

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Islam first came to Korea through trade routes in the 9th century AD, during the Silla Dynasty. In the 14th century AD, the Korean kingdom imposed a policy of isolation and obliged all its people to embrace Confucianism, so that relations between Islam and Korea were severed. Later in the modern era, Islam in South Korea flourished through the contribution of Turkish soldiers in the Korean War in the 1950s. The Turks who were Muslims helped a lot with the schools in South Korea and from there they taught Islam to the Korean people (Nurhalisa, 2021). In South Korea, freedom of religion is guaranteed by the constitution. According to a 2015 statistical survey, 44% of South Korea's total population adheres to a religion. The religions that affect the population of South Korea consist of Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism and Islam. Buddhism was introduced in 372 AD and there are tens of thousands of temples throughout the country. South Koreans have ideologies deeply rooted in Buddhism and Confucianism, and more than half of Korea's cultural relics and assets are linked to Buddhism or Confucianism. Then followed by Christianity which developed at the end of the 19th century A.D. So that in the middle of the 20th century A.D., Islam appeared on the surface of South Korean society (Kjølstad, 2020) .

Relations between Koreans and Muslims have developed since the first contact in the late 7th century, during the Silla Dynasty. In the 9th century CE small-scale contact with predominantly Muslim nations, especially the Uyghurs, continued. Islam in South Korea also continued to flourish during the Korean War through the contribution of the Turkish army. At that time Turkey sent the second largest army (after the United States) to help South Korea under the direction of the United Nations. Shortly after the war, some Turks stationed in South Korea as UN troops began teaching Koreans about Islam. The first time the Korean Muslim Union was established was in 1955, when the first

mosque in South Korea was established. The Korean Muslim Association grew large enough that it became the Korean Muslim Federation in 1967 (Geun, 2009). Despite Islamophobia following the World Trade Centre in 2001, Islam in South Korea has seen significant development. The Korean government has assisted in the development of Islam, treating the Muslim community on the same basis as other religious groups (Nurhalisa, 2021).

Table 1.1 Data on Muslim population in South Korea

No	Population Muslim in South Korea	Year
1.	195.000	2020
2.	100.000	2021
3.	135.000	2022
4.	200.000	2023

Based on the data above, the percentage of Muslims in South Korea is increasing every year. The Korea Muslim Federation (KMF) plays an important role in developing Islam in South Korea through various da'wah and educational activities. Through these efforts, Islam in South Korea has become more accepted and has a beneficial contribution to society at large. The Korea Muslim Federation was established in the 1970s and established relations with various Islamic countries and organizations in the world and received a lot of assistance with the aim of maintaining their Islamic identity by developing various religious institutions, building facilities for Muslims, preaching through education, mass media, culture and social issues. The Korea Muslim Federation formed the Korean Muslim Student Association to pay attention to the establishment of Islamic institutions and the translation of the meaning of the holy book of the Qur'an into Korean (Geun, 2009). This is useful for the basic

foundation of the future of Islam in South Korea. In addition, KMF also conducted regeneration sending several Korean Muslim youths to Islamic countries to study Islam so that the development of Islam in South Korea could run dynamically. The KMF organization was officially granted permission by the South Korean government to develop Islamic da'wah in South Korea clearly in order to spread Islam in South Korea peacefully (Nurhalisa, 2021).

Based on the author's personal observations, the Korea Muslim Federation has an important role in the development of Islam in South Korea by using online media as a means of conveying dawah in line with one of the hadiths HR. Bukhari which reads:

بَلِّغُوا عَنِّي وَلَوْ آيَةً

“Convey it from me, even if it's just one verse.”

Islamic da'wah activities in Korea have continued since 2000 until now through publications, mass media, education, mosques, Islamic cultural institutions and the internet. As one of the developed countries, South Korea has advanced technological capabilities. Through this, KMF utilizes the use of technology in spreading Islamic da'wah and information in the ginseng country (Umayatun, 2017). KMF has also used and developed a website not only for Muslims but also non-Muslims in disseminating diverse information about Islamic culture and beliefs based on the Qur'an and Hadith to guide pre-Muslims or Muslim beginners to know the Islamic world. It is an effective and intensive way to spread the Islamic faith in the context of Korea in the 21st century. In addition to the website, KMF also has several social media such as Instagram, Facebook and YouTube with the same purpose (Umayatun,2017).

