

Jurnal Penelitian KEISLAMAN

Democratic Leadership of Murabbiah nn Guiding Female Santri: A Qualitative Analysis of Behavioral and Spiritual Development
Nahdliyatul Ilmiyah Huda, Dinda aulia Nisyah, Farkhatul Fitriyah Salsabila Raharjo & M. Imamul Muttaqin

Islam and Environmental: The Role of Generation Z Students in Sustainable Campus Initiatives
Fauziah Astuti, Nadia Indah Safhira & Cucu Surahman

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Kholifatul Maghfiroh, Ali, Dyah Syifa Herawati, Septi Apriliyani P. & Naila Umdah Zuhaidah

Tahlilan and Yasinan as Phenomenological Expressions of Islamic Religious Experience in Indonesia
Dendy Wahyu Anugrah Dendy

Political of Religion in Digital Era: Analysis of Jean Baudrillard's Thoughts
Lalu Rifki Rahman Rifki

Integrating Tawazun and Wasatiyyah: A Qualitative Literature Study on Work-Life Balance in Contemporary Muslim Contexts
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ب	= b	ظ	= z̤
ت	= t	ع	= ‘
ث	= th	غ	= gh
ج	= j	ف	= f
ح	= h̤	ق	= q
خ	= kh	ك	= k
د	= d	ل	= l
ذ	= dh	م	= m
ر	= r	ن	= n
ز	= z	ة ، ه	= h
س	= s	ء	= ’
ش	= sh	و	= w
ص	= š	ي	= y
ض	= d̤		

Vokal Tunggal (Monoftong), Panjang (Madd), dan Rangkap (Diftong)

◦ = a	◦ = ā	◦ = aw
◦ = u	◦ = ū	◦ = ay
◦ = i	◦ = ī	

Ya` (ي) Nisbah

Di akhir kata إسلامي = Islāmiy

Di tengah kata إسلامية = Islāmiyyah

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Daftar Isi

Democratic Leadership of Murabbiah nn Guiding Female Santri: A Qualitative Analysis of Behavioral and Spiritual Development

Nahdliyatul Ilmiyah Huda, Dinda aulia Nisya, Farkhatul Fitriyah Salsabila

Raharjo & M. Imamul Muttaqin 1-20

Islam and Environmental: The Role of Generation Z Students in Sustainable Campus Initiatives

Fauziah Astuti, Nadia Indah Safhira & Cucu Surahman 21-32

Between Shari'ah and Secularism: Tunisia's Code of Personal Status as Contextualized Ijtihad in Islamic Family Law

Kholifatul Maghfiroh, Ali, Dyah Syifa Herawati, Septi Apriliyani P. & Naila

Umdah Zuhaidah 33-48

Tahlilan and Yasinan as Phenomenological Expressions of Islamic Religious Experience in Indonesia

Dendy Wahyu Anugrah Dendy 49-65

Political of Religion in Digital Era: Analysis of Jean Baudrillard's Thoughts

Lalu Rifki Rahman Rifki 66-80

Integrating Tawazun and Wasatiyyah: A Qualitative Literature Study on Work-Life Balance in Contemporary Muslim Contemts

Ahmad Sholihin Sirojuddin 81-93

Oral Tradition as Cultural Pedagogy: Preserving Kotah Pehapeng Waha Pledang in The Lifelong Learning Practices of Lamakera

Syaban Abdul Karim 94-112

DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP OF *MURABBIAH* IN GUIDING FEMALE SANTRI: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF BEHAVIORAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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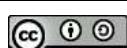
Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran kepemimpinan demokratis, khususnya yang dijalankan oleh murabbiah di lingkungan *ma'had*, dalam membimbing mahasantri perempuan yang berisiko terjerumus dalam lingkaran sosial negatif. Penelitian ini mengkaji tantangan yang dihadapi oleh mahasantri, termasuk kecanduan rokok dan pengaruh teman sebaya yang negatif, yang dapat mengancam nilai, iman, dan tujuan hidup mereka. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan demokratis yang diterapkan oleh murabbiah berhasil membangun komunikasi terbuka, supportif, dan empatik. Melalui interaksi yang persuasif namun penuh kasih, murabbiah mampu memotivasi mahasantri untuk menggali kembali potensi mereka dan menyelaraskan hidup dengan nilai-nilai agama dan moral yang positif. Temuan penelitian mengindikasikan bahwa kepemimpinan ini tidak hanya menyelesaikan masalah perilaku langsung, tetapi juga berkontribusi pada pengembangan holistik mahasantri dengan memperkuat karakter, spiritualitas, dan ketangguhan mereka. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa kepemimpinan yang partisipatif dan penuh kasih sangat diperlukan untuk menciptakan lingkungan pendidikan yang kondusif dalam mendukung mahasantri membangun orientasi hidup yang positif dan bermakna.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan Demokratis, Murabbiah, Santri, Nilai Moral, Gaya Kepemimpinan

Judul: Kepemimpinan Demokrasi Murabbiah dalam Membimbing Mahasantri Putri

Abstract: This study explored the role of democratic leadership, specifically as practiced by murabbiah within *ma'had* environments, in guiding female *santri* who were at risk of falling into negative social circles. The research examined the challenges faced by *santri*, including nicotine addiction and negative peer influence, which could threaten their values, faith, and sense of purpose. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study revealed that democratic leadership employed by *murabbiah* fostered open, supportive, and empathetic communication. Through persuasive yet compassionate interactions, *murabbiah* were able to motivate *santri* to rediscover their potential and align their lives with positive religious and moral values. The findings indicated that such leadership not only addressed immediate behavioral issues but also contributed to the holistic development of the *santri* by strengthening their character, spirituality, and resilience. The study concludes that nurturing and participatory leadership is essential to create a conducive educational environment that supports *santri* in building a positive and meaningful life orientation.

Keywords: Democratic Leadership, *Murabbiah*, *Santri* Development, Moral Values, Leadership Styles



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INTRODUCTION

The strategic development and empowerment of *santri* (students) must be continually adapted to align with the dynamic challenges of contemporary society. The demands of the present era necessitate a comprehensive rethinking of how *santri* are guided, especially in female dormitory environments, which are uniquely vulnerable to social and cultural shifts. Today, these challenges encompass not only the traditional aspects of religious and moral education but also extend to promoting mental health awareness, harnessing the benefits of digital technologies for education and communication, and embedding Islamic values within responses to broader global concerns, including environmental sustainability and gender equity. These areas of concern reflect an increasingly complex landscape in which *pesantren* must operate, requiring leaders to adopt more responsive and integrative strategies.

A growing body of literature has emphasized the need for a holistic and participatory approach in the leadership of Islamic educational institutions. Tohet and Hidayat, for instance, in their analysis of transformational leadership for enhancing educational quality within the perspective of symbolic interactionism, underscore the importance of leadership that is capable of inspiring, empowering, and adapting to the dynamic needs of learners and their communities.¹ Their findings point toward the critical role of leadership in fostering educational environments where students can thrive academically, morally, and socially. Similarly, Khofifah et al. have demonstrated the essential role of technology in enhancing the effectiveness of Islamic educational practices, underlining how digital platforms can be leveraged to support learning and facilitate positive behavioral change.² Furthermore, Triyono and Mediawati have examined how *pesantren* education can effectively transmit Islamic values to shape *santri* character, highlighting the significance of a value-based educational approach that goes beyond rote learning.³ These collective contributions illustrate an emerging recognition of the importance of integrating transformative and participatory leadership practices to cultivate *santri* who are resilient, morally grounded, and socially aware.

Nevertheless, despite these valuable insights, significant gaps remain in applying effective leadership frameworks to address pressing social challenges faced by *santri*, particularly within the female dormitory setting. This is evident in the case of *mabna* K at Ma'had Sunan Ampel Al-Aly, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, where existing leadership strategies have faced obstacles in adequately responding to students' behavioral risks.

¹ Moch. Tohet and Taufik Hidayat, "Kepemimpinan Transformasional Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif Interaksionalisme Simbolik," *JIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 6, no. 2 (2023): 1184–91, <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v6i2.1571>.

² Khofifah Khofifah et al., "Peran Teknologi Dalam Meningkatkan Efektivitas Pembelajaran Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Al-Affan* 4, no. 2 (2024): 218–23.

³ Bambang Triyono and Elis Mediawati, "Transformasi Nilai-Nilai Islam Melalui Pendidikan *pesantren*: Implementasi Dalam Pembentukan Karakter *santri*," *Journal of International Multidisciplinary Research* 1, no. 1 (2023): 147–58, <https://doi.org/10.62504/jimr403>.

Interviews conducted with the *murabbiah* of *mabna* K revealed their difficulties in mentoring female *santri* who have been exposed to negative peer influences, including behaviors such as smoking and social interactions deemed inappropriate by dormitory standards. *Murabbiah* acknowledged the urgency of implementing more effective preventive strategies while simultaneously expressing a strong desire to increase student participation in dormitory decision-making processes. These findings point to the need for leadership approaches that not only address behavioral issues reactively but also empower *santri* to participate actively in shaping a healthy and supportive dormitory culture.

In response to these challenges, this study aims to fill the identified research gap by comprehensively analyzing the leadership strategies employed by the *murabbiah* of *mabna* K in managing issues of smoking addiction and negative social behaviors among female *santri*. This study is expected to make a significant scholarly contribution by developing a leadership model that combines personal mentoring approaches with democratic participation principles, thereby promoting more sustainable behavioral change among *santri*. Furthermore, this research will generate evidence-based recommendations for strengthening *santri* development programs that prioritize student participation, voice, and empowerment. Additionally, it will offer a nuanced understanding of the multidimensional factors that influence *santri* behavior in the modern *pesantren* environment, including social, cultural, and structural aspects that shape their daily experiences.

