

REVISITING *BID'AH HASANAH* TERM AS A COUNTER-DISCOURSE TOWARDS *BID'AH DALALAH* IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

MENINJAU ULANG TERMA BID'AH HASANAH SEBAGAI KONTRA WACANA TERHADAP BID'AH DHALALAH DI RUANG PUBLIK

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to revisit the existence of *bid'ah hasanah* term (good innovation) in the public sphere as a counter-discourse against the dominance of the established meaning of *Bid'ah* which in terms of Islamic Sharia is interpreted as an act of misguidance or *bid'ah dalalah*. Counter-discourse is a way of thinking that opposes an institutionalized discourse. Therefore, we try to investigate the emergence of this term and describe how it is expressed as an opposing thought against the negative meaning of *bid'ah* which was discursively long-established in the public sphere by conducting the grounded approach. The data collected is taken from a mini-survey and some specific discourses related to this topic such as the discussions in some chapters of the Islamic teaching textbook, and discourses from online sources including social media and some websites affiliated with certain religious groups. The result shows that the *bid'ah hasanah* term is emerged and echoed by traditional religious groups to label the non-exclusive worships (*ghairu mahdhah*) that originally don't require any special rules in its implementation. According to them, this term is retrieved and interpreted from several hadiths and the words of the Prophet's companions. In the public sphere, this term is still being roughly debated by some religious groups, mainly the Salafis and the Traditionals, due to their differences in the methodology of meaning to this term. The Salafis prioritize the textual rigorous sharia meaning contained in this term, whereas Traditionals put forward the literal and original meaning in understanding this term.

Keywords: Terminology; Counter-Discourse; *Bid'ah Hasanah*; Public Sphere

ABSTRAK

Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk meninjau kembali eksistensi istilah *bid'ah hasanah* (inovasi yang baik) di ruang publik sebagai kontra wacana terhadap dominasi makna *bid'ah* dalam syariat Islam yang telah diinterpretasikan sejak lama sebagai perbuatan sesat atau *bid'ah dhalalah*. Kontra wacana adalah sebuah cara berpikir menentang wacana yang dilembagakan. Oleh karena itu, dengan memanfaatkan pendekatan *grounded approach*, penulis mencoba menyelidiki kemunculan dan eksistensi istilah ini, serta mendeskripsikan tentang bagaimana istilah *bid'ah hasanah* tersebut muncul sebagai konsep pemikiran yang berlawanan dengan makna negatif yang melekat pada istilah *bid'ah* yang mana telah lama diwacanakan secara mapan di ruang publik. Data penelitian ini bersumber dari survei sederhana dan beberapa wacana terkait topik ini termasuk pembahasan di beberapa bab di buku ajar agama Islam, serta wacana dari beberapa sumber daring termasuk sosial media dan beberapa situs web yang berafiliasi dengan kelompok agama tertentu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa istilah *bid'ah hasanah* muncul dan digaungkan oleh kelompok tradisionalis untuk melabeli berbagai bentuk ibadah yang bersifat non-eksklusif (*ghairu mahdhah*) yang memang pada dasarnya tidak memerlukan aturan khusus dalam pelaksanaannya. Menurut mereka, istilah ini diambil dan ditafsirkan dari beberapa hadis dan perkataan sahabat Nabi Muhammad SAW. Di ranah publik, istilah *bid'ah* memang masih diperdebatkan secara sengit oleh beberapa kelompok, terutama kelompok Salafi dan tradisional, karena perbedaan mereka dalam metodologi pemaknaan terhadap istilah ini. Kelompok Salafi mengedepankan makna syariah yang kaku secara tekstual yang terkandung dalam istilah ini, sedangkan kelompok tradisional mengedepankan makna literal dan orisinal dalam memahami istilah ini.

Kata kunci: Istilah; Kontra Wacana; *Bid'ah Hasanah*; Ruang Publik

INTRODUCTION

This paper is a part of the grand research project about student's perspectives towards Arabic-Islamic debatable terms including *jihad*, *khilafah*, and *bid'ah*. Regarding the *bid'ah* discussion, the researchers have a strong interest to investigate it, especially, in the discussion about the emergence of a related term which is often debated concerning its existence and significance, that is *bid'ah hasanah*. This term is not even quite familiar to most Muslims, because the meaning contained in this term seems paradoxical. In their understanding, the word *bid'ah* is linked with bad things or deviant actions, while the word *hasanah* has a positive meaning such as good or commendable.