The ongoing development of technology is one of the effective ways to become a communication channel in these days. New media is a transparent and practical way that can be used flexibly anywhere and anytime. KMF also does not miss to use cyber media, namely website media and social media as communication channels for the dissemination of information related to Islam

to interested Muslim or non-Muslim communities so that the resulting reciprocity can be responded to effectively.

There are various kinds of online media managed by KMF such as website, KMF also manages several social media accounts such as Instagram, Facebook and YouTube that provide information related to activities and programs implemented by the Korea Muslim Federation.

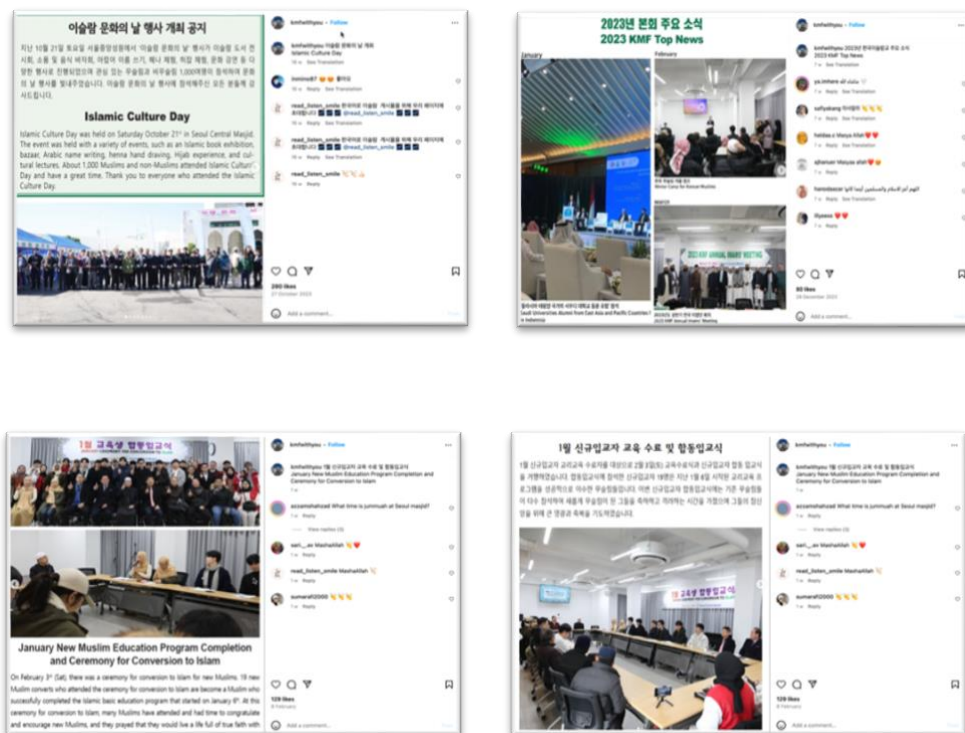


Figure 1.1 Instagram of Korea Muslim Federation

Source: Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/kmfwithyou/>

In social media Instagram account @kmfwithoyu continue to update information related to Islam such as some of the data above. An example of the latest post update uploaded on Instagram on February 8, 2024. This shows the level of KMF's activeness in providing information updates through Instagram social media. In addition, KMF also has a Facebook account that has the same function in disseminating information.