This research differs substantively from previous investigations, which have tended to concentrate on the general patterns of character education in *pesantren*, by focusing specifically on democratic leadership practices within a contemporary *pesantren* dormitory setting. Employing a qualitative research approach through in-depth interviews, this study is grounded in a theoretical framework that integrates transformational and participatory leadership perspectives. Such a framework is especially pertinent for addressing the multifaceted social problems emerging in modern female dormitories, where traditional top-down approaches may be insufficient.

The objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to identify the leadership strategies currently implemented by the *murabbiah* of *mabna* K in responding to social and behavioral issues among female *santri*; (2) to analyze the effectiveness of these leadership strategies, particularly in addressing smoking addiction and negative social interactions; and (3) to develop practical recommendations for enhancing future *santri* development strategies in female dormitory environments, based on participatory and empowering leadership practices.

By situating its analysis within the specific context of *mabna* K, applying a rigorous analytical approach, and adopting relevant leadership theories, this research extends the scope of existing studies and offers a fresh empirical perspective on an issue that has so far remained underexplored in academic literature. As such, the present study responds to a

contemporary and timely case that has not previously been systematically examined, thus providing critical insights into how democratic leadership approaches may correlate positively with reducing smoking behaviors among *santri* in the *mabna* K dormitory. This analysis will not only enrich the academic discourse on Islamic educational leadership but will also serve as a valuable reference for policymakers, dormitory managers, and educators seeking to strengthen *santri* character-building initiatives in modern *pesantren* settings.

METHOD

This study is designed to identify and explore the role of democratic leadership practices demonstrated by the *murabbiah* in guiding female *santri* who have become entangled in negative peer circles. To achieve this objective, the research adopts a qualitative approach that allows for a rich, in-depth exploration of social and behavioral dynamics within the *pesantren* environment. Data were primarily collected through semi-structured interviews and complemented by a systematic literature review.

The key informant in this study was the *murabbiah* from one of the female dormitories (*mabna*) at Ma'had Sunan Ampel Al-Aly, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. The selection of the *murabbiah* as the primary source of information was based on their direct involvement and experience in mentoring female *santri*, particularly in addressing issues related to smoking behavior and negative social interactions. The interviews were guided by a flexible set of questions, allowing the researcher to probe more deeply into the participant's responses and to capture nuanced perspectives and contextual explanations relevant to the study objectives. This flexibility facilitated the emergence of unanticipated themes and insights, enriching the overall data quality.

In addition to interview data, this study also incorporated a thorough literature review as a secondary data source. This process involved systematically identifying, reading, annotating, and synthesizing relevant scholarly works, official reports, and institutional documents concerning leadership practices, character education, and youth behavioral issues in Islamic boarding school environments. This triangulated approach was intended to strengthen the validity and reliability of the research findings by corroborating interview insights with established literature.

The researcher formulated several key research questions that served as the basis for both the data collection process and the subsequent analysis, which will be elaborated further in the discussion section. First, what specific leadership strategies are being implemented by the *murabbiah* of *mabna* K? Second, how effective are these leadership strategies in mitigating smoking addiction and negative peer associations among the female *santri*? Third, what recommendations can be proposed for developing more effective, participatory character-building strategies in female dormitory settings?

By adopting this qualitative methodology, the research aims not only to document leadership practices as they occur but also to interpret their underlying meaning and implications within the wider sociocultural and educational context of modern *pesantren*. This approach is particularly suited to exploring complex, value-laden, and interpersonal phenomena such as leadership, empowerment, and behavioral change, which cannot be easily captured through quantitative measures alone.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings from interviews with a *murabbiah* at one of the female dormitories (*mabna*) in Ma'had Sunan Ampel Al-Aly, it emerged that two female *santri* were identified as being addicted to smoking and had become involved in negative peer circles outside the campus environment. This involvement contributed to a sense of spiritual doubt regarding divine guidance and the existence of Allah. Smoking itself, defined as the act of inhaling the smoke of rolled tobacco products wrapped in paper and then exhaling it into the environment, not only produces an unpleasant odor but also exposes bystanders to harmful secondhand smoke, posing significant health risks to both the smoker and those around them.⁴ Despite being widely recognized as a harmful behavior, some individuals, including those described by Suryawati and Gani, reported that smoking helps improve their mood under stress or emotional pressure.⁵ Others may initiate smoking simply out of curiosity about its sensory effects.⁶

The *murabbiah* explained that, in many cases, female *santri* do not actively choose to smoke but instead continue the behavior because they have become entangled in patterns of dependency within their peer groups.⁷ Responding to this complex challenge, the *murabbiah* implemented a persuasive and empathetic approach to establish rapport and trust with the affected students. She began by engaging them in casual conversations, encouraging them to share details of their daily routines, hobbies, and personal aspirations. Through this nonjudgmental and supportive dialogue, the *murabbiah* was able to gently uncover the underlying motivations and circumstances that had led to their current situation. Recognizing the social nature of their smoking habit, she sought to connect with them through shared, less risky interests — in this case, their habit of gathering in cafés — which then became an entry point for gradually introducing healthier perspectives and values. Over time, this process enabled the students to become more receptive to guidance, and they have since

⁴ Wanty Khaira and Mulia Mulia, "Pendekatan Gestalt Terhadap Perilaku Merokok," *Intelektualita* 12, no. 1 (2023): 89–98, <https://doi.org/10.22373/ji.v12i1.19259>.

⁵ Ida Suryawati and Abdul Gani, "Analisis Faktor Penyebab Perilaku Merokok," *Jurnal Keperawatan Silampari* 6, no. 1 (2022): 497–505, <https://doi.org/10.31539/jks.v6i1.3743>.

⁶ Putri Ayu and Muhammad Syukur, "Mahasiswa Perokok Di Kota Makassar," *Jurnal Sosialisasi Pendidikan Sosiologi-FIS UNM* 5, no. 2 (2018): 111–14, <http://ojs.unm.ac.id/sosialisasi/article/view/2376>.

maintained ongoing communication with the *murabbiah*, even if only through occasional, informal video calls.

Further details regarding the profile of these female *santri* smokers were corroborated by a *musyrifah* (senior *santri* supervisor) who also serves as part of the security division within the same *mabna*. Observations carried out by the security team confirmed the presence of two female *santri* involved in smoking, who had been formally reported and whose cases were subsequently addressed by the dormitory management. These incidents came to light in October 2024, highlighting the urgency of implementing more effective preventive and mentoring strategies to support *santri* in avoiding such behaviors.

The first female *santri*, identified by the initial N (aged 18), was initially discovered smoking when her roommate, who served as a *muharrakah* (motivator) within the dormitory, reported her behavior to a senior mentor who also oversaw security within the *mabna*. Her roommate had caught her smoking in front of the sports hall one afternoon after returning from language classes. At that time, she was seen smoking near a street vendor outside the building. According to her roommate, N had actually been addicted to smoking since she was a child and had been a consistent active smoker from an early age. Following a thorough investigation and cross-checking conducted by the *mabna*'s security team, it was revealed that N's smoking habit was strongly influenced by internal family factors. Her parents were both active smokers, and her home environment considered female smoking to be entirely acceptable and normalized.

While on campus, N commonly purchased cigarettes from a vendor located in one of the faculties, where the price was relatively affordable for students.⁷ She also acknowledged that she frequently smoked in front of her home when returning on breaks, considering this to be a completely ordinary practice within her community. Usman's research supports this notion, arguing that smoking among women is not necessarily viewed as a social taboo, as seen in cultural groups such as the Tengger community, where women have practiced smoking since their ancestors' time without perceiving it as a violation of norms.⁸

Environmental factors, particularly family upbringing as the smallest unit of socialization, exert a profound influence on a child's character formation. In N's case, her family environment emerged as a critical internal factor shaping her smoking behavior. She explained that one motivation for smoking was a longing for special attention from her family, whom she described as religiously uninvolved and lacking in spiritual guidance. As a coping mechanism to distract herself from familial neglect and conflict, she turned to

⁷ Ayu and Syukur.

⁸ Ari Usman, "Makna Merokok Bagi Wanita: Studi Fenomenologi Pada Mahasiswi Perokok," *RESIPROKAL: Jurnal Riset Sosiologi Progresif Aktual* 6, no. 1 (2024): 38–51, <https://doi.org/10.29303/resiprokal.v6i1.451>.

smoking. This phenomenon is consistent with research showing that female students who become smokers often experience incomplete socialization processes during their formative play stage.⁹ Observing parents or role models who smoke, and seeing it as a normalized behavior, tends to become deeply ingrained in their subconscious and is later imitated. In social environments where permissive attitudes towards adolescent smoking prevail, the likelihood of maintaining such behavior is significantly strengthened.¹⁰

On the one hand, N expressed deep regret for her actions, acknowledging her awareness of both the short-term and long-term risks associated with smoking, not only for herself but also for others exposed to secondhand smoke. Consequently, when the security officers confiscated the evidence — several sticks of illicit cigarettes found in her bag — she did not object. She was also prepared to accept the consequences of violating a fundamental rule of the *mabna*, which strictly prohibits female *santri* from smoking. Following this, she received an *iqab* or disciplinary sanction, which included reciting Surah Al-Waqiah, delivering one hundred *shalawat*, and writing a letter of commitment not to repeat the offense. N then pledged not to engage in smoking again. Her roommate observed a noticeable positive change in N's behavior after the punishment was implemented, and since then, she has not been reported to have smoked again.