The discourse contention about this term is still happening today in public spheres such as social media and websites affiliated with certain religious groups, as well as in the academic sphere represented in the classrooms discussions and the textbooks used as teaching materials of Islamic religious education in university level (Jahroni, 2018; Zarif et al, 2013; Adam et al, 2015; Muhtadin & Ritonga, 2018; Musadad & Ngarfillah, 2016). When it comes to the history of the debate, it is known that this subject of debate has started since the beginning of the Islamic law establishment (Anshari, 2018; Musadad & Ngarfillah, 2016, Sopyan, 2018).

The arguments contestation between several Islamic groups towards this term is inseparable from the various problems or disputes that lie behind (Ansari, 2018; Musadad & Ngarfillah, 2018). The main problem is related to differences in their interpretations and perceptions towards this term. The general understanding of many Muslim communities related to the meaning of *bid'ah* term mostly leading to heretical and deviant acts, referring to the prophet's hadith narrated by Imam Muslim (an-Naisabury, 2006) as follows:

عن جابر بن عبد الله رضي الله عنهما: أن النبي ﷺ كان يقول في خطبته: أما بعد، فإن خير الحديث كتاب الله، وخير الهدي هدي محمد، وشر الأمور محدثاتها، وكل بدعة ضلالة

“On the authority of Jabir bin Abdullah, may God be pleased with them: The Prophet, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, used to say in his sermon: Having say that the best of hadith is the book of God (Al-Quran), and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (PBUH), and the evil of things (worships) are their modernized one, and every innovation is misguided”

This hadith has several versions in terms of the redaction (Ansari, 2018), but in general, it shows that everything new concerning the worships is included in the category of *bid'ah*, and all kinds of *bid'ah* is categorized as something *dalalah* (deviant or heresy). The lexeme “*Kullu*” attached before the word *bid'ah* in this hadith means “every” or “all” (Ibn-Faris, 1979). Thus, it can be concluded that all kind of *bid'ah* is a heretic (*dalalah*). In other words, there is no division in *bid'ah* except *bid'ah dalalah* itself. It's not a complicated thing to conclude that, because in the hadith above there is no specific information concerning the type of worship there should be no creativity on it. Thus, everything new (no guidance before) related to worship is categorized as an act of heresy or misguided.

On the other side, the groups who agree with the emergence of the *bid'ah hasanah* usually use the proposition conveyed by Imam Syafi'i (al-Baihaqy, 1970) as follows:

المحدثات من الأمور ضربان: أحدهما: ما أحدث يخالف كتاباً، أو سنة، أو أثراً، أو إجماعاً. فهذه البدعة الضلالة. والثانية: ما أحدث من الخير لا خلاف فيه لواحد من هذا، وهذه محدثة غير مذمومة.

“The modernized things have two sides: The first side is what caused a violation of *kitab* (Al-Quran), *sunnah* (prophet's guidance), *atsar*, or *ijma'*. This is called *bid'ah dalalah* (heretical innovation). The second side is what caused a good thing and do not violate one of them (*kitab*, *sunnah*, *atsar*, and *ijma'*), and this is an undisputed modernized thing (*bid'ah Hasanah/ good Innovation*)”

This proposition further elaborates on the dynamics of the interpretation of “something new without any previous examples”, which according to Imam Syafi'i has two sides: the good side

and the bad (heretical) side. This interpretation is certainly quite contrary to the meaning of the redaction of the words from the previous hadith (an-Naisabury, 2006) which uses the word *kullu* which means the whole or every of everything related to the *bid'ah*. With this understanding we can clearly grasp its basic rule of thumb for this “good” *bid'ah* is if these new or innovative actions do not violate the sharia which has been established from various sources of Islamic law (Al-Quran, *hadits*, *Atsar*, *Ijma'*, etc.).

