

LOOKING AT THE MODEL OF "PERSONAL BRANDING" OF PROPHET YUSUF 'ALAIHISSALAM IN THE QUR'AN BASED ON PETER MONTOYA'S PERSPECTIVE: SEMANTIC ANALYSIS STUDY

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Abstract

Highlighting one's own strengths to the general public both directly and indirectly is often termed personal branding. This term is used to build people's positive perception of personal merit. This has been done by the Prophets, one of which is Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* as the verses in Surat Yusuf. The purpose of this study is to find out the personal branding model according to Peter Montoya's theory conducted by Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* based on Yusuf Verse. Research with this type of qualitative is in the form of library research using content analysis in the form of *Surat Yusuf* in the Qur'an then analyzed descriptively to obtain conclusions. The results of this study show that Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* brands himself as a dream taker, and a person who is good at keeping again knowledgeable. To strengthen his personal branding, Allah the Exalted shows many advantages including having a handsome face, justifying the results of his supervision, and making people rank in the Egyptian state at that time. The branding carried out by Prophet Yusuf himself and by Allah through His *kalam* shows according to Peter Montoya's personal branding principles, specialization, leadership, personality, distinctiveness, visibility, unity, persistence, and goodwill.

Keywords: *distinctiveness; goodwill; leadership; persistence; personality; visibility*

1. Introduction

Showing one's superiority to others is sometimes considered arrogant; whereas, every human being has characteristics that distinguish the person from others, one of which is to be easily recognized (Afrilia, 2018). These characteristics do not rule out the possibility to show the advantages possessed or the potential to develop themselves. Currently, highlighting one's strengths is found in many of them, one of which is on social media (Franzia, 2018). Social media can record a person's track to find out the quality of a person (Rahmah, 2021). As a good human being, it is not appropriate to be prejudiced against other people's posts. Just like when someone uploads several medals or certificates of appreciation for achievements obtained through their social media accounts, this could be a strategy for personal branding. Even when applying for a job or scholarship, the interviewer

will ask about his strengths. This is important to convey because it will be a consideration of acceptance or rejection of a person according to the advantages he shows.

Personal branding is done to instill a person's positive point of view towards the general audience (Mandira & Yulia Carey, 2023), can be done directly or indirectly. As one of the 'Nusantara scholars familiarly called Gus Baha' states that expressing signs or pamphlets that read for example "dentist" are important. It can be concluded that the existence of pamphlets is a form of personal branding. In the current era, social media can be used to develop themselves so that it is easy to get a job or scholarship (Nani, Ahluwalia, & Novita, 2021).

In fact, the term personal branding is a reconstruction of self-actualization and has been applied by previous people, including the apostles. The apostle is a messenger given revelation by Allah, the Exalted and is obliged to convey it to his people (2020 العجبي). Doing personal branding for the Apostles is a common thing, considering the task is quite heavy. One of the Apostles and Prophets whose complete story is immortalized in one verse is the one of Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* (Zulhelmi, 2022).

Peter Montoya is an author of "*The Personal Branding Phenomenon*," "*The Brand Called You*," and he is the publisher of Personal Branding magazine. He regularly appears as a personal branding commentator on CNN, MSNBC and Fox News. He is an expert in the field of designers, writers, and speakers at workshop seminars (Montoya, 2005). The book entitled *The Personal Branding Phenomenon* contains knowledge about personal branding, the concept of building personal branding, and tips on how to build personal branding (Peter, 2002).

The purpose of this study is to find out how the personal branding model is in accordance with Montoya theories carried out by the Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* based on verses in *Surat Yusuf*. The researchers chooses *Surat Yusuf* because of the uniqueness of this verse, which is a surah with a full story that tells the story of Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* in full without being repeated in other *surahs* (Pratama, 2017).

Previous research related to this research has been widely conducted. Among them is research on Laudiya Chintya Bella's personal branding through Instagram (Soraya, 2017). The research shows that Laudya Cynthia Bella forms personal branding through features on the Instagram account and used 8 Peter Montoya personal branding concepts. Then a research is conducted by Oryza Devi Salam on personal branding analysis on Instagram by Digital Natives (tech-savvy generation) (Salam, 2020). The study shows that personal branding carried out by digital natives needs to pay attention to eight concepts of personal branding from Peter Montoya's perspective. Research with the object of Yusuf's has been carried out by Ahmad Bahrul Hikam researching the education of children's spiritual intelligence in the family in accordance with Yusuf Verse (Hikam, 2020).