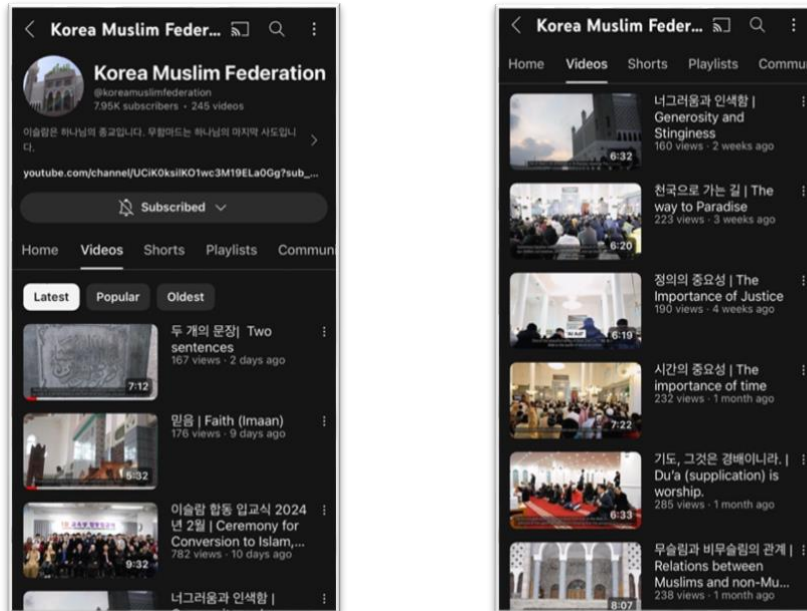


Figure 1.2 YouTube of KMF

Source: YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/@koreamuslimfederation/videos>

Through social media YouTube KMF also provides information through videos uploaded on @koreamuslimfederation account. It can be seen from the description of the YouTube account that it says "We spread the bless and the peace from Allah and aim for coexistence through communication". This shows that through the YouTube account, KMF shares information related to Islamic knowledge to activities carried out by KMF that can be accessed by netizens provided in Korean and English, so that everyone can capture the information submitted. In addition to YouTube, KMF also utilizes Facebook to become a KMF communication tool through the internet network.

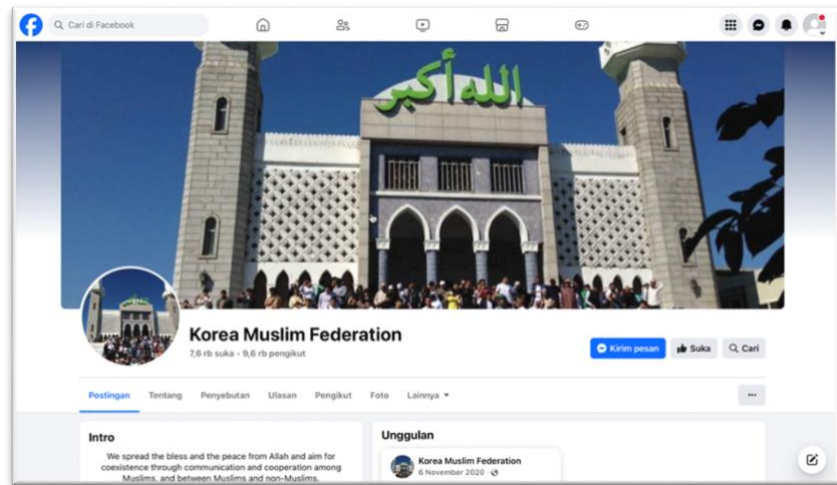


Figure 1.3 Facebook of Korea Muslim Federation

Source: Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/kmfwithyou>

Through @koreamuslimfederation *Facebook account*, it appears that there are 9,600 followers and likes by 7,600 people. This also shows KMF's activeness in disseminating information through their Facebook account massively. With some of the above we can see how active KMF is in disseminating information integrally through the Website and social media Instagram, YouTube and Facebook. The existence of website and social media features certainly makes it easy for netizens, especially Muslims in Korea, to reach information faster and be able to respond to information provided by the Korea Muslim Federation.



Figure 1.4 Website KMF

Source: Website <http://www.koreaislam.org/en/mainpage/>

The Korea Muslim Federation has a website account, namely: <http://www.koreaislam.org/en/mainpage/> Through the website KMF provides relevant information and services to become the main resource for Muslims in Korea, both locals and expatriates who have an interest in knowing more in the country (Ladyanna, 2014). Key features include general information about Islam, Muslim culture, Korean Muslim community, Islamic weddings and funerals, Islamic news, travel information, Islamic education and training to Hajj programs. Overall, the Korea Muslim Federation website is a comprehensive and powerful platform for Muslims in Korea, providing a wide range of information and services relevant to their needs and interests in their daily lives and religious practices. (Umayatun, 2017)