The word *bid'ah* etymologically implies something new that does not yet have any previous example, or also known as creativity or innovation (Zarif et al, 2013; Musadad & Ngarfillah, 2016; al-Shatibi, 1997; Ibn-Faris, 1979). Although the substance of the meaning is “something new”, the term is indeed perceived in a variety of ways (significances) in a couple of Islamic scientific discourse (Musadad & Ngarfillah, 2016). Historically, this word was taken or adopted as a term in the Science of Islamic Doctrine and Jurisprudence. In consequence, the word *bid'ah* has then interpreted as a new activity in religious (worship) matters that were contrary to what was introduced (exemplified) by the Prophet (Muhammad) and has no roots (basic doing) in Islamic Sharia (Anshari, 2018; Adam et al, 2015).

Therefore, this word does have a broader scope of meaning. It is not only limited to Islamic religious matters, but also various novels and innovations carried out by humans. If the word *bid'ah* is treated as a “word” (not as a “term”) which has a wider meaning, the debate over this term will not be as sharp as it has been lately, despite the problem is not that simple. However, it cannot be denied that the word *bid'ah* has become a term that is discursively established in the perspective of islamic sharia as a representation of new actions or matters that are considered to be something that deviates or violates the strictly religious rules regarding the exclusive worship (*Ibadah Mahdah*) since there are no instructions or examples practically from the Prophet Muhammad regarding those actions (Anam et al, 2018; Musadad & Ngarfillah, 2017).

The term *bid'ah* has the same root word and meaning as *badi'* and *ibda'*. The word *badi'* is generally used in two different terms, (1) being one of the Asma'ul Husna (The Best Names of Allah) which means the Creator of something that has no previous example (an-Nablusi, 2017), and (2) become one of the branches or part of the arabic stylistics (*'Ilm al-Balaghah*) which talks about decorating speech and improving it with a kind of embellishment through detailing with rhyming, alliteration, inlay, punctuation of the meaning, or the use of countertops, etc. (al-Hasyimi, 1999). Meanwhile, the word *ibda'* is not used specifically in certain terms, this is because this word is derived from the same root word (with *bid'ah* and *badi'*) and has a meaning of realization or a product of action which is reflected in the word *badi'* itself. However, during its development, the word *bid'ah* was chosen to be a term that represented the meaning of something new or there was no previous example in the framework of Islamic sharia mentioned in its several works of literature.

The core of the debate lies in the understanding concerning the perspective of meaning contained in the *bid'ah* term -both epistemologically (literally) and terminologically. Disputes of views between the opposite religious groups, especially between Salafi and Traditional- in various public spaces- towards this term is happening because of their differences in perspective and the methodology of meaning this term. In the Salafi's perspective, the term *bid'ah hasanah* does not exist, even tends to be invented, since based on the textual rules mentioned in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, all *bid'ah* activities are included in the heretical category (*bid'ah dalalah*) (Muhtadin & Ritonga, 2018; Musadad & Ngarfillah, 2017). On the other side, as for the Traditionalists, *bid'ah hasanah* exists with their various arguments as an act of accommodation to the local traditions in a broader society that are not contrary to Islamic teachings. This accommodation of the traditions is deemed to have made the Islamic teachings developed rapidly and be easily accepted by various levels of society (Sugara, 2017; Muhtadin & Ritonga, 2018).

In this paper, we argue that the *bid'ah hasanah* term seems to be raised and constructed by some Muslim groups to counter the dominance of sentiment of the *bid'ah* term as an act of misguidance or heresy that had already been discursively established since the early history of Islamic legislation (Anshari, 2018; Musadad & Ngarfillah, 2016). This attempt is motivated by the disadvantages that might be experienced by some groups due to the uncontrolled labeling of *bid'ah* for their non-exclusive worships. For this reason, the counter-discourse framework is highly reliable.

The counter-discourse is a way of thinking that opposes and challenges the dominance, hegemony, or power that has been exceedingly institutionalized (van Dijk, 1993; Burney, 2012; Macgilchrist, 2007). It does not have a formal expression path; it is not stipulated in the textbook, it is not a collective, coordinated, or planned effort, it does not contain strong criticism of the actions or beliefs of dominant groups and is certainly not effective in influencing the direction of strategic change (Heracleous, 2006; Bamberg & Andrews, 2004). Criticism directed at the dominant group used in this approach is usually posted in a broader form of social convention, namely satire (Heracleous, 2006). Thus, this approach is employed as an analytical framework to see and analyze the existence of *bid'ah hasanah* term in the dominance of the negative meaning of the *bid'ah* term which had already been discursively established in the Muslim communities' perspective at large in various public spaces.