Based on previous studies conducted by the researchers, there has been no research on personal branding with the object of Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* according to the verses of the Qur'an in *Surat Yusuf*. For this reason, this research is expected to be able to contribute knowledge about personal branding carried out by Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam*, and becomes an example, especially for current and future generations, how to build a good personal brand, without bringing down or harming other parties.

2. Literature Review

Branding comes from the word brand, in English it means brand, name, term (Setiana, 2018). Branding does not only apply to a product or place, but also applies to someone (Arjuna, 2019). Personal branding can be interpreted as a process that will make uniqueness in oneself such as skills and personality as advantages that can be highlighted (Srihasnita & Dharmasetiawan, 2018). Personal branding in Indonesia is sometimes used by politicians to show their strengths through campaigns to attract sympathetic people (Romadhan, 2018). It can be concluded, personal branding is how someone shows his strengths both in terms of attitude, ability and skills so that the interlocutor or audiences have a positive view of him.

Peter Montoya in his book *The Personal Branding Phenomenon* writes eight main concepts in personal branding (Peter, 2002), namely:

1. Specialization
Brand focus or what is the most highlighted thing about a person.
2. Leadership
The ability to be a leader or have more leadership spirit so that it deserves to be called a figure who has more advantages than others.
3. Personality
A brand must be built with a good personality
4. Distinctiveness
To be attractive, the brand that is built must have differences with other brands that tend to be the same.
5. Visibility
In building personal branding one must have high consistency and ability to continue to fight despite many obstacles.
6. Unity
A person brands himself in line with prevailing ethics and morals.
7. Persistence
The brand owned is able to adjust to the needs of the times, meaning it continues to grow in terms of quality.
8. Goodwill
The results of branding that is carried out continuously will produce a good name for someone in the future.

3. Research Method

This research is a type of descriptive qualitative research. Data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data are in the forms of the Qur'an, Surat Yusuf, and Peter Montoya's book *Personal Branding Phenomena*. The secondary sources are interpretations, books, articles, other journals related to this discussion. The data are obtained through the content analysis method, namely in the Qur'an Surat Yusuf. The researchers use descriptive analysis techniques, where the data are in the form of verses that have been collected and presented descriptively using semantic analysis and then correlated with Peter Montoya's personal branding theory and conclusions are obtained.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Correlation of the story of Prophet Yusuf in the Qur'an with Peter Montoya's personal branding

Prophet Yusuf is the son of Prophet Ya'qub 'alaihissalam (Pratama, 2017). He was born in 1745 BC in the Faddan area under Babylonian rule (Cahyani, 2020). Before the birth of Prophet Yusuf, the Faddan area experienced a long drought. The birth of Prophet Yusuf seemed to bring blessings, namely rain (Khairu, 2015). He was a prophet endowed with a beautiful face with a great intellect. His story is immortalized in the Qur'an which can be used as a lesson for anyone who reads and adheres to it. Included in the is an implied story of how Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam has done personal branding so that his name is fragrant until now among Muslims. Here are some data presentations about the personal branding of the prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam in accordance with the verses in Surat Yusuf:

1. Good-looking face

In his story in the Qur'an, the handsome face of the prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam actually invites the negative side of the king's wife, Zulaikha. Besides Zulaiha, the love of people who see actually leads to disaster. This is in accordance with the interpretation of Ath Thabari, that Yusuf forbids the two young men who are imprisoned with him to love him. Yusuf does not want his good looks to cause disaster. As Yusuf states to two young men in prison, "By God, no one loves me, but his love leads to disaster. My aunt, my father, my friend's wife, all love me. But all his love became a disaster for me (Ath-Thabari, 2007)".

His good looks make the king's wife named Zulaikha want to invite Yusuf to commit adultery. As Yusuf verse 23 says:

وراودته التي هو في بيتها عن نفسه وغلقت الأبواب وقالت هيت لك ^ع قال معاذ الله صلى إنه ربي
أحسن مثواي ^{صلى}

In the above verse, it can be seen that Zulaikha's invitation is not accepted by Yusuf 'alaihissalam. His good looks do not diminish his faith in Allah the Almighty. This shows that the personal branding built by prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam is not just a personal image, but with a firm stance or truth value that he holds. This is according to the passage of the verse

إنه ربي أحسن مثواي...

"...My Lord has treated me well."

As Ath Thabari's interpretation of the passage suggests, Allah has given Yusuf a good position, glorified, and trusts him, so that Yusuf does not want to betray Him (Ath-Thabari, 2007). In that verse, the author finds that Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam rejects Zulaikha's invitation on the basis of faith, and feels it is inappropriate to do such a heinous thing while Allah the Almighty has given good deeds to Yusuf 'alaihissalam. This passage shows the implied personal branding done by the prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam to the King's wife. Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam shows that he has a good personality, obedience to his God.

