

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: JNHST-034

Title: Public Ethics and Popular Interpretation: Challenges of Qur'anic Preaching in the Social Media Era**Recommendation:**

Accept after minor revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance	✓			

Reviewer's ID: JPR- Dr Abdul. Haseeb.

Detailed Reviewer's Report

The article titled "**Public Ethics and Popular Interpretation: Challenges of Qur'anic Preaching in the Social Media Era**" provides a timely and intellectually rigorous analysis of how digital transformation reshapes religious discourse. By situating the practice of *da'wah* (preaching) within the contemporary "attention ecosystem," the author successfully identifies a critical shift from traditional scholarly authority to what is termed "algorithmic authority". The paper is well-structured, moving logically from the conceptualization of "popular interpretation" to the ethical dilemmas of reductionism and polarization.

One of the manuscript's primary strengths is its balanced perspective. It avoids a purely technophobic stance, acknowledging that social media democratizes access to the Qur'an while simultaneously warning of the "banality of meaning" that occurs when complex revelation is reduced to fragmentary narratives. The integration of classical Islamic principles—such as *al-'adl* (justice), *wasatiyyah* (moderation), and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (objectives of Islamic law)—with modern digital literacy concepts provides a robust theoretical framework for "reconstructing" digital ethics. The methodology is sound for a conceptual-critical study, drawing from both classical exegetical texts and contemporary media theory. However, the manuscript would benefit from more concrete digital examples to ground its theoretical claims and a more extensive engagement with how specific platform architectures (like TikTok's short-form video vs. X's text-based threads) uniquely influence interpretive outcomes.

Suggestions for Improvement

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- **Broaden Case Studies and Examples:** While the paper is theoretically dense, it would be significantly strengthened by including specific examples of "popular interpretation" or "religious memes" currently circulating on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, or X.
- **Analyze Platform-Specific Logic:** The "algorithmic logic" mentioned is often platform-specific; the paper should briefly discuss how different media formats (e.g., short-form video vs. long-form threads) uniquely drive reductionism or polarization.
- **Clarify the "Popular" vs. "Academic" Bridge:** In the introduction, the author mentions the challenge of building an ethical bridge between academic and popular interpretation. The paper needs more practical, actionable steps on how academic scholars can realistically "popularize" complex exegesis without losing depth.
- **Deepen the Discussion on Commodification:** The section on the commodification of *da'wah* is highly relevant. Expanding on how "religious branding" specifically alters the *intent (niyyah)* of interpretation from a theological perspective would add depth.
- **Address Global vs. Local Contexts:** The bibliography reflects a strong Indonesian academic influence. The author should clarify if the findings are intended to be a global critique of the "Digital Ummah" or if they are specifically rooted in the Indonesian digital landscape.
- **Strengthen Visual/Conceptual Mapping:** To assist the reader in navigating the "6-Stage Firewall" or the "Proposed Ethical Framework," a conceptual diagram or table summarizing the shift from "Traditional" to "Algorithmic" authority would enhance clarity.
- **Engage with AI and LLMs:** Given the reference to "Qur'anGPT" in the bibliography (Niam, 2025), a brief discussion on how Generative AI further complicates "popular interpretation" by removing the human preacher entirely would modernize the paper.
- **Refine Technical Definitions:** Ensure the distinction between *tafsīr* (formal exegesis) and *da'wah* (preaching) remains sharp throughout the text, as social media often blurs these two distinct practices.
- **Expand on Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah Application:** While the author suggests using *maqāṣid* as an ethical compass, providing a brief hypothetical "case" (e.g., interpreting a specific verse on social relations) would demonstrate how this framework prevents polarization.
- **Update Recent Literature:** While many 2024 and 2025 sources are cited, ensure that the discussion on "echo chambers" reflects the most recent 2025–2026 scholarship on algorithmic bias and filter bubbles.

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Recommendation: Recommended for publication with minor revision.

The manuscript addresses a vital gap in contemporary Islamic studies by merging the fields of Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr*) and digital media ethics. The revisions suggested are primarily intended to provide more concrete "real-world" grounding to an already excellent theoretical piece. Once the author incorporates specific digital examples and further clarifies the practical implementation of the proposed ethical framework, this article will serve as a significant contribution to the study of religion in the digital age.