Numerous studies have attempted to explain the emergence of discourses regarding the *bid'ah hasanah*. Historical study on the genealogy of the word *bid'ah* as well as the involvement of social contexts that occurred in the prophetic and the Khulafa' ar-Rashidun period are clearly described by Anshari (2018). In his study, he explained that the term *bid'ah* had undergone a process of transformation from its use etymologically to becoming a special term in Islamic law so that later it became a concept of *bid'ah sayyi'ah* (*dalalah*) and *bid'ah hasanah*. However, this study only discusses the emergence and transformation of the word *bid'ah* in a socio-historical perspective,

without specifically locating the existence of conflicting discourse regarding the existence of the term *bid'ah hasanah*.

Meanwhile, Jahroni (2018) examines the negotiation of ritual and *bid'ah* in the public sphere in contemporary Indonesia through direct observation and literature review. However, his approach is limited to mapping those negotiations and debates in terms of the history and reality of the current conditions of Indonesian society in various public spaces, rather than positioning an entity in the debate -e.g. the emergence of *bid'ah hasanah*- as an established discourse by certain circles of silent majority.

On the other side, Sugara (2017) tried to reinterpret the concept of *bid'ah* and the flexibility of Islamic law from the perspective of Hasyim Asy'ari. He felt that it was very ironic if the actions carried out by most Muslims in Indonesia were accused of being superstitious and heresy, because these actions were considered, by certain groups, to be incompatible with the Qur'an and al-Sunnah. His analysis is based on the idea that the activities of Indonesian Muslims are inseparable from culture and tradition. In his conclusion, Hasyim Asy'ari argues that not all new things are deviant acts, because although there are no arguments that are strong enough, they can still rely on Islamic sharia.

Furthermore, Zarif (2013) approaches the concept of *bid'ah* in his research entitled *Creating Creative and Innovative Muslim Society*. He tries to connect the concept of *bid'ah* with the progress of Islamic civilization and reveals the positive sides of this concept to fight extremism. However, he did not explain the debates of Muslim community groups over this concept in public spaces.

According to these previous works, it can be noted that the debate regarding the *bid'ah* discourse, as previously stated, has been widely discussed from various points of view. However, positioning people voicing *bid'ah hasanah* within the framework of counter-discourse in various public spaces has never been in the spotlight. In consequence, the in-depth study regarding the emergence and existence of this debatable term in the community needs to be carried out.

METHOD

This qualitative study employs a grounded theory approach to explain and propose the existence of the term *bid'ah hasanah* as a counter-discourse towards the general understanding of the term *bid'ah* which tends to have negative sentiments and close to superstitious practices (Adam et al, 2015). Grounded theory is a type of social research methodology that emphasizes generating knowledge and constructing theoretical claims in an inductive and generative way -starting from collecting the data needed, then elaborating and generating them to compose a research inquiry (Glaser & Strauss, 2006; Charmaz, 2006, Urquhart, 2013; Hadley, 2017). This methodology emphasizes the use of inductive reasoning which involves generalizations based on observed behavior in a particular case. Thus, an outcome of the inquiry tends to be thoroughly drawn from the data.

In this research, the data is collected in two ways relating to the existence of the *bid'ah hasanah* term in the public sphere as well as in the academic one. In the public sphere, the data explored from online sources including numerous websites affiliated with certain religious groups -through a search-process utilizing several major search engines- and from various specific posts about the related theme (*bid'ah hasanah*) in the three biggest social media such as *Twitter*, *Facebook*, and *Instagram*. Furthermore, to capture and encode the information that has been successfully collected, NCapture for NVivo is employed. As for the academic one, the data is taken from specific discourses or chapters of Islamic teaching materials and a mini-survey regarding students' agreement towards the existence of the *bid'ah hasanah* and the need to understand it as a guide conducted to about a hundred targeted university-level students coming from various backgrounds of religious affiliations. The data that has been collected is then categorized according to two predefined categories: public and academic sphere.