The second female *santri*, identified by the initial R (aged 18), resided in the same *mabna* as N but occupied a different room. R was suspected of being an active smoker following a staged investigation conducted by the *mabna* security team. The incident originated when several *santri* returned late to the *mabna* after attending a birthday celebration for one of their study programs. Although they were aware that the dormitory's gate would close at 10:00 p.m. local time, a number of students arrived after the curfew despite hurrying back. During this chaotic return, R was observed tripping while running in her long robe, and several cigarettes fell out of her pocket at the same time. A member of the security staff witnessed the event directly and was even able to record it on video.

Immediately, R was stopped and questioned before being allowed to re-enter the *mabna*. During the security team's interrogation, she initially denied ownership of the cigarettes, claiming they actually belonged to a male friend who had accompanied her to the birthday gathering. Due to the absence of conclusive evidence to verify her story, the *mabna*'s security staff decided to impose a heavy *iqab* penalty on her. In response, R attempted to negotiate by calling the friend in question and asking him to come to the *mabna* immediately to clarify the situation. After a period of waiting, the friend arrived and admitted that the cigarettes were

⁹ Wahyu Ningsih and Abdul Haris F, "Faktor Penyebab Mahasiswa Merokok Dikalangan Fis Universitas Negeri Jakarta," no. 2 (2024).

¹⁰ Usman, "Makna Merokok Bagi Wanita: Studi Fenomenologi Pada Mahasiswa Perokok."

indeed his, and retrieved them on the spot. As a result, R was absolved of the accusation of being an active smoker.

Not long after these events, another female *santri* reported experiencing shortness of breath due to exposure to cigarette smoke originating from her roommate. She eventually gathered the courage to inform her father about the problem, who subsequently escalated the complaint to the dormitory's student affairs management. Following a thorough investigation, the individual responsible was identified as R. She was then summoned before the security team, where she admitted to being an active smoker and confessed to having smoked inside her dormitory room on several occasions. During the subsequent room inspection, security staff discovered several cigarette butts as corroborating evidence, which led to the immediate imposition of disciplinary sanctions against her.¹¹

he need to gain acceptance within a friendship circle often compels individuals to engage in behaviors they might otherwise avoid. The higher the degree of conformity, the greater the likelihood of smoking behavior.¹² Ultimately, the incident was only uncovered after her roommate experienced acute breathing difficulties, prompting the entire situation to be revealed. As a consequence of her misconduct, R received a severe *iqab* (disciplinary punishment).

The steps taken by the *murabbiah* (female mentor) and *musyrifah* (female supervisor) in resolving this case were considered appropriate and effective. They adopted a democratic approach aimed not only at sanctioning but also at creating a deterrent effect so the violator would not repeat the offense. The application of democratic leadership within the *mabna* (dormitory) environment demonstrates that leadership goes beyond merely issuing orders or directives; it also involves fostering solidarity and cultivating mutual trust among members. For any institutional leader, possessing skills in empathy, communication, and the ability to understand the aspirations and needs of those being led is essential.

A *murabbiah* with a democratic leadership style embodies the principle that a leader is responsible not only for managing herself but also for guiding and motivating others. Moreover, one of the challenges of leadership is to serve as a role model in upholding justice, promoting collective consultation (musyawarah), and creating a harmonious environment for all members.¹³

¹¹ Anik Sunariyati Siswoyo, Umi Dayati, and Muh. Ishom Ihsan, "Kontrol Diri Wanita Terhadap Keinginan Merokok," *Jurnal Pembelajaran, Bimbingan, Dan Pengelolaan Pendidikan* 1, no. 9 (2021): 778–83, <https://doi.org/10.17977/um065v1i92021p778-783>.

¹² Khaira and Mulia, "Pendekatan Gestalt Terhadap Perilaku Merokok."

¹³ Faiqoh Ghonim and M Imamul Muttaqin, "Implementasi Kepemimpinan Berbasis Nilai Budaya Islam Dan Budaya Lokal Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang , Indonesia Menciptakan Pemimpin Yang Efektif , Tetapi Juga Untuk Menjaga Dan Memperkuat Kohesi Banyak Peluang Dalam Menciptakan P," 2024.

Democratic Leadership of *Murabbiah* in Guiding Female Santri

Leadership represents the ability to influence and direct individuals or groups toward the achievement of shared goals. A leader must possess skills aligned with the needs of their group and be able to utilize these skills effectively to guide and motivate members toward desired outcomes. Leadership is also viewed as an art of fostering cooperation, in which a leader employs their capabilities to encourage and persuade others to act in accordance with collectively agreed-upon objectives. Consequently, a leader plays a critical role in determining the direction and success of a group or organization through the influence and motivation exerted on its members. Furthermore, leadership is a competency possessed by an individual that is shaped by various factors, including internal personal qualities as well as influences from the surrounding environment. It further reflects an individual's ability to shape the behavior of others, regardless of whether those others occupy higher or lower positions within a hierarchy, to achieve common goals.¹⁴

Etymologically, the term 'leadership' derives from the word 'to lead', which in its essence refers to guiding, developing, directing, and serving as an example. A leader, therefore, is an individual entrusted with the responsibility of leading, while leadership itself constitutes the talent or characteristic that must be inherent in that leader. In this sense, leadership can be interpreted as the capacity to influence others within a group or organization in order to achieve specified objectives.¹⁵

Leadership may also be conceptualized as a process whereby a leader influences and serves as a role model for followers in order to accomplish organizational objectives. Leadership encompasses the art of guiding and motivating individuals to collaborate harmoniously with trust and dedication. This capability involves exerting influence, providing motivation, and offering direction to individuals or groups so as to achieve the intended results. In practice, leadership involves three essential elements: the leader, the followers, and the situational context, which together shape the dynamic nature of leadership interactions.¹⁶

Leadership can be manifested through various dimensions, including individual traits and behaviors, the capacity to influence others, as well as patterns of interaction within an organization. Furthermore, leadership reflects a collaborative relationship among differing roles, strategic executive positions, persuasive ability, and legitimacy in influencing others.

¹⁴ Dr. Wendy Sepmady Hutahaean, "Filsafat Dan Teori Kepemimpinan (Dr. Wendy Sepmady Hutahaean, S.E., M.Th.) (z-Lib.Org).Pdf," 2021.

¹⁵ Ahmad Sulhan, *Teori Kepemimpinan Organisasi Dalam Pendidikan Islam*, *TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 2020, www.sanabil.web.id.

¹⁶ Encep Syarifudin, "Teori Kepemimpinan," *Alqalam* 21, no. 102 (2004): 459, <https://doi.org/10.32678/alqalam.v21i102.1644>.

This legitimacy is constructed on the basis of perceptions and trust developed within a working environment or community.¹⁷

According to Ordway Tead, leadership is defined as the activity of influencing people so that they are willing to work cooperatively to achieve desired objectives. Likewise, J.K. Hemphill and Coons conceptualize leadership as the behavior of an individual when directing the activities of a group toward achieving shared goals.¹⁸ In the view of Thoha, leadership represents efforts to influence the behavior of individuals or groups, and is considered an art of guiding people toward certain objectives. Within organizational life, leadership plays a pivotal role since the success or failure of an organization largely depends on the effectiveness of its leaders in making decisions, fostering collaboration, and mobilizing members to pursue the established vision.¹⁹

Sumantri argues that leadership is a social influence process whereby a manager encourages the voluntary participation of subordinates in order to accomplish organizational goals. A leader is not only responsible for steering the organization's path but also for defining its vision and the targets it seeks to achieve. Consequently, leadership holds an essential function in shaping the organization's image and reputation, as its success depends heavily on the leader's ability to inspire, manage, and energize team members.²⁰

According to Sundari and colleagues, leadership comprises the actions of individuals or groups in coordinating and directing organizational members to achieve predetermined objectives. A leader utilizes formal authority to organize, guide, and supervise subordinates so that their work aligns with the organizational vision. An effective leader is able to nurture the best potential within subordinates and encourage them to develop their capabilities independently. The ideal leader, therefore, is someone who is able to mentor others until they are able to function autonomously without being overly dependent on the leader's direct supervision.²¹

Leadership is characterized by distinct and specific attributes, which must be adapted to particular situations. Within a group that pursues certain objectives and activities, a leader's personal characteristics and qualities must align with the situational demands of that group. Therefore, an effective leader should possess core attributes that are accepted by the group,

¹⁷ (Jasmine, 2014)

¹⁸ Rahman Afandi, "Kepemimpinan Dalam Pendidikan Islam" 18, no. 40 (2013): 6.

¹⁹ Miftah Thoha, "Kepemimpinan Dan Manajemen, Devisi Buku Perguruan Tinggi," *Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada*, 2010.

²⁰ Rifki Ahda Sumantri, "Problematika Kepemimpinan Di Lembaga Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal An'nur* V, no. 1 (2013): 144–63.

²¹ Ariefah Sundari, Ahmad Fathur Rozi, and Ahmad Yani Syaikhudin, *Kepemimpinan* (Lamongan: Academia Publication, 2022).

relevant to the circumstances at hand, and compatible with contemporary developments so that their leadership remains both influential and effective in achieving predetermined goals.²²

From these perspectives, it can be concluded that leadership reflects a leader's strategy for influencing subordinates through distinct characteristics in order to achieve desired objectives. The success of a leader largely depends on the leadership techniques applied in creating conditions that encourage subordinates' awareness and willingness to perform tasks as expected. In other words, the effectiveness of leadership is determined by the leader's ability to manage and adapt their leadership style to the specific situation and context of their organization. Three prominent theories have emerged to explain the origin of leadership.²³

The Genetic Theory

This theory posits that leaders are born with innate leadership talents. It maintains that:

1. Leaders are not made, but born with extraordinary natural abilities from birth.
2. They are destined to assume leadership roles in situations and conditions they cannot choose for themselves.