2. Ability to realize dreams

The ability to interpret the dreams of Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam has been immortalized in the Qur'an, as Yusuf Verse 36, when the prophet Yusuf is in prison with two young men. The two men are servants of the King of Egypt (Ath-Thabari, 2007). The first young man serves as a drink waiter named Nabwu, the second one specialized in serving the

king's food named Mujlits (2008, محمد). The reason is, the two young men tell Yusuf their different dreams, so that Yusuf would fulfill the dreams. It is based on a narration that when the Prophet Yusuf goes to prison and is asked about his work, he replies "*I am a dream taker*" (2001, عطية. عبد الحق بن غالب بن عطية). Then the two young men tell him their dreams. The first young man dreams of squeezing wine. Another young man dream of carrying bread over his head, but part of it is eaten by birds.

To prove Yusuf's claim to be the author of a dream, the two young men say according to Verse 36

نبئنا بتأويله....

The answer to the dream interpretation is mentioned in Verse 41 of Yusuf. The young man, who dreams of squeezing wine would later become the king's drinking presenter; while the young man who dreams of carrying bread on his head and some of it is eaten by birds, would die on the cross and his head eaten by birds. In Verse 42, the Prophet Yusuf 'alaihisslaam then asks one of the young men who would later survive and become the king's servant:

اذكرني عند ربك....

The interpretation of this passage is for the young man to tell his king about the condition of Yusuf who is imprisoned in a state of innocence. In that way, Yusuf hopes to be free from prison soon. But because Satan makes the young man forget, Yusuf remains imprisoned for several more years (Ath-Thabari, 2007). Until finally the king has a dream and this is shown in Yusuf Verse of 43.

The king said (to the leading men of his people), "truly I dreamed of seeing seven fat heifers eaten by seven thin heifers and seven green (wheat) and seven dry ones'. O eminent men, 'explain to me the ta'bir of my dream if you can make it a dream."

Ibn Abi Hatim in his *tafsir* explains the king's anxiety towards his dream. The thing that worries the king is that he sees seven fat cows eaten by seven thin cows, seven green and dry grains. Then the king gathers the country's leading men such as fortune tellers, and weavers to interpret his dreams (n.d, الرازي).

Their answer is seen in Verse 44:

They replied, '(They) are empty dreams and sometimes we don't know the ta'bir of those dreams."

Knowing this, the young man who has been imprisoned with Yusuf remembers Yusuf's ability to interpret dreams, and asks the king for permission to take Yusuf to interpret his dreams. With the permission of Allah the Exalted, Yusuf is able to interpret the king's dream as seen in Yusuf Verse of 47:

Yusuf said, "you may plant seven years as usual; then what you reap, let it be bullied except for a little for you to eat."

In the story of the ability to interpret dreams above, the author finds the side of the prophet Yusuf in branding himself as a dream writer. After fulfilling the dream of the two

young men in prison and proving its truth, Prophet Yusuf is entrusted by the king of Egypt and by the power of Allah Almighty, Prophet Yusuf's devotion to the king's dream comes true.

3. A man of rank in his country

After Yusuf is proven innocent, he becomes the king's confidant and has a seat in the Egyptian state at that time. As Yusuf Verse of 54 says:

وقال الملك ائتوني به أستخلصه لنفسي صلى فلما كلمه قال إنك اليوم لدينا مكين أمين
And the king said, 'Bring Yusuf to me, that I may choose him as a man close to me'. So when the king had a conversation with him, he said 'verily you will from this day on become a man of high position again trusted by our side'."

The interpretation of the verse is that when the king finishes a conversation with Yusuf and learns of his innocence in imprisonment, the king is sympathetic to Yusuf. The king makes Yusuf a person of high position and freedom to occupy any position in the government of the Egyptian state (Ath-Thabari, 2007). Based on the interpretation of the verse, the researchers find that prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam has succeeded in personal branding as someone who is trustworthy not treacherous behind the king; he is also intelligent because he is able to fulfill the dreams. Because of his intelligence and honest nature, Yusuf is trusted by the king of Egypt and given a high position.

In Verse 55, Yusuf brands himself as intelligent and trustworthy.

قال اجعلني على خزائن الأرض صلى إني حفيظ عليم
Yusuf said, 'Make me treasurer of the state (Egypt); verily I am a man of guarding, again of obedience.'"