The next step is generating and elaborating the collected data by analyzing the emergence of the *bid'ah hasanah* term in these discourses by looking for the relationship in disputes about

this term by mapping the understanding of each conflicting group about the nature of the *bid'ah* term itself. At this stage, their opinions towards the term *bid'ah hasanah*, both supporting and rejecting, are further analyzed regarding their expressions and attitudes, as well as the distribution pattern of the influence of the discourse. Departing from this, it can be seen how their understanding and perspective towards this term. Henceforth, the existence of the *bid'ah hasanah* term as a counter-discourse towards the dominance of the discursively established widely known meaning of *bid'ah* can be grounded and identified.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Bid'ah Hasanah in Digital Spaces

Based on search results by relying on the word "*bid'ah hasanah*" and "*#bidahhasanah*" in the public spaces represented by social media including *Twitter*, *Instagram*, and *Facebook*, it was found that this term (*bid'ah hasanah*) is still being a hot topic of conversation (read: discourse war) on this three biggest social media platforms. From the data collected since the mid-June of 2020 until mid-July of 2020, it is shown that there are 45 *Instagram* posts, 27 tweets, and 12 *Facebook* posts discussing this term in two opposing sentiments -this data does not include replies responding to these posts. This number is obtained from search results sampling with the two keywords above and with a predetermined time span as mentioned before. The data showing positive sentiment towards this term are 37.04%, 16.67%, and 17.78%, while the rest shows a huge negative sentiment reaching 62.96%, 83.33%, and 82.22% respectively (see Figure 1).

Hasanah on social media has become a topic of conversation among Muslims, but most of them highlight it in regard to negative sentiments. Some of the sentiments addressed in this term are that the worships categorized in *Bid'ah Hasanah* deviate from Islamic teachings by showing evidence that this kind of activity did not exist or was not carried out at the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW was still alive. The positive sentiments that some other small

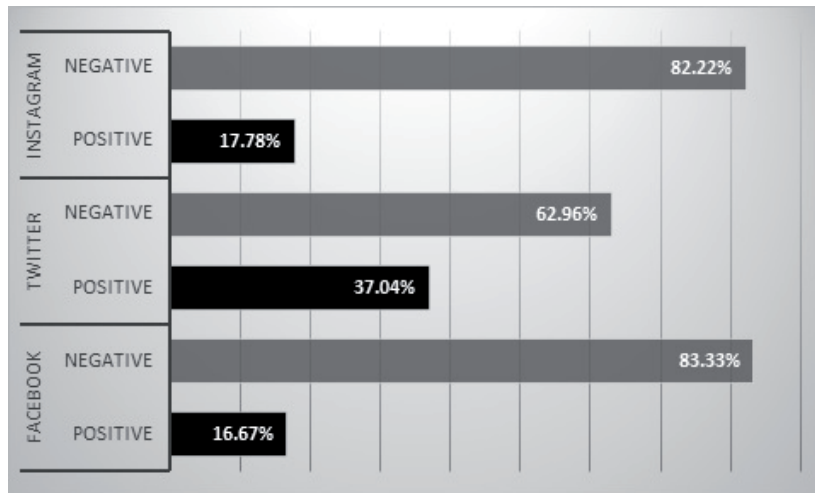


Figure 1: People sentiments towards *bid'ah hasanah* term in social media

Muslim groups try to raise indicate that there is a kind of resistance to the dominance of negative perceptions of this term. They try to provide a counter-narrative that the *bid'ah hasanah* really exists and provide arguments that what they are doing is not an act that deviates from the teachings of Islam.

In other digital spaces, we also browse some information and various articles on a couple of websites affiliated with certain Islamic groups by searching them through the word *bid'ah hasanah* on major search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Bing, and Ask, which subsequently we selected about the top 10 search results to be analyzed for each of these search engines. This search was carried out in the same time frame as the previous search on social media. It should be noted that in this search we take data in the form of a website only and deny some categories of search results including videos and book sales information on marketplaces.