In earlier societies, it was believed that individuals could become leaders based on lineage or noble descent. The persistence of this theory is often evident among aristocratic groups, where, for example, only royal descendants are permitted to succeed their parents as rulers. Conversely, if a person's parents did not hold leadership positions, their children were considered incapable of becoming leaders. However, proponents of democratic values have widely contested this theory.

The Social Theory

Social theory stands in contrast to genetic theory. It argues that leadership is not inherited through lineage, but rather is shaped by societal influences, reflecting the situational and contextual environment. This theory asserts that anyone can become a leader through several supporting factors such as experience, education, and training, alongside opportunities that enable them to be appointed to leadership positions. According to this theory:

1. Leaders must be prepared, trained, educated, and developed. Good leaders do not simply emerge on their own.
2. Every individual has the opportunity to become a leader, provided they undergo preparation, receive education, are motivated, and are given support.

Studies on leadership have shown that there are various factors capable of enhancing an individual's leadership skills. The greater the focus an individual devotes to developing these aspects, the higher their potential to become a competent leader.

²² Jaja Jahari dan Rusdiana, "Buku Kepemimpinan Pendidikan 2020.Pdf," 2020.

²³ Rahmi Aulia, Bambang Kurniawan, and Muhamad Subhan, "Implementasi Manajemen Kepemimpinan Dalam Pencapaian Tujuan Organisasi," *Journal of Student Research* 2, no. 1 (2024): 121–31.

The Ecological Theory

Ecological theory represents a synthesis of both the genetic and social perspectives. According to this view, a leader requires innate talent, but this talent must be continuously developed and cultivated in order to grow. The potential of such talent may flourish depending on how the environment shapes and supports it. The core of this theory emphasizes that multiple factors influence and shape an individual throughout their journey to becoming a leader, combining elements of heredity, natural ability, and environmental influences — such as education, training, and experiential opportunities — that facilitate the realization of each individual's leadership potential.

The majority of leadership scholars believe that leadership abilities and the potential to become an effective leader should ideally be nurtured within the first seven years of a child's life. The more leadership-related experiences individuals acquire during childhood, the more mastery they tend to develop over essential leadership skills. Vince Lombardi famously stated that "contrary to the opinion of many people, leaders are not born, but made and shaped through hard work and effort." In the current era, there has been a notable shift in public perception, with leadership no longer viewed as an innate destiny, but rather as something shaped by experience, motivation, learning, and perseverance.²⁴

Leadership can further be defined as an individual's ability to influence others through communication whether directly or indirectly to encourage them to recognize, understand, and willingly follow the leader's intended direction. An effective leader is someone who possesses such skills.²⁵ Ideally, a leader should embody virtuous character traits, as these enable the leader to inspire, motivate, and effectively guide others:

1. Intelligence is the product of diligent and continuous learning, forming a crucial asset for any leader. With a strong foundation of broad knowledge, a leader can formulate decisions swiftly and accurately, as well as resolve diverse problems effectively. An unflagging enthusiasm for learning is key to refining this intelligence, enabling leaders to offer innovative solutions and drive their organizations toward sustainable progress.²⁶
2. Responsibility, an ideal leader is responsible not only for personal performance but also for the welfare, development, and overall integrity of their team or organization. This

²⁴ Endang Dwi Wahyuningsih et al., "ARTI PENTINGNYA FUNGSI KEPEMIMPINAN BAGI PERANGKAT DESA," *Jurnal Pengabdian Mandiri* 1, no. 6 (2022): 839–42.

²⁵ Yani Muhammad, "Konsep Dasar Karakteristik Kepemimpinan Dalam Pendidikan Islam," *AL-HIKMAH : Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 2 (2021): 157–69.

²⁶ Ni Wayan Mujiati, "Karakteristik Para Pemimpin Yang Diidolakan Masa Kini Dan Masa Depan Pada Organisasi," *Forum Manajemen* 15, no. 2 (2017): 34–42, <https://doi.org/10.61938/fm.v15i2.164>.

encompasses responsibility for fostering the growth and well-being of team members, achieving organizational goals, and maintaining high ethical standards.²⁷

3. Fairness, an effective leader must be capable of acting justly toward all members of their team or organization. Fairness serves as a critical foundation for establishing trust, cultivating a harmonious work environment, and improving overall team performance. Such fairness is reflected in equal treatment of team members, appropriate task allocation, and impartial evaluation.²⁸
4. Trustworthiness (*Amanah*); A leader must be trusted by their members, as trust is a fundamental pillar of leadership. An ideal leader must be capable of building and sustaining the trust of their team members. Such trust is not established instantaneously but must be cultivated through consistent actions and behaviors that demonstrate reliability and integrity.
5. Honesty represents a cornerstone of ideal leadership. By demonstrating honesty and transparency in every policy and decision, a leader reinforces a solid foundation of trust among team members. This trust fosters confidence in the leader's words and actions. An honest leader not only earns respect but also has the ability to motivate the team to achieve shared objectives with a sense of integrity and high commitment.²⁹ T.

Hani Handoko in his scholarly work highlighted several essential leadership traits that are fundamental for effective leadership. These characteristics include:³⁰ The capacity to carry out management tasks, particularly in directing and supervising the work of others, fulfilling a supervisory role; A strong drive for achievement in the workplace, characterized by proactively seeking out tasks and striving for success; Intelligence, which encompasses sound judgment, creativity, and critical thinking abilities; Decisiveness, reflecting the capability to make prompt and effective decisions while solving problems with confidence and accuracy; Self-confidence, representing the belief in one's own abilities to handle various challenges and obstacles effectively; and initiative, defined as the ability to act independently, develop diverse activities, and identify innovative solutions.

Leadership style, or leadership type, refers to the manner in which a leader exercises authority and guides their group members. Ideally, an individual's style of leadership should

²⁷ Siharta Leman Anwar Nababan, Warto Warto, and Triana Rejekiningsih, "Pemimpin Idaman Dalam Masyarakat Multikultural," *Social, Humanities, and Educational Studies (SHEs): Conference Series* 5, no. 1 (2022): 247, <https://doi.org/10.20961/shes.v5i1.57805>.

²⁸ Abd Mu'iz and Ibrahim Al-Khalil, "PEMIMPIN IDEAL DALAM AL-QUR'AN (Analisis Komparatif Tafsir Al-Azhar Dan Tafsir Al-Misbah)," *El-Waroqoh: Jurnal Ushuluddin Dan Filsafat* 6, no. 2 (2022): 232–59.

²⁹ Sakdiah, "Karakteristik Kepemimpinan Dalam Islam (Kajian Historis Filosofis) Sifat-Sifat Rasulullah," *Jurnal Al-Bayan* 22, no. 33 (2016): 29–49.

³⁰ A dan dewi M Wawan, "Hubungan Sifat-Sifat Kepemimpinan Dan Pengetahuan Komunikasi Dengan Kinerja Kepala SD Di Bandar Lampung," *Ahsanta Jurnal Pendidikan* 5, no. 2 (2010): 20.

align with their personal character and disposition, as leaders are expected to continually develop their own capacity.³¹ A leader should also possess specific expertise relevant to the field or objectives pursued by their group. Since leaders have unique personal attributes and perspectives, each will naturally demonstrate a distinct leadership type.

1. Autocratic Leadership Type; Etymologically, the term “autocracy” derives from *auto* (self) and *kratos* (rule), referring to governance dominated by a single authority.³² In an autocratic leadership style, all authority and responsibility are concentrated in one person — the leader — who acts as the central decision-maker and exercises unilateral power. Subordinates have minimal influence, as the leader dictates instructions and expects obedience. Autocratic leaders are often perceived as self-centered and authoritarian, prioritizing strict control over participatory input.
2. *Laissez-Faire* Leadership Type; In contrast, laissez-faire leadership represents the antonym of autocracy. Leaders who adopt this style grant their members extensive freedom to act independently while maintaining ultimate accountability for group outcomes.³³ Subordinates are empowered to solve problems on their own, develop their own suggestions, and make decisions with minimal or even no direct guidance from their leader. The laissez-faire leader tends to recede into the background, placing high confidence in team members’ abilities to carry out tasks independently.

This leadership style is characterized by a low level of visible direction, as the leader delegates virtually all authority to the team. The rationale behind this approach is that, by providing maximum freedom, team members may achieve success more quickly. Nevertheless, this style is only effective if the team members themselves have a high degree of intrinsic motivation and dedication, even in the absence of continuous oversight from the leader.

Some advantages of laissez-faire leadership include a reduced sense of pressure among subordinates, greater autonomy, and expanded opportunities to take initiative, since the leader does not exercise heavy domination. However, its disadvantages include a higher risk of chaos, subordinates behaving without sufficient restraint due to a perceived lack of control, and difficulty achieving organizational goals if members’ initiative and commitment decline over time.³⁴

³¹ Johanes Alfredo Purba and Mitro Subroto, “Analisis Tipe-Tipe Kepemimpinan Di Lembaga Pemasyarakatan,” *JIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 6, no. 4 (2023): 2168–72, <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v6i4.1858>.

³² Zainal Efendi Hasibuan Samsul Nizar, “Kepemimpinan Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif Hadis” (Jakarta Timur: Prenamedia Group, 2019), 1–302.

³³ Leny Marlina et al., “Tipe-Tipe Kepemimpinan Dalam Manajemen Pendidikan” XVIII, no. 02 (2013): 215–27.

³⁴ Purba and Subroto, “Analisis Tipe-Tipe Kepemimpinan Di Lembaga Pemasyarakatan.”