Abu Ja'far interprets the Verse to mean that Yusuf would take care of something that the king asks him to keep, and Yusuf also has sufficient knowledge of what he should take care of. Yusuf's request to the king to make him treasurer is based on Yusuf's experience on this subject. He is able to maintain things with good calculations, and has good language skills (Ath-Thabari, 2007). Being a treasurer at that time is a very important position in the country, and worthy of the position in line with the position of the king (Andriono, 2018).

After looking at the context of the storyline, the researchers find that the personal branding of prophet Yusuf in the Qur'an is in accordance with the principles of leadership. In Hamka's opinion, the leadership or position obtained by Prophet Yusuf is proactive, because the position obtained is not because of his father's great name, or the help of others (Arifin, 2016). The position is obtained by prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam because of his intelligence and persistence in seeking the pleasure of Allah *ta'ala*.

4.2 Personal Branding Concept

By the permission of Allah, the Exalted, Prophet Yusuf's persistence pays off, namely reuniting with his family. The brothers who has wronged him repents to God and Yusuf forgives his brothers' improper behavior. Getting to this stage, of course, cannot be separated from the principle of personal branding carried out by prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam. Based on the exposure of the data above, the author finds the concept possessed by Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam so that he succeeds in branding himself as a

successful dream taker and state treasurer. From the concept of personal branding of prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* the author synchronizes this with the theory of eight concepts of personal branding of Peter Montoya:

1. Specialization

To build a self-branding, specialization is needed, which is something highlighted by prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam*. As it is known in Yusuf Verse, that he has a handsome face and is loved by his father Ya'qub *'alaihisslam*, compared to his other brothers (Aisyah, 2021). This leads to the malice of his brothers and finally decide to remove prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* from his family. In addition, prophet Yusuf is also an expert in interpreting dreams. The ability to interpret dreams is an advantage given by Allah the Exalted directly, as He says in Yusuf Verse of 21:

ولنعلمه من تأويل الأحاديث

"and that We teach him ta'bir dream."

He shows the ability to win dreams when he is in prison and is asked what his job is. He replies that his job is to interpret dreams. Then the truth of his abilities is proved in the dreams of the two young men in prison, and the dream of the Egyptian king.

2. Leadership

Personal branding in Verse of 55, makes prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* known for his leadership.

قال اجعلني على خزائن الأرض ج إني حفيظ عليم

He (Yusuf) said, "ake me treasurer of the land (Egypt); for verily I am a man of guard and knowledge." (Q.S Yusuf: 55)

The position of Prophet Yusuf as treasurer of the Egyptian state at that time, is an important and influential position (Irawan, 2019). The words of Prophet Yusuf in Verse 55 of Yusuf Verse, reflect his worthiness as a leader, namely having the authority to regulate the circulation of state finances by deploying his subordinates and being fully responsible for his duties. To strengthen the personal branding of Prophet Yusuf as a leader, a study states that Prophet Yusuf has a good personality when carrying out his mandate; he is able to master the problems that are or will be faced, and has high motivation (Arifin, 2016). One of them is evidenced by the ability of Prophet Yusuf to prepare food barns in Egypt to face famine, so that no people go hungry when famine comes.

3. Personality

The personality of prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* in the Qur'an can be seen in several verses, including in Yusuf Verse of 22,

"And when he was old enough, we gave him wisdom and knowledge. Thus we reward those who do good."

The verse interprets Prophet Yusuf as a good man before Allah the Almighty, so by His grace, Prophet Yusuf is given reason and knowledge.

In addition, the personality of Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* is also reflected in the passage of Yusuf Verse 23 when Yusuf is invited to sleep with Zulaikha

Yusuf said, 'I take refuge in God, so my master has treated me well.'" In that verse, the author finds that prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam has a good personality, namely piety to Allah (avoiding His prohibitions), and being trustful (not betraying the king behind his back).

4. Difference

The story of Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam presented in Surat Yusuf is *ahsanul qashas* or the best story in the Qur'an. This is in accordance with Verse 3 of Yusuf's Verse.

We lack the best stories for you....

"We tell you (Muhammad) the best story"

Narrated *asbabun nuzul* this verse is that the companions ask the messenger of Allah to tell a story about the previous people, then the story of Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam comes down as the best story (Shihab, 2002). This makes a difference between the popularity of Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam and the story of the previous people. Allah the Almighty presents his story perfectly in one verse, one of which is that it is easy for the reader to remember and to learn lessons from each plot of the story.