The result shows that search results on Google and Ask are both dominated by information that states that they disagree with the emergence of the term *bid'ah hasanah* in Islamic worship (both 70%), while search results on Yahoo and Bing show positive affirmations that this term does exist and become a part of the treasures of worship in Islam (60% & 70% respectively). In addition, there are top three sites appeared on all these four search engines: *nu.or.id* -representing the pros,

muslim.or.id and *rumahsyo.com* -representing the cons. Consider Figure 2 below:

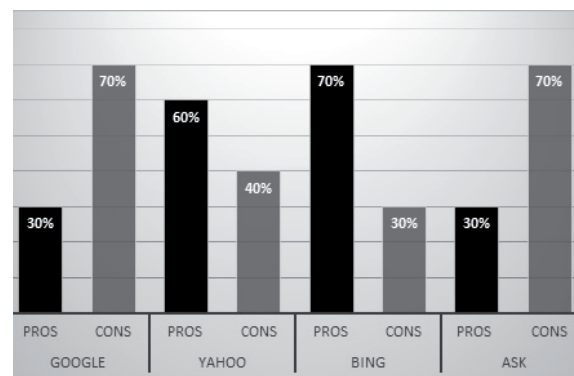


Figure 2: Pros and cons towards *bid'ah hasanah* term in major search engines

The Figure 2 shows that in terms of perspective or sentiment, discourse on the term *bid'ah hasanah* in public spaces, especially on social media and on various websites appears in the major search engines, dominated by negative sentiments (with an average of 76.17% and 52.5% respectively) who believe that this term refers to religious activities or practices that are considered heretical or deviate from the standard rules in the text of the Prophet's hadith -that all *bid'ah* are deviant. The biggest percentage of negative sentiments towards this term (*bid'ah hasanah*) are found in Facebook & Instagram (83.33% & 82.22%), which shows that Facebook and Instagram users tend to take advantage of the

negative stereotypes of the *bid'ah* as a tool to discredit the group's understanding of agreeing to the existence of the *bid'ah hasanah*. Stereotypes become the basic material of beliefs within individuals and groups (collectively), and in certain situations, these beliefs become prejudices which can further ignite discriminatory behavior and other non-cooperative actions, such as backbiting and hostility between groups (Mulawarman & Nurfitri, 2017). On the other hand, the highest positive sentiment about this term is in Twitter users (37.04%), because this platform has advantages - from the user's perspective - in terms of ease of conveying ideas and sharing inspiration (Astuty, 2019; Assegaf, 2014).

The dominance of negative sentiment in those public spheres by opposing the existence of this term or activities in this category of *bidahah hasanah* -which is also labeled as the vocal minority (Mustafaraj, 2011), is quite massive and structured. This can be seen from the distribution pattern of posts content, whether in the form of photos, videos, or text, or sources (websites) that are used as a reference to deny the existence of *bidahah hasanah* in part almost uniform, while on the other hand, the defense of the existence of *bid'ah hasanah* looks only perfunctory, there is almost no specific pattern of distribution as practiced by the opposing party. Consider the Figure 3 below.

From the capture of the pattern of information dissemination on Instagram, for instance, it can be noticed that those who believe contradictory to the discourse of several actions which are categorized as *bid'ah hasanah* by these traditionalists seem quite structured. It can be seen from the same picture which is posted by different accounts. These accounts usually only copy or repost these existing pictures and then giving various captions in the same discourse framework -discrediting the meaning of *bid'ah (hasanah)*. This fact shows that in public spaces, the discourse of *bid'ah* is indeed still dominated by the negative meaning of the term so that parties who come up with ideas or ideas that there is a positive meaning of *bid'ah* (known as *bid'ah hasanah*) are considered a contra narrative of the established discourse. Compare it with Figure 4.

In the picture, it can be seen how the *bid'ah hasanah* is tried to be constructed by some groups who believe that this term exists as an antithesis of the negative meaning of *bid'ah (bid'ah dalalah)*. The statement used as a form of counter-discourse in this image is "If you interpret *bid'ah* as something that did not exist at the time of the Prophet Muhammad, then you are the part of *bi'dah* itself because you also did not exist at the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW." This sentence can be interpreted as a resistance of groups who argue that all forms of *bid'ah* are heretical.



Figure 3: Capture of the pattern of disseminating information that contradicts the existence of *bid'ah hasanah* on Instagram



Figure 4. A capture from one of the defense form or counter-discourse that discredits the existence of *bid'ah hasanah*

Thus, it can be noted that this statement is used to counter the dominance of negative significance built up in *bid'ah* discourse in general. When it is viewed from the distribution point, posts that support the existence of *bid'ah hasanah* tend to be not as structured as their counterparts.

