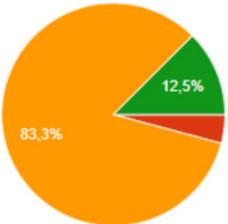
Presentation of Mad'u Understanding of Da'wah via YouTube	Explanation	
	0%	No
	12.5%	Really Understand
	4,2%	Doubtful
	83,3%	Understand

Chart 1

In addition to data from the results of the digital questionnaire mentioned above, analysis related to da'wah via YouTube can also be seen from the results of direct interviews with several informants as follows.

Lisafitri, 20 years a store employee, said, "I often watch videos via Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube, sometimes for up to 1 hour. I enjoy watching da'wah videos because they gain knowledge and make me aware, and experience changes in attitudes and actions after watching da'wah videos."<sup>39</sup> As for other informants, A.Muhammad Tasbih stated, "I often watch videos via Youtube and FB, sometimes 3-4 videos for 30 minutes a day, and I enjoy reading da'wah content by watching videos. I get learning for self-introspection, experiencing changes in attitudes and actions after watching da'wah videos."<sup>40</sup>

Similarly, Mardiana, 23 years old journalist, reported, "I often watch da'wah videos but not erratically in a day, depending on the quota. I prefer to watch videos because the videos can be selective, and the theme is not monotonous. By watching da'wah videos, I gained far-reaching knowledge and information that we can find by watching the video I experienced a lot of changes in mindset, even though it depended on the way the da'wah was delivered, and I experienced a change in attitude and action after watching the da'wah video."<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, Erwin, one of the IAIM Sinjai students, added, "I watch YouTube 1-2 times a day for 15-30 minutes or depending on the duration of the da'wah videos watched. I like YouTube because the explanations are more complete, and I experience a change in mindset, especially when the da'wah video content is interesting and mindblowing so I can provide new insights and straighten out our understanding in studying the religion of Islam, besides that the form of implementation after watching the da'wah video can be self-control for me in attitude and behavior. This is because da'wah videos can display visuals and audio, so it's easier for me to understand. Moreover, I am a person with a visual learning type who will more easily understand lessons by seeing/watching."<sup>42</sup>

In line with what was conveyed by Erwin, Faisal also noted, "I usually watch da'wah videos once or twice a day normally and never at all. The time I spend most of the time watching da'wah videos is 30 minutes. I like watching via YouTube. The change is very significant. I experienced a change in attitude after watching the da'wah video, but sometimes if I don't watch the da'wah for a long time, it's as if my attitude will change again. I prefer watching videos because I feel better when I listen than reading because I hear as if I pondered and explored what was conveyed."<sup>43</sup>

The similar statement was also conveyed by Kamrida, "I often watch da'wah videos daily, sometimes up to four times daily, for about 30 minutes or even 1 hour on Instagram and YouTube. Da'wah videos always move us to always improve ourselves to be better. The da'wah video is complete, and the studies are complete to completion. On Instagram, it is a little longer but directly shows the important points contained in the da'wah. So that we also understand it well. Da'wah videos to improve worship, namely never leaving the five daily prayers, invites us to always think not to abandon Allah SWT's commands to become a better person because through the video, we listen to the advice of scholars, and it is easier to digest when explained by the scholars themselves."<sup>44</sup>

As can be seen from the above interviews, people often listen and watch the da'wah contents via YouTube. The advantages of YouTube as an audiovisual media, flexible time considerations, and completeness of da'wah material delivered compared to da'wah through videos on other social media make mad'u happy. Concretely, millennial people watch da'wah via YouTube for several reasons such as: easy and can be opened at any time, more complete and clear, less time, and simple. You can also use a cell phone, and you can listen to da'wah at any time, making it easier to learn and listen to da'wah in between busy schedules. Preaching that could not be attended before followed, time is more flexible and can be done anytime and anywhere, easy to get, youtube is one of the very good media to hear lectures from several ustadz without having to be present at the place where the lecture is taking place if you really need the material and can't participate in person. The homepage makes it easier to access the da'wah you want to hear, easy to reach anywhere and anytime, and can be watched again.<sup>45</sup>

Some *Ustadz* or *Ustadzah* have used YouTube as a medium for preaching, and Millennials like preaching from them, such as Ustadz Adi Hidayat, K.H. Abdullah Gymnasitiar, Ustadz Abdul Shomad, Ustadzah Oki Setiana Dewi and Ustadzah Syifa Nurfadhillah. Some of the reasons why their da'wah is liked are because the explanation is very clear, the way of explaining is easy to catch, educational, funny, easy to understand, the explanation is simple and in accordance with current facts, the understanding

is very broad, the nature at the moment delivering lectures, the opinions conveyed are from strong references, the delivery of material is not monotonous, and the way of communicating da'wah is relaxed and clear.<sup>46</sup>

The researcher found that *Ustadz*, or *Ustadzah* most liked on Youtube, was *Ustadz* Adi Hidayat. This can be seen from the below Chart 2:

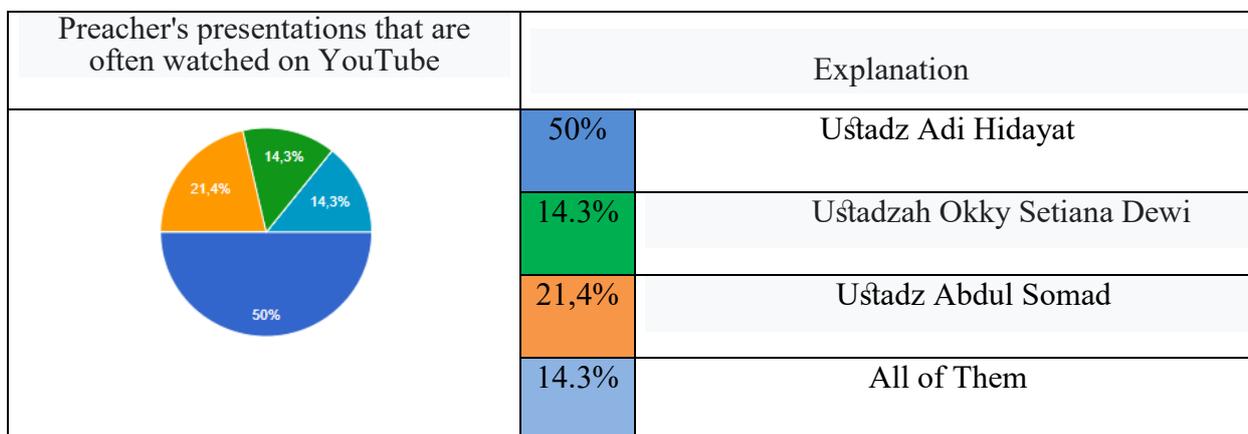


Chart 2

*Mad'u's* interest in participating in da'wah activities through YouTube can manifest changes in mindset and behavior in *mad'u*. This illustrates that the community has felt the benefits of using YouTube as a propaganda medium. The results of the interviews above illustrate that preaching via YouTube is in high demand by millennials. The da'wah is deemed to be effective in realizing the goals of da'wah so that preachers are expected to consider using YouTube in preaching. The impacts of da'wah through YouTube that endangers changes in the object of da'wah can be seen in the below Chart 3:

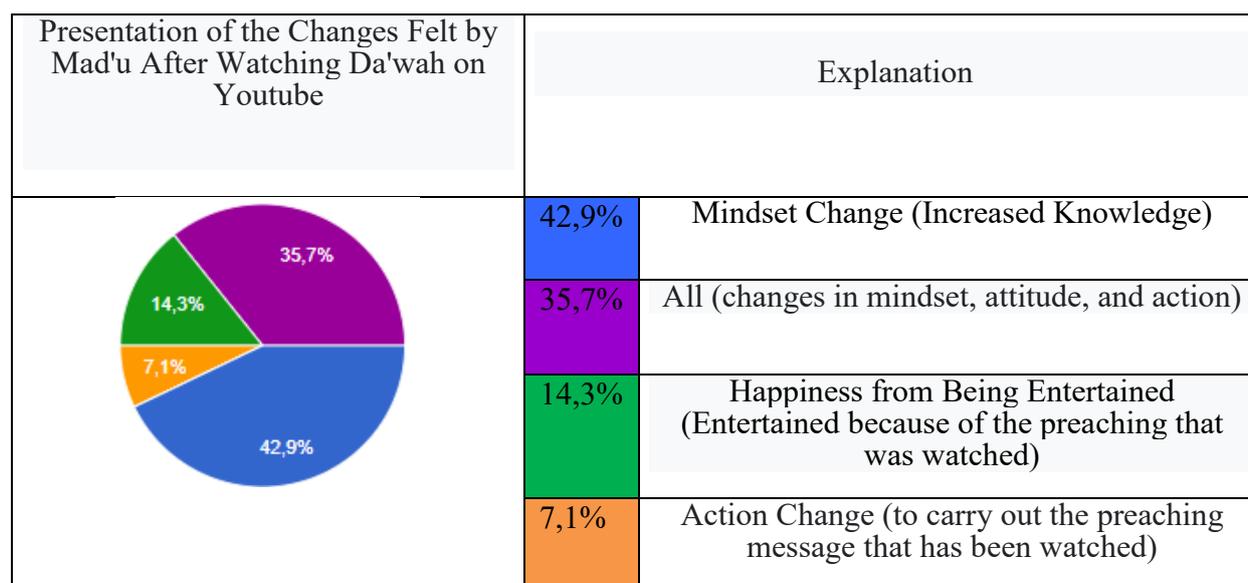


Chart 3

The above chart description illustrate that da'wah via YouTube is considered effective in endangering changes in mindset, attitude, action, and a sense of happiness.

## CONCLUSION

The use of YouTube in preaching in the contemporary era is relevant, especially with the advantages of YouTube compared to other media, namely in terms of audiovisual and data storage, so that it can be accessed repeatedly according to the needs of mad'u. Besides, the message of da'wah through YouTube is clear and concrete, so mad'u who need enlightenment and clarity on da'wah material choose YouTube as a medium to get their da'wah material. The implication of using YouTube in preaching is that the effectiveness of preaching through YouTube is quite encouraging because it can cause changes in the mindset, attitude, and behavior of mad'u. Therefore, the use of YouTube as a medium for preaching must be packaged in a good way, considering the concept of communication effectiveness, which can be considered from mad'u's ability to receive and process information. Avoiding intolerant preaching and suitable duration of preaching should also be considered by the preacher who wants to preach through YouTube.

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