3. Democratic Leadership Type; Democratic leadership is a people-oriented style that emphasizes efficient guidance while valuing the potential of each subordinate. Leaders who apply this style actively listen to feedback, including criticism and suggestions, and display a dignified authority that earns them respect from subordinates, rather than fear through authoritarian behavior.³⁵ Democratic leaders are willing to acknowledge the expertise of their members within their respective domains. They continue to coordinate work while fostering internal responsibility and promoting strong teamwork. Key indicators of democratic leadership include maintaining positive relationships with members, providing recognition and appreciation, and prioritizing the aspirations of subordinates. The core concept of democratic leadership involves a balanced distribution of power among those who support the leader's success, ensuring that neither the leader nor members dominate the decision-making process, which is instead carried out through consensus and deliberation.³⁶ Within this framework, leaders and subordinates cooperate from planning and implementation through to evaluation stages.

The advantages of this leadership style are that subordinates tend to feel comfortable and confident, which helps them reach their full potential, and the emergence of opposition groups is rare since the entire team works toward shared goals. However, its disadvantages include lengthy decision-making processes due to collective deliberations, challenges in unifying opinions, and potential conflicts arising from members who have strong egos and are unwilling to accept group decisions.³⁷

4. Charismatic Leadership Type; Max Weber described charismatic leadership as an extraordinary gift, a form of power that cannot be fully explained through logic alone. Charisma represents a personal authority that enables a leader to inspire others and motivate team members to achieve peak performance.³⁸ Charismatic leaders possess a magnetic presence that naturally attracts large numbers of followers. Their respect and admiration often cannot be easily explained in concrete terms; they appear to be endowed with a kind of supernatural gift that builds strong trust among subordinates, allowing them to become role models and sources of inspiration.

The effectiveness of charismatic leadership does not necessarily rest on the leader's objective qualities alone but rather on the perceptions and confidence of their followers toward them. This dynamic illustrates how charismatic leaders can profoundly influence

³⁵ Nunu Nahnudin, Anis Fauji, and Rijal Firdaos, "Tipe Dan Ide Kepemimpinan Adaptif Terhadap Solusi Konflik Organisasi," *Tadbir Muwabbid* 7, no. 1 (2023): 85–108, <https://doi.org/10.30997/jtm.v7i1.8127>.

³⁶ Nahnudin, Fauji, and Firdaos.

³⁷ Purba and Subroto, "Analisis Tipe-Tipe Kepemimpinan Di Lembaga Pemasyarakatan."

³⁸ Samsul Nizar, "Kepemimpinan Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif Hadis."

organizational culture and member behavior through personal appeal and perceived extraordinary traits.³⁹

5. Paternalistic Leadership Type; The paternalistic leadership type is characterized by a fatherly attitude, often encountered in traditional social environments. In such traditional communities, leaders are usually granted high respect and positioned as elder figures.⁴⁰ Indicators of paternalistic leadership include: An overprotective attitude coupled with excessive care; A tendency to regard subordinates as immature or lacking in maturity; and Rarely providing opportunities for subordinates to make independent decisions.

Leaders adopting this style aim to protect their subordinates while simultaneously encouraging them to develop toward self-reliance. This style is strongly linked to organizational change, where the leader acts as a visionary driving progress toward shared goals.⁴¹

6. Militaristic Leadership Type; Although not identical to leadership in a formal military organization, militaristic leadership adopts high levels of discipline, a rigid structure, and a command-driven system for mobilizing subordinates. Such leaders typically exercise their authority to organize and influence their team members to execute organizational tasks efficiently and achieve preset goals.⁴² The advantage of this type of leadership lies in its decisiveness, which fosters discipline among subordinates. However, its disadvantages include creating feelings of oppression among team members and establishing a rigid, inflexible atmosphere due to the leader's harsh behavior.⁴³
7. Pseudodemocratic Leadership Type; Pseudodemocratic leadership refers to a style that only appears democratic on the surface. Beneath this façade of responsibility, the leader subtly manipulates group opinions, presenting their own views as if they represent a collective decision. In practice, this form of leadership is essentially authoritarian in nature, disguised under the appearance of democratic values.

Field interviews with *murabbiah* at Ma'had Sunan Ampel Al-Aly revealed the cases of two female *santri* who were addicted to smoking and fell into negative peer groups. The persuasive approach implemented by the *murabbiah*—building empathic relationships and providing a comfortable communication climate—proved highly effective. The *santri* felt secure in sharing their stories, and gradually changed their behavior. This outcome supports

³⁹ Istikomah and Budi Haryanto, *Management Dan Kepemimpinan Pendidikan Islam*, 2021.

⁴⁰ Istikomah and Haryanto.

⁴¹ Nahnudin, Fauji, and Firdaos, “Tipe Dan Ide Kepemimpinan Adaptif Terhadap Solusi Konflik Organisasi.”

⁴² Istikomah and Haryanto, *Management Dan Kepemimpinan Pendidikan Islam*.

⁴³ Sulhan, *Teori Kepemimpinan Organisasi Dalam Pendidikan Islam*.

both interpersonal communication theory and self-determination theory, which emphasize the critical role of supportive relationships and autonomy in fostering behavioral change.⁴⁴

The success of these interventions further illustrates that punitive measures alone may be insufficient in addressing addictive behaviors.⁴⁵ Subsequent analysis highlighted the significant role of family and peer environments in triggering smoking behavior. For example, *santri* N reportedly used smoking as a coping mechanism to manage family-related stress, aligning with social learning theory.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, *santri* R was influenced by negative peer groups, consistent with social influence theory.⁴⁷ This case study underscores the need for a holistic approach that integrates spiritual, psychological, and social dimensions in addressing addictive behaviors. In this context, the role of the *murabbiah* as an empathetic mentor becomes essential to support *santri* in overcoming challenges and rediscovering a positive spiritual path.⁴⁸

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study of democratic leadership, particularly as embodied by *murabbiah* within the ma'had environment, has demonstrated the crucial role of democratic leadership in guiding female *santri* who find themselves entangled in negative social circles. The research has highlighted several essential aspects of this leadership style and its impacts on the personal and spiritual development of *santri*. It focused on the complex challenges faced by *santri*, especially those struggling with issues such as nicotine addiction and harmful peer influences. These challenges often risk disorienting young women, leading them to question their values and faith.

The leadership approach of the *murabbiah*, grounded in democratic principles, emphasizes personal connection and open, empathic communication. This method has been shown to foster a more supportive environment in which *santri* feel comfortable sharing their struggles and personal stories. Through persuasive yet compassionate interactions, the *murabbiah* guides *santri* to recognize their own potential and appreciate the importance of aligning their lives with positive religious and moral values. Such an approach addresses not only the immediate behavioral problems but also cultivates a deeper understanding of their life purpose consistent with religious teachings.

⁴⁴ Ali Nurdin, *Teori Komunikasi Interpersonal Disertai Contoh Fenomena Praktis* (Prenada Media, 2020).

⁴⁵ Nicole Adams, Todd D Little, and Richard M Ryan, "Self-Determination Theory," *Development of Self-Determination through the Life-Course*, 2017, 47–54.

⁴⁶ Tarsono Tarsono, "Implikasi Teori Belajar Sosial (Social Learning Theory) Dari Albert Bandura Dalam Bimbingan Dan Konseling," *Psycpathic: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi* 3, no. 1 (2010): 29–36.

⁴⁷ Fellasufah Diniyah, "Faktor Yang Mempengaruhi Niat Perilaku Muslim Menggunakan Platform Crowdfunding Waqf: Teori UTAUT Model," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Islam* 7, no. 2 (2021): 544–52.

⁴⁸ Siti Irene Astuti, "Pendekatan Holistik Dan Kontekstual Dalam Mengatasi Krisis Karakter Di Indonesia," *Cakrawala Pendidikan*, no. 3 (2010): 84129.

The findings of this study confirm that a democratic leadership approach not only alleviates the immediate problems encountered by *santri* but also contributes significantly to their overall character building and spiritual growth. By creating a nurturing and empowering atmosphere, the *murabbiah* helps *santri* navigate their challenges and emerge with a stronger sense of direction and purpose, integrating personal, social, and religious dimensions. This underscores the need for leadership styles that prioritize participation, empathy, and empowerment, which in turn can lead to more effective *santri* development programs.

Therefore, it is imperative to build educational environments that are conducive to positive development. Leadership marked by wisdom, empathy, and peace will shape strong character and nurture *santri* to become individuals with a positive, resilient, and meaningful life orientation.

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ISLAM AND ENVIRONMENTAL: THE ROLE OF GENERATION Z STUDENTS IN SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS INITIATIVES

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Abstrak: Indonesia sebagai salah satu negara penghasil sampah terbesar di dunia menghadapi tantangan lingkungan yang signifikan akibat pengelolaan sampah yang kurang memadai, yang dapat mengancam ekosistem dan kesehatan masyarakat. Dalam konteks ini, nilai-nilai Islam yang menekankan prinsip pengelolaan lingkungan dan sikap moderat (*wasatiyyah*) dapat menjadi kerangka moral yang kuat untuk mendorong perilaku berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini mengkaji peran mahasiswa Muslim Generasi Z dalam menerapkan praktik zero waste di salah satu universitas di Bandung, serta menganalisis bagaimana prinsip etika Islam memengaruhi kesadaran, sikap, dan partisipasi mereka terhadap isu lingkungan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode survei kuantitatif dengan kuesioner berskala Likert, dan menganalisis data dari 40 responden menggunakan teknik statistik deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa Generasi Z memiliki tingkat kesadaran lingkungan yang relatif tinggi dan menunjukkan keselarasan positif antara prinsip zero waste dengan nilai-nilai agama mereka, khususnya konsep *khilafah* (kepemimpinan lingkungan) dalam Islam. Namun demikian, penelitian ini juga menemukan adanya hambatan dalam penerapan zero waste secara penuh, seperti keterbatasan infrastruktur kampus, pengetahuan praktis yang masih rendah, serta tantangan sosial budaya. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan peningkatan fasilitas, pengembangan program edukasi yang terarah, serta pelibatan tokoh agama untuk memperkuat etika lingkungan di kalangan mahasiswa.