5. Visibility or Consistency

Prophet Yusuf continues to call upon him to recognize God even though he is in prison. Prophet Yusuf calls on the two young men who are in prison with him to renounce worshipping various gods. Based on one history, one of these young men is a polytheist (Ath-Thabari, 2007). Prophet Yusuf's attitude is a form of personal branding as the Prophet continues to invite people who are lost to remember Allah the Almighty. In addition, the visible form of personal branding of Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam as a dream taker is clear.

6. Unity

Although Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam has a charming appearance and liked by many women, he still pays attention to the moral and ethical values that prevail when being invited to sleep with the King's wife. This concept of personal branding is reflected in Verse 23 of Yusuf Verse.

قال معاذ الله صلى إنه ربي أحسن مثواي صلى

Yusuf said, 'I take refuge in Allah, indeed my Lord has treated me well'.

This verse is a form of rejection of Prophet Yusuf when invited to sleep by Zulaiha, the wife of the King of Egypt. This is reflected in the actions of Prophet Yusuf paying attention to moral values as a Servant, so he has to obey His commands and stay away from His prohibitions. The author finds the concept of unity between the attitude of the Prophet Yusuf and his personal branding.

7. Persistence

Personal branding will continue to develop in line with the trend of the times. At a time when the King of Egypt needs a dream interpreter, Prophet Yusuf is able to do so and managed to brand himself so that he eventually becomes the king's confidant and gains a high position in the country. Then when the country experiences a long famine, Prophet Yusuf with his position as treasurer is able to overcome the country's food security so that

there is no famine in Egypt. These two things indicate that the prophet Yusuf has applied the concept of constancy in building personal branding as a prophet as well as a state treasurer.

8. Goodwill

A good personal branding process will produce something positive that can be felt by many people as well. After personal branding is carried out by Prophet Yusuf, the positive results are clearly reflected in the verses of the Qur'an including Yusuf Verse of 54:

And the king said, 'Bring Yusuf to me, that I may choose him as a man close to me'. So when the king had a conversation with him, he said 'verily you will from this day on become a man of high position again trusted by our side'."

Being close to the king and having the freedom to choose the desired position is not necessarily a free radiance. This is the result of good personal branding done by Prophet Yusuf. First, the Prophet Yusuf is able to fulfill the dream of the King of Egypt, though the dream has been considered empty. Then after prophet Yusuf is further traced by the authorities, prophet Yusuf is proven innocent of the past events with the king's wife. This is reflected in Verse 52 of Yusuf:

*ذلك ليعلم أني لم أخنه بالغيب وأن الله لا يهدي كيد الخائنين
(Yusuf said), 'such is so that he (Al Aziz) may know that verily I did not betray him behind his back, and that Allah does not favor the deceit of the treacherous.'*

This is what makes Prophet Yusuf gain the trust of the king, being a person close to him and having a high position as treasurer of the state at that time. During the time Yusuf has a good plan to face a long famine. He mobilizes the people for mass production of wheat and good food stock management. (Mukti, 2019).

Owing to the famine, every family comes to the palace to ask for food, including the family of Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* who formerly tyrannizes him (Zakaria & Nordin, 2021). Here, Prophet Yusuf is able to reunite with his family after years of separation; his brothers who have wronged him have repented to Allah and are forgiven by Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam*.

5. Conclusion

The term personal branding which has recently been often used among the public has actually existed for a long time and is even enshrined in the Qur'an. Yusuf Verse interprets how Prophet Yusuf *'alaihissalam* brands himself as a Prophet who has a handsome face but still believes in Allah the Almighty. The ability to interpret dreams, and his intelligence give him a high position as treasurer of the State of Egypt at that time. The most prominent verse on how the Prophet Yusuf brands himself before the king is Verse 55;

*قال اجعلني على خزائن الأرض ءَ إني حفيظٌ عليم
He (Yusuf) said, 'Make me treasurer of the land (Egypt); for verily I am a man of guard and knowledge'" (Q.S Yusuf: 55).*

In the process of branding himself, Prophet Yusuf 'alaihissalam is in line with Peter Montoya's personal branding concepts, (1) specialization, being a handsome man and able to interpret dreams, (2) leadership, this is proven in time of famine; he makes a good food stock management for the country, (3) personality, being is pious wherever he is, and walking in the right path, (4) difference, the story of Yusuf is considered the best story in the Qur'an, (5) visibility, in matters of religion, seen in time of being imprisoned, (6) Unity, in matters of personality, paying attention to the ethical and moral values; he rejects the tempting invitation from the queen, (7) constancy, proven to conduct the duties of a treasure in a good way, (8) forgiving, proven to forgive his family members.

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