Figure 1.5 Number of Website Visitors of Korea Muslim Federation

Source: Website <http://www.koreaislam.org/en/mainpage/>

Through the data above, it shows that KMF website that continues to be visited by netizens who need information related to Islam in South Korea. Based on several online media managed by KMF. The website is the first online media managed by KMF in 2014. The website of the Korea Muslim Federation (KMF) serves as the main page and is the main centre for disseminating information related to Islam in South Korea. Through this website, KMF provides various types of important and relevant information to the Muslim and non-Muslim communities who are interested in understanding more deeply about Islam. The information presented covers various aspects such as weddings and funerals for

Muslims, the latest news about Islam, hadith, the Qur'an, Islamic history, worship schedules, as well as travel guides for Muslims, including information related to Hajj and Umrah. In addition, KMF also provides educational information and local news related to the Islamic community in South Korea.

Landing pages in the form of websites have an important role in an organization such as the Korea Muslim Federation (KMF). As the main gateway, the website serves as the digital face of the organization, giving a very influential first impression on the visitor's view. A well-designed website not only facilitates the delivery of clear and structured information, but also builds credibility and trust for KMF in the eyes of the Muslim community and the general public.

In the context of actualizing da'wah, online media is an important phenomenon where Muslims try to present expressions in the mindset of Muslims that function to strengthen Islamic identity in cyberspace. Therefore, the role of online media has become very dominant with interactive communication and information channels that reach the entire world through the internet (Darminto, 2017). Korea Muslims use online media as one of the important means in disseminating Islamic da'wah information in South Korea through online media managed by KMF. This makes it possible for Muslims in South Korea to gain deeper knowledge about the teachings of Islam in the real world. It also facilitates two-way interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims in South Korea by presenting accurate, balanced, and educational information about which plays a role in overcoming negative stereotypes and prejudices against Islam in South Korea (Umayatun, 2017).

The aftermath of the WTC events of September 11, 2001 in America produced two views that emerged. There are various kinds of information that present negative views, but behind the incident there are also some people who are also increasingly curious about Islam (Geun, 2009). Through this event, many local South Koreans came and visited the Seoul Central Mosque because they were curious and interested in Islam to learn Islamic teachings with facilities provided by the Korea Muslim Federation. Therefore, the Korea

Muslim Federation has an organizational mission that seeks to change the image of Islam from violence to peace by spreading Islamic da'wah in South Korea through the dissemination of information. The means of spreading da'wah carried out by KMF are also modern, slow, peaceful through seminars, workshops, Arabic language classes, Local Muslim Youth, to Islamic studies classes on campuses. (Umayatun, 2017)

Yuni Fitriani (2017) in a journal entitled *"Analysis of the Use of Various Social Media as a Means of Disseminating Information for the Community"* explained that social media is a means to communicate, interact, and build networks through online communication media. In general, social media is also the most up-to-date thing from the development of new internet-based web technologies to be able to communicate so that it makes it easier for everyone to disseminate their own content, dissemination of information through the media is an effective means of disseminating information. So that the use of online media is an effective way for the Korea Muslim Federation. Therefore, through some of the points above, it is an interest for the author to know how the management of online media (website media and social media) of the Korea Muslim Federation in disseminating information in Korea. Of course, this shows that as a minority country, KMF continues to maintain the existence of Islam in South Korean society.

The Korean Muslim Federation (KMF) is a significant player in the growth of Islam in South Korea, a minority country. This research aims to understand how KMF uses online media to spread Islamic information and build networks with the global Muslim community, increasing its influence and presence in the country. KMF uses websites, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook to spread Islamic information, reaching a wider target audience and strengthening relationships in the Islamic world. KMF also promotes modern da'wah activities and provides halal facilities and products for Muslim tourists. As the number of Muslim tourists visits South Korea, KMF must adapt effective online media strategies to meet their needs and strengthen South Korea's image as a Muslim-friendly and inclusive country. The research will provide in-depth insight into

KMF's strategic management of online media in the dissemination of Islamic information in South Korea.