Kata Kunci: Etika Lingkungan Islam, Generasi Z, Zero Waste, Kepemimpinan Lingkungan, Praktik Keberlanjutan di Kampus

Judul: Islam dan Lingkungan: Peran Mahasiswa Gen Z dalam Menjaga Zero Waste di Kampus

Abstract: Indonesia, as one of the world's largest waste producers, faces significant environmental challenges stemming from inadequate waste management, threatening both ecological systems and public health. Against this backdrop, Islamic values — which emphasize environmental stewardship and moderation (*wasatiyyah*) — may serve as powerful moral frameworks to foster sustainable behavior. This study investigates the role of Muslim Generation Z students in adopting zero-waste practices at a university in Bandung, examining how Islamic ethical principles influence their environmental awareness, attitudes, and participation. The study employed a quantitative survey method using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed data from 40 respondents through descriptive statistical techniques. Results indicate that Generation Z students possess relatively high environmental awareness and demonstrate a positive alignment between zero-waste principles and their religious values, particularly the Islamic concept of *khilafah* (stewardship). Nevertheless, significant barriers remain in fully adopting zero-waste practices, including insufficient campus infrastructure, limited practical knowledge, and sociocultural challenges. The study recommends enhancing facilities, developing targeted educational programs, and involving religious leaders to strengthen environmental ethics among students.

Keywords: Islamic Environmental Ethics, Generation Z, Zero Waste, Environmental Stewardship, Sustainable Campus Practices



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INTRODUCTION

Islam is a religion that comprehensively governs every aspect of human life, including the ethical obligations of Muslims toward the natural environment. Within the Islamic worldview, cleanliness, balance, and a deep sense of care for the environment are highly esteemed moral imperatives that extend beyond ritual to encompass social and ecological responsibilities.¹ The Qur'an explicitly describes humanity's role as *khalifah* (stewards or vicegerents) on earth in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 30, assigning humans the critical duty to manage and protect nature with wisdom, prudence, and a sense of accountability:

“And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, ‘Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority.’ They said, ‘Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?’ Allah said, ‘Indeed, I know that which you do not know.’” (QS. Al-Baqarah: 30)

This verse highlights both the trust and the profound responsibility placed on human beings as stewards of the earth, a theme further reinforced in other Qur'anic verses. For example, Surah Ar-Rahman verses 7–9 emphasize the principle of *mizan* (balance), warning against human actions that disrupt ecological harmony and instructing believers to uphold justice and fairness in their relationship with the natural world:

“And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance. That you not transgress within the balance. And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance.” (QS. Ar-Rahman: 7–9)

These verses establish a powerful theological framework that positions environmental stewardship as a fundamental part of Islamic ethics. Nevertheless, in reality, human activities have often strayed from these divine mandates. Various forms of environmental degradation, including the indiscriminate disposal of waste, illegal logging, and slash-and-burn practices that destroy vast forest areas, continue to proliferate, largely driven by human negligence and unsustainable consumption patterns.² This profound contradiction between religious ideals and actual practices underscores the urgent need to translate Islamic ecological values into everyday behavior.

As the country with the world's largest Muslim population, Indonesia holds enormous potential to become a global exemplar in applying Islamic teachings to environmental management. However, empirical data reveal a sobering picture. According to the National Waste Management Information System (SIPSN) from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry as of July 2024, Indonesia generated approximately 31.9 million tons of waste annually, with around 11.3 million tons (35.67%) remaining unmanaged. This overwhelming

¹ Harahap, R. Z. “Etika Islam dalam Mengelola Lingkungan Hidup.” *EDUTECH: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan dan Ilmu Sosial* 1, no. 1 (2015).

² W. Mardliyah, S. Sunardi, and L. Agung, “Peran Manusia Sebagai Khalifah Allah di Muka Bumi: Perspektif Ekologis dalam Ajaran Islam,” *Jurnal Penelitian* 12, no. 2 (2018): 355–378.

waste burden indicates that public awareness and the consistent implementation of environmentally conscious behavior — rooted in Islamic ethical frameworks — are still far from adequate.

In response to these environmental challenges, the zero waste movement has emerged as a promising sustainable lifestyle. This approach aims to drastically minimize waste production by adhering to the 5R principles: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot.³ Concrete actions, such as carrying refillable drinking bottles, bringing home-cooked meals, using reusable shopping bags, and selecting eco-friendly products, have become central pillars of this movement. Beyond reducing landfill waste, zero waste practices align with Sustainable Development Goal 12, which promotes responsible consumption and production, and further provide economic advantages while enhancing environmental consciousness among communities.⁴ These practices also resonate with Islamic teachings on moderation (*wasatiyyah*), balance, and the prohibition of extravagance (*israf*), which encourage individuals to adopt sustainable lifestyles that protect creation.

A pivotal demographic in advancing the zero waste movement is Generation Z, defined as those born between 1997 and 2012. According to Indonesia's National Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2020, Generation Z accounts for an estimated 71.5 million people, making it the country's largest generational group.⁵ This cohort is characterized by strong digital literacy, high environmental sensitivity, and active participation on social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, enabling them to spread environmental awareness at unprecedented speed and scale. Within academic environments, Generation Z university students have begun to integrate zero waste practices into their daily routines by bringing reusable containers and water bottles, opting for sustainable shopping bags, and consciously choosing products with minimal environmental impact.

Previous studies on the implementation of zero waste initiatives in urban communities have revealed mixed results. For instance, research examining circular economy practices in urban *kampongs* found that while such practices contributed positively to local greening efforts, their impact on residents' economic prosperity remained limited.⁶ Other scholarly

³ R. Rarasati and T. Pradekso, "Pengaruh Terpaan Berita Satwa Laut yang Mati Akibat Sampah Plastik dan Kampanye Zero Waste terhadap Perilaku Pengurangan Penggunaan Kantong Plastik," *Interaksi Online* 7, no. 4 (2019): 295–304.

⁴ K. Rustan, A. Agustang, and I. I. Idrus, "Penerapan Gaya Hidup Zero Waste sebagai Upaya Penyelamatan Lingkungan di Indonesia," *Sibatik Jurnal Ilmiah Bidang Sosial Ekonomi Budaya Teknologi dan Pendidikan* 2, no. 6 (2023): 1763–1768, <https://doi.org/10.54443/sibatik.v2i6.887>.

⁵ Badan Pusat Statistik, "Jumlah Penduduk Menurut Wilayah, Klasifikasi Generasi, Dan Jenis Kelamin, Di INDONESIA - Dataset - Sensus Penduduk 2020 - Badan Pusat Statistik," *Sensus.bps.go.id*, last modified 2020, <https://sensus.bps.go.id/topik/tabcular/sp2020/2/0/0>.

⁶ M. Iqbal and T. Suheri, "Identifikasi Penerapan Konsep Zero Waste dan Circular Economy dalam Pengelolaan Sampah di Kampung Kota Kampung Cibunut, Kelurahan Kebon Pisang, Kota Bandung," *Jurnal Wilayah dan Kota* 6, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.34010/jwk.v6i02.3191>.

work has highlighted strong conceptual harmony between Islamic principles and waste management inspired by zero waste models.⁷ Despite these insights, there is still a marked paucity of research exploring how religious and cultural contexts — especially the link between Islamic values and environmental awareness — manifest among Generation Z, who are poised to drive Indonesia's future sustainability agenda.

Accordingly, this study aims to address this significant research gap by investigating Muslim Generation Z students' perceptions of how Islamic values interface with the zero waste lifestyle. This research also aspires to expand scholarly understanding of how Islamic ethical principles can be effectively integrated into sustainability initiatives, particularly through practices that emphasize reusable products and reduce resource consumption. By doing so, the study seeks to contribute not only to the academic discourse on religion and the environment but also to practical strategies for fostering environmental consciousness that is firmly rooted in Islamic moral frameworks. Such integration is particularly vital in academic settings, where students can act as agents of change and role models for sustainable living. Ultimately, this research is expected to offer a constructive pathway for aligning Islamic values with global sustainability objectives, enriching both ecological and spiritual dimensions of environmental stewardship in Indonesia's rapidly changing society.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design. A descriptive statistical approach was adopted to explore the role of Generation Z in promoting environmental sustainability through a zero waste lifestyle within a university setting. The research aimed to measure the levels of awareness, knowledge, and participation in the implementation of zero waste programs, as well as to examine the causal relationships between these practices and the broader Islamic principle of *maslahah* (the promotion of human well-being and public benefit). In accordance with Kasiram (2008), quantitative research can be understood as a systematic process of acquiring knowledge through numerical data to answer specific research questions.⁸

Consistent with its definition, the quantitative method was chosen to identify and describe the relationships among variables in a defined population. The descriptive approach within quantitative research allowed for a thorough, extensive, and in-depth exploration of the social situation under investigation.⁹ This approach aligned with the aim of the present study, namely to examine the role of Generation Z in preserving the environment through

⁷A. J. Syukriya and L. R. Safitri, "Zero Waste Lifestyle Concept within Islamic-Science Perspective," *Journal of Halal Product and Research* 4, no. 1 (2021): 32–42, <https://doi.org/10.20473/jhpr.vol.4-issue.1.32-42>.