This fact shows many things, one of which may be that traditionalist, who agree and support the *bid'ah hasanah* practices, do not feel the need to counter those discourses in public spaces that have already been discredited because for them it is futile because each group departs from a different paradigm or perspective, so it is quite impossible for an understanding to occur. They believe that the most important thing is to ground and preserve those activities (included in *bid'ah hasanah*) directly and visibly in the community with its various theological foundations (Anshari, 2017; Muhtadin & Ritonga, 2018).

However, in counter-discourse point of view, several peoples or groups that agree with and support the *bid'ah hasanah* existence seems to try to fight the domination of established negative meaning of *bid'ah* discourse simultaneously on social media by using various arguments and simple analogies - as shown in Figure 4 and its explanation. From this explanation, it can be noted that there have been various attempts to carry out a kind of counter-narrative against the negative meaning of *bid'ah* which is discursively established. However, it must be understood that this counter-discourse narrative is a point of view

which according to Michael Foucault (in Hall, 2001) is seen as representing the world differently so that it will not come to the stage of overthrowing and replacing established discourse, it's just a counter-discourse perspective. This is seen as an attempt to emerge small and marginalized discourses narrated as a form of resistance to the dominant discourse (Terdiman, 1985; Heracleous, 2006).

Bid'ah Hasanah in Academic Spaces

Hereinafter, in addition to the argument and discourse disputes that took place in the public sphere, the existence of the *bid'ah hasanah* term is also discussed in academic spaces (mostly in one direction) in various forms, one of which was found in the teaching material or literature used for teaching and learning in university. This term is taken into consideration in various discussions as presented in Table 1.

Furthermore, to find out the perspective of the scholars on the term *bid'ah hasanah*, especially from the students' point of view, we also conducted a small survey which one of its questions related to their opinions regarding the existence of the *bid'ah hasanah* term and the need to understand it as a guide. As the result, 66.4% of respondents (81 of 122) agree (and strongly agree) with the statement, while the rest of them are in a neutral position (28.7%) and disagree (5%). (see Figure 3).

Table 1: Discussion of *bid'ah hasanah* in some Islamic religious education literature at the university level

Book Title	Chapter	Content Perspective
<i>Pendidikan Islam Transformatif: Membentuk Pribadi Berkarakter</i> (Editor, 2017)	Iman, Islam, dan Ihsan (Kinds of Worship)	<i>Bid'ah hasanah</i> is described as the antithesis of the <i>bid'ah dalalah</i> . In the explanation, <i>bid'ah hasanah</i> may be carried out in certain religious worships, namely <i>ghairu mahdhah</i> worship which deals more with the <i>mu'amalah</i> (Social-Treatment) matters. Examples related to the <i>bid'ah hasanah</i> are included
<i>Pendidikan Agama Islam pada Perguruan Tinggi</i> (Muhtadin, 2016)	<i>Bid'ah</i> (Division of <i>bid'ah</i>)	<i>Bid'ah hasanah</i> is constructed as a part of <i>bid'ah</i> , accompanied by the postulates of its existence. Examples of <i>bid'ah hasanah</i> cases are also included in this discussion. There is a special chapter about counter explanation to the groups who oppose the emergence of this understanding
<i>Pendidikan Agama Islam di Perguruan Tinggi</i> (Katili, 2015)	Islamic Basic Framework (Sharia)	There is no specific discussion about the <i>bid'ah hasanah</i> term, only indicating that there is a category in worship called " <i>ghairu mahdhah</i> " worship. This kind of worship is not specified in its specific form and type in Islamic law, which is closely related to religious practices that are considered as <i>bid'ah hasanah</i>

The Figure 3 shows that the discourse dispute phenomenon that occurs in academic spaces about this topic tends to be slightly inversely related to what is found in public spaces (especially social media), where the debates that occur there tend to be massive and out of control -because the discussion that takes place is no longer limited to the essence of the science but has reached the stage of mutual claims and blames each other (Mustofa, 2019). The term *bid'ah hasanah* and various religious activities related to this concept received a positive response, both represented through explanations in the various academic literature of Islamic teaching (as presented in Table 1), and good perceptions (66.4% agree and strongly agree) from the respondents (students)

who see and agree that the *bid'ah hasanah* is existed and need to be understood as a guide.