1.2 Identify the Problem

Based on the background of the problems described above, the following problems can be identified:

1. South Korea's small Muslim population presents challenges in disseminating Islamic information due to lack of understanding and potential prejudice.
2. Online media has become a crucial tool for conveying information, requiring effective strategic management.
3. Identify weaknesses and strengths in KMF's management strategies and provide improvement recommendations.
4. Identifying how KMF's communication strategies contribute to increasing understanding and tolerance can be achieved.
5. Research evaluates the impact and coverage of KMF's online media in disseminating Islamic information.
6. Adapting strategies to technology developments can encourage the Korea Muslim Federation to optimize the spread of Islamic da'wah through the internet.
7. The development of Korean culture throughout the world is a matter that does not rule out the possibility that Muslims in South Korea continue to increase.
8. Knowing the number of impressions and engagement from the Korea Muslim Federation Online Media is an interesting thing to study regarding how enthusiastic Islam in minority countries is.

1.3 Problem Statement

1. What is the strategic management of Korea Muslim Federation Online Media in the dissemination of Islamic information in South Korea?

2. What are the factors influencing the strategic management of the Korea Muslim Federation online media in the dissemination of Islamic information in South Korea?

1.4 Research Objectives

1. Know the strategic management of Korea Muslim Federation online media in the dissemination of Islamic information in South Korea.
2. Analyse what are the factors that influence the strategic management of Korea Muslim Federation Online Media in the dissemination of Islamic information in South Korea.

1.5 Research Benefits

From the research obtained, this study hopes to be able to contribute and benefit:

a. Theoretical Benefits:

This research is expected to organize da'wah media management through strategic management of Korea Muslim Federation online media in Disseminating Islamic Information in South Korea.

b. Practical Benefits.

This research is expected to be an overview and guide for the Muslim community in South Korea to obtain information related to Islam practically and effectively.

c. Policy Benefits.

This research is expected to be a reference for the Korea Muslim Federation to continue to spread da'wah through the Korea Muslim Federation online media related to Islamic extremism in minority countries.

1.6 Research Limitations

Regarding the formulation of the problem to be studied, the author limits the research to clarify the focus of the research conducted. Basically, the Korea Muslim Federation is one of the Muslim Society that aims to have aspects in the conduciveness of the Muslim community in South Korea. However, in this study, the author will only focus research on how the Korea Muslim Federation thanks to the existence of Islam in South Korea through the dissemination of information related to Islam through Online Media.

Based on the online media managed by KMF consisting of websites, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. As for this study, the researcher will examine the KMF website related to how it is managed in using the website to disseminate information. The researcher limited the scope of research on online media which is a website, because the website is the first online media created by KMF as a source of dissemination of Islamic information in South Korea.

The existence of the landing page allows KMF to efficiently disseminate various important information, ranging from the organization's visions and missions, activities and programs, to the services provided such as wedding,

funeral, and hajj information. With information that is always updated and easily accessible, the website helps educate visitors about Islam and KMF activities, and is a reliable source of reference.

As for the time aspect, the author limits research related to the strategic management of the Korea Muslim Federation online media in the dissemination of Islamic information in South Korea in the period 2020-2023. So the author only limited the research to the strategic management of the Korea Muslim Federation online media during the three-year period because in 2020 which was the COVID-19 pandemic. At that time online engagement increased rapidly as more people spent time at home and relied on online media to get information and connect with the community. In this context, the online media of the Korea Muslim Federation can help understand how the community is adapting to these changes and optimize the use of social media for communication and proselytizing purposes in South Korea.

1.7 Systematics of Writing

1. Initial Part

The initial part of writing this thesis is in the form of a front cover, title page, official memorandum, endorsement page, statement of authenticity of scientific paper, preface, table of contents, table of tables, list of figures, list of attachments and abstracts.

2. Main Parts

The main part or body part of the thesis consists of several chapters, each chapter is very possible to have each sub-chapter that explains matters related to research. Some parts of the main part are in the form of introduction, literature review and theoretical framework, research methods, discussion as well as conclusions and suggestions.

3. Final Part

The final part of the thesis contains a bibliography and appendices.