⁸ Mohammad Kasiram, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif-Kualitatif* (Malang: UIN Malang, 2008).

⁹ Karimuddin, *Bab 1 Penelitian Kuantitatif*, in *Metodologi Penelitian Kuantitatif* (Yayasan Penerbit Muhammad Zaini Anggota IKAPI, 2021).

zero waste principles and to analyze the causal link between Islamic teachings and environmentally responsible behavior.

The study focused on a population of Muslim university students enrolled at a university in Bandung, Indonesia. This population included students from a variety of faculties and academic programs, thereby providing a comprehensive picture of Generation Z's awareness, attitudes, and participation in sustainable practices informed by zero waste principles. Following Creswell (2014), to ensure representativeness, the study applied quota sampling. Participants were selected according to predetermined characteristics set by the researcher, specifically Muslim students who practiced or supported zero waste initiatives.¹⁰ The final sample comprised 40 respondents, which was considered sufficient to yield valid and reliable results.

For data collection, the study employed a structured questionnaire as the principal instrument. The questionnaire was designed to capture reliable, factual, and informative data on respondents' perceptions, knowledge, and behaviors. In particular, the instrument assessed Muslim students' environmental consciousness and their sense of responsibility for environmental stewardship in line with Islamic values. As noted by Yasin et al. (2024), a questionnaire is an effective tool for collecting data from a large group of respondents.¹¹ The questionnaire was constructed using a Likert scale format, enabling respondents to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements or viewpoints.¹² This scale allowed the researcher to obtain more detailed and nuanced data on respondents' attitudes and beliefs concerning environmental issues and their relationship with the quality of life in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Following data collection, the responses were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. According to Sugiyono, data analysis is an intellectual activity that demands analytical skill and sound understanding to interpret findings appropriately.¹³ In this study, descriptive statistical analysis was used to interpret and present the data without attempting to generalize the results beyond the study sample. This analytical technique helped to describe data patterns and distributions through simple visual representations such as charts and graphs. These graphical results were subsequently explained through narrative discussion, offering a clearer and more concise interpretation of the findings.

¹⁰ Deri Firmansyah and Dede, "Teknik Pengambilan Sampel Umum Dalam Metodologi Penelitian: Literature Review," *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Holistik (JIPH)* 1, no. 2 (August 30, 2022): 85–114.

¹¹ M. Yasin, S. Garancang, and A. A. Hamzah, "Metode dan Instrumen Pengumpulan Data (Kualitatif dan Kuantitatif)," *Journal of International Multidisciplinary Research* 2, no. 3 (2024).

¹² A. Wardhana, "Instrumen Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif," in S. Bahri (Ed.), *Metodologi Penelitian Kesehatan* (Media Sains Indonesia, 2023).

¹³ M. I. Syahroni, "Analisis Data Kuantitatif," *Jurnal Al-Musthafa* 3, no. 3 (2023): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.62552/ejam.v3i3.64>.

Through this methodological framework, the study provided empirical insights into how Muslim Generation Z students engage in zero waste practices on campus, and how these practices resonate with Islamic ethical principles of environmental stewardship. This approach was expected to contribute to scholarly discussions as well as practical policy considerations for fostering environmentally responsible behavior within a religiously grounded ethical framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the data analysis, beginning with descriptive statistical findings obtained through SPSS, followed by an elaboration of the questionnaire responses categorized into four thematic areas: (1) understanding of Islam and the environment, (2) environmentally friendly behavior, (3) implementation of zero-waste initiatives on campus, and (4) obstacles in adopting zero-waste practices.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Factor	20	23.00	36.00	30.2500	3.36976
Behavior	20	24.00	36.00	28.9000	3.38573
Valid N (Listwise)	20				

Based on the results presented in the table above, a descriptive analysis was conducted on two main variables: Factor, which encompasses awareness of the importance of environmental stewardship, and Behavior, which measures the extent to which students adopt environmentally friendly practices in their daily lives.

For the Factor variable, the mean score was 30.25 with a standard deviation of 3.37. This suggests that respondents generally demonstrated a relatively high level of understanding concerning the significance of protecting the environment. The minimum and maximum values ranged from 23 to 36, indicating considerable variation in respondents' awareness levels. This variation implies that while many students possess a good grasp of environmental issues, a proportion still exhibits lower levels of understanding, pointing to opportunities for further educational interventions.

Regarding the Behavior variable, the mean was 28.90 with a standard deviation of 3.39. These results indicate that most students have adopted environmentally friendly behaviors to some degree, although differences remain among individuals. The minimum and maximum scores ranged from 24 to 36, similarly reflecting variability in the practical application of environmentally friendly behaviors on campus. This suggests that while a culture of sustainable practices is beginning to take root among students, there is still a need for strengthening consistent behavior across the entire student body.

Understanding of Islam and the Environment



Figure 1

Based on the data collected, the results indicate that 50.8% of Generation Z respondents strongly agreed, 45.0% agreed, and the remaining 4.2% disagreed regarding their understanding of Islam and environmental issues. These findings reflect a positive orientation toward comprehending the zero-waste concept and its interconnection with the Islamic principle of *khilafah* in relation to environmental concerns. The high proportion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed demonstrates how religious values can effectively contribute to raising awareness about the importance of environmental stewardship.

Religion serves as a fundamental basis that can reinforce personal convictions and offer positive guidance in shaping community attitudes and behaviors. The higher an individual's level of religious understanding, the more likely they are to develop environmental awareness and engage in pro-environmental behaviors. As highlighted by Nurulloh,¹⁴ Islamic education can foster a heightened environmental consciousness among its adherents. Therefore, the concept of *khilafah* becomes an essential element, emphasizing the human responsibility to safeguard the environment, particularly within the university student community.

In addition, Islamic teachings underscore the obligation to preserve and protect the environment as an expression of human accountability before God.¹⁵ Accordingly, the *khilafah* concept carries profound significance in motivating individuals, including university students, to be more attentive and responsive to environmental challenges. With a strong foundation in religious understanding, environmentally positive behaviors can be more effectively cultivated and sustained.

¹⁴ E. S. Nurulloh, "Pendidikan Islam dan Pengembangan Kesadaran Lingkungan," *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2019): 237, <https://doi.org/10.36667/jppi.v7i2.366>.

¹⁵ Sutoyo, "Revolusi Paradigma Perlindungan dan Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup di Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan* 28, no. 1 (2015): 56–66.

Environmentally Friendly Behavior

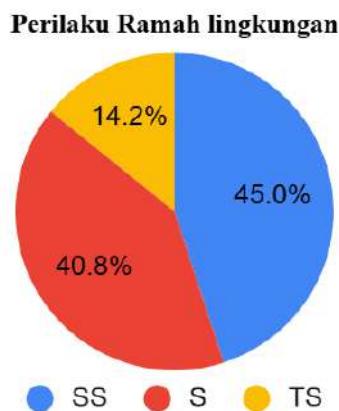


Figure 2

As presented in the preceding table, responses related to environmentally friendly behaviors within the campus context revealed that 45.0% of respondents strongly agreed, 40.8% agreed, while 14.2% disagreed. The findings indicate that although a significant proportion of respondents demonstrate positive environmentally responsible practices, a considerable minority — 14.2% — have yet to consistently adopt eco-friendly behaviors on campus. This includes actions such as reducing plastic waste, avoiding single-use items, and opting for environmentally sustainable products.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the overall awareness and practice of environmentally friendly behavior remain relatively high. Environmental problems frequently originate from human behavior, making behavior change a critical starting point for addressing these challenges. As emphasized by La Fua,¹⁶ transforming negative habits into pro-environmental practices is fundamental to resolving environmental issues. Therefore, educational initiatives and awareness-raising campaigns on campus should be further strengthened to support the adoption of sustainable behaviors among students and the wider academic community.

¹⁶ Jumarddin La Fua, "Eco-Pesantren; Model Pendidikan Berbasis Pelestarian Lingkungan," *Al-TA'DIB: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Kependidikan* 6, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 113–125.

Implementation of Zero-Waste Practices on Campus



Figure 3

Regarding the implementation of zero-waste initiatives, the results indicate that 40% of respondents strongly agreed, 45% agreed, and 15% disagreed with the feasibility of applying zero-waste practices on campus. These figures demonstrate a relatively high level of agreement among respondents about the potential for zero-waste adoption within the university environment. Based on the collected data, many students expressed enthusiasm for participating in zero-waste activities and were willing to incorporate zero-waste principles into their daily habits. However, a substantial proportion of students also perceived that their campus environment remained insufficiently proactive in educating and supporting them on the importance of zero-waste practices.

The application of zero-waste principles on campus could begin with simple, practical steps, such as carrying reusable water bottles and choosing eco-friendly products.¹⁷ Nevertheless, significant challenges remain, including the availability of supporting facilities and adequate educational initiatives from the campus itself. Structured environmental education programs can enhance students' awareness and preparedness to adopt sustainable lifestyles,¹⁸ thereby enabling universities to more effectively facilitate and mainstream zero-waste behaviors within their academic communities.

¹⁷ R. Rarasati and T. Pradekso, "Pengaruh Terpaan Berita Satwa Laut yang Mati Akibat Sampah Plastik dan Kampanye Zero Waste terhadap Perilaku Pengurangan Penggunaan Kantong Plastik," *Interaksi Online* 7, no. 4 (2019): 295–304.

¹⁸ S. Hasnidar, "Pendidikan Estetika dan Karakter Peduli Lingkungan Sekolah," *Jurnal Serambi Ilmu* 20, no. 1 (2019): 97–119.

Barriers to Zero-Waste Adoption



Figure 4

In relation to barriers encountered during the implementation of zero-waste lifestyles, 45% of respondents strongly agreed, 40.8% agreed, and 17% disagreed that there were significant obstacles in applying zero-waste principles, particularly within the campus setting. These findings highlight that students frequently face substantial challenges in consistently adopting zero-waste behaviors. Moreover, most respondents believed that the adoption of zero-waste practices would be more feasible if supported by campus policies and facilities, such as the provision of refillable water dispensers, enabling students to use reusable bottles rather than purchasing single-use bottled water.

The most prominent challenges to overcome include habits of improper waste disposal, unclean living patterns, and wasteful consumption behaviors.¹⁹ These observations align with the present study's findings, which indicate that despite a generally high level of environmental awareness among respondents, the practical implementation of pro-environmental behaviors remains hampered by various obstacles. Therefore, coordinated efforts are required to address these challenges, including comprehensive institutional support, policy reinforcement, and improvements in campus infrastructure, to nurture and sustain a zero-waste culture among the student population.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data obtained, it is evident that Generation Z exhibits a relatively high level of awareness and understanding regarding the importance of environmental stewardship through the zero-waste concept. This perspective is closely tied to the Islamic concept of *khilafah*, wherein humans are viewed as stewards of the earth with an inherent moral and religious responsibility to protect it. Respondents agreed that Islam encourages

¹⁹ Herdiansyah, "Eco-Pesantren as a Basic Forming of Environmental Moral and Theology," *Kalam* 12, no. 2 (2018): 303–326, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v12i2.2834>.

environmentally friendly behavior, reflecting a positive understanding of the obligation to safeguard the environment by adopting zero-waste practices as part of their ethical and religious duties. However, the findings also reveal the existence of considerable barriers to the practical implementation of zero-waste principles.

Despite these encouraging attitudes, several limitations emerged in the adoption of zero-waste practices among Generation Z in relation to the *khilafah* concept. These include the lack of adequate recycling facilities, limited practical knowledge, a continued reliance on single-use products, and cultural or social obstacles. Addressing these challenges requires a more comprehensive strategy. Future research is therefore recommended to focus on the development of recycling infrastructure, practical educational programs, and evaluations of alternative eco-friendly products. Additionally, further investigation into the influence of social norms that hinder zero-waste adoption is warranted.

It is also essential to explore the role of religious leaders and institutions in promoting zero-waste initiatives, as well as to assess the effectiveness of economic incentives in encouraging the use of environmentally friendly products. Moreover, the development of community empowerment programs committed to zero-waste principles could foster more sustainable behavior change. Through such multifaceted efforts, the implementation of zero-waste practices can become more effective and better aligned with the religious values held by the community.

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BETWEEN *SHARI'AH* AND SECULARISM: TUNISIA'S CODE OF PERSONAL STATUS AS CONTEXTUALIZED *IJTIHĀD* IN ISLAMIC FAMILY LAW

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji kontroversi yang melingkupi hukum keluarga Islam di Tunisia, yang berada pada persimpangan antara tradisi syariah dan modernisasi negara. Tunisia dikenal sebagai salah satu negara di dunia Muslim yang secara progresif mereformasi hukum keluarga melalui pengesahan Majallah Al-Ahwāl Al-Shakhsiyah atau Code of Personal Status (CPS) pada tahun 1956. Kodifikasi ini melarang praktik poligami, memberikan hak cerai kepada perempuan, dan menegaskan prinsip kesetaraan gender, yang kemudian memicu perdebatan di kalangan ulama, aktivis Islam, dan masyarakat luas. Artikel ini menganalisis akar sejarah, politik, dan ideologis di balik reformasi tersebut, serta dampaknya terhadap praktik hukum keluarga. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, penelitian ini mengumpulkan data melalui kepustakaan (library research) dengan menganalisis bagaimana konflik antara tradisi syariah dan sekularisme Tunisia membentuk lanskap hukum keluarga yang unik, sekaligus menciptakan kontroversi dari legitimasi reformasi tersebut dalam kerangka hukum Islam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami konflik antara tradisi dan modernitas dalam konteks hukum Islam, sekaligus memberikan kontribusi terhadap kajian global mengenai relasi antara agama, negara, dan hukum di masyarakat Muslim kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: Kontroversi, Hukum Keluarga Islam, Tunisia, Reformasi Hukum

Judul: Kontroversi Hukum Keluarga Islam di Tunisia: Antara Tradisi Syariah dan Modernisasi Negara

Abstract: This study examines the controversies surrounding Islamic family law in Tunisia, situated at the intersection of *Shari'ah* tradition and state-led modernization. Tunisia is widely recognised as a pioneer among Muslim-majority countries for its progressive reform of family law through the enactment of the *Majallah al-Ahwāl al-Shakhsiyah* (Code of Personal Status, CPS) in 1956. This codification outlawed polygyny, granted women the right to petition for divorce, and enshrined principles of gender equality - measures that have provoked sustained debate among jurists, Islamic activists, and the broader public. Employing a qualitative, descriptive-analytical approach, the study draws on library research to explore how historical, political, and ideological dynamics have shaped Tunisia's distinctive family-law regime. It analyses the tensions between *Shari'ah* norms and Tunisia's secular legal order, assessing the legitimacy of CPS reforms within an Islamic-legal framework. The research reveals that Tunisian family-law reform represents a contextualised exercise of *ijtihād*, aimed at reconciling Islamic objectives with contemporary social imperatives. By illuminating the conflict between tradition and modernity in Tunisian jurisprudence, this article contributes to global scholarship on the relationship among religion, state, and law in contemporary Muslim societies

Keywords: Islamic Family Law, Code of Personal Status, Tunisia, Gender Equality, *Shari'ah* Modernization



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INTRODUCTION

Islamic family law constitutes a fundamental component of the broader Islamic legal framework, governing familial relationships and responsibilities - including marriage, divorce, and inheritance. Over the centuries, Islamic law (*sharia*) has served as the prevailing legal system within Muslim-majority societies, Tunisia included. The controversies surrounding family law in Tunisia vividly illustrate the intricate interplay between time-honored sharia traditions and the forces of state-led modernization, a dynamic that has occupied center stage in both social and political debates within the country.

Since the promulgation of the *Majallah al-Akhwāl Ash-Shakhṣiyah*, or Code of Personal Status (CPS), on 13 August 1956, Tunisia has embarked upon significant reforms aimed at enhancing the rights and status of women and children. The CPS - one of the earliest legislative enactments following independence from French colonial rule - abolished polygamy, introduced more equitable divorce procedures, and granted women novel rights in guardianship and child custody matters.¹

Despite being heralded as a watershed in the pursuit of gender equality within the Islamic world, the CPS has also provoked vehement criticism from conservative quarters, who contend that its provisions contravene core sharia principles.² This debate has been further intensified by the broader social transformations following the 2011 revolution, during which emerging social and political movements have articulated divergent agendas. On one hand, certain factions uphold the CPS as an emblem of progress and modernity; on the other, revivalist currents seek to reintegrate traditional and more conservative religious norms into the family law corpus.³ Such tensions epitomize the ideological contest between secular values championed by a modern state and more orthodox religious interpretations.

Against this backdrop, the present article undertakes an in-depth examination of the controversies surrounding Islamic family law in Tunisia, focusing particularly on how the CPS has shaped the nation's social and national identity. By exploring a range of perspectives on the CPS's impact on familial life, this study aims to elucidate the challenges inherent in reconciling tradition with contemporary imperatives. Through a critical analysis of existing literature and primary sources, this article seeks to offer a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of how Tunisia's family law serves as a focal point for the interplay between enduring traditional values and the demands of modernity.

¹ Muhammad Muhajir, "REFORMASI HUKUM KELUARGA ISLAM TUNISIA PASCA ARAB SPRING: Antara Liberalisme dan Konservatisme," *Al-Ahwāl: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 14, no. 1 (12 Mei 2021): 29, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ahwal.2021.14103>.

² Dede Ahmad Permana, "Majallah Al Akhwāl Ash-Shakhṣiyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga di Tunisia," *Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Anak* 7, no. 01 (30 Juni 2020): 2, <https://doi.org/10.32678/jsga.v7i01.173>.

³ Muhajir, "REFORMASI HUKUM KELUARGA ISLAM TUNISIA PASCA ARAB SPRING," 27.

METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative, descriptive-analytical design to investigate Tunisian family law within its existing legislative framework and from an Islamic-law perspective. Its primary objective was to furnish a comprehensive account of the subject under review—namely, the statutory and doctrinal dimensions of family law in Tunisia.

Data were obtained exclusively through library research. Sources included statutory instruments governing family law, peer-reviewed monographs and journal articles, official government documents, and prior empirical studies addressing Tunisian family law from both sharia and contemporary legal viewpoints. All materials constituted secondary data and were accessed via academic libraries or private collections. For data analysis, a systematic qualitative procedure was employed. First, documents were meticulously reviewed to identify salient themes and legal constructs. Next, the material was organized and coded according to conceptual categories derived from Islamic legal theory and modern legal scholarship. Finally, findings were synthesized to elucidate the principal controversies surrounding Tunisia's family-law reforms, highlighting the tensions between traditional sharia norms and modern legislative developments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of the Formation of Islamic Family Law in Tunisia

Republik Tunisia, atau *al-Jumhūriya at-Tūnisiya*, Tunisia, officially the Republic of Tunisia, occupies the northernmost point of the African continent, with its capital in Tunis. The country is a unitary semi-presidential republic in which the President serves as Head of State and the Prime Minister as Head of Government. Covering 162,155 km², it borders Algeria to the west and Libya to the south and east and is subdivided into 23 governorates. As of 2013, its population was approximately 10.