This agreement at least indicates two possibilities. The first possibility could be due to the lack of ideal two-way communication (giving criticism to each other), even though discussion rooms are opened relatively free, because there is a possibility of authority control that makes critics reluctant and reluctant to express their opinions honestly and openly (Hartono et al, 1994). The second possibility could be that scholars are already more established academically and intellectually so that they are more receptive to differences of opinion and not easy to punish people who disagree with them (the others) as deviant (heresy).

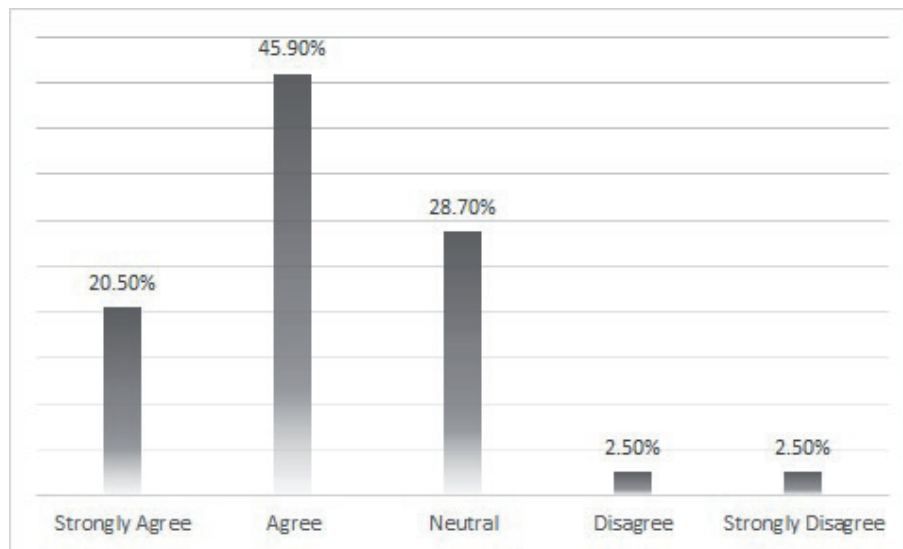


Figure 3: Percentage of student's agreement towards the existence of the *bid'ah hasanah* and the need to understand it as a guide

It is undeniable that the data collected for this study is relatively limited, especially related to data from academic spaces, comes from a moderate campus environment, and does not reach universities that are relatively "liberal" - having traditions and schools of thought that tend to be varied - or "extreme" -having conservative thinking-, so that students who tend to have those understandings are not well exposed in this study. It could be that they exist on some moderate campuses but feel afraid to express their feelings and feel inferior to the understanding they believe in, or it could be because of a change in their mindset who tend to become more mature, so they can understand and interpret various things form differences of opinion.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that *bid'ah hasanah* term is constructed and positioned as a counter-discourse towards the established general well-known understanding of *bid'ah* leading to deviant acts. It is meant to be constructed because this term is not something relatively popular and accepted in a couple of Muslim communities, mainly the Salafis which has a textually rigorous tradition, so the effort to build, bring up, popularize, and provide a positive image (sentiments) to this term (*bid'ah hasanah*) is considered as an act of narrative resistance to the heretical meaning of *bid'ah*

which is discursively established previously for a long time.

Moreover, *bid'ah hasanah* term is emerged and echoed by traditional religious groups to label the non-exclusive worships (*ghairu mahdhah*) that originally don't require any special rules in its implementation. This term is retrieved and interpreted from several Hadiths and the words of the Prophet's companions. In the public and academic sphere, this term is still being roughly debated by some religious groups, mainly the Salafis and the traditional, due to their differences in the methodology of meaning to this term. The Salafis prioritize the textual rigorous sharia meaning contained in this term, whereas traditional parties put forward the literal meaning in understanding this term, so that this conflict of discourse may indeed never find a point of mutual understanding.

However, this research has several limitations, including the method used which is centered on grounded research from data in public digital spheres. To get a clearer picture of this counter-discourse, the data should be supplemented with the results of interviews with various Muslim communities. In addition, this research may also be expanded by examining the discourse related to other problematic terms so that the public can understand the nature of the emergence of these terms and why until now it is still a debate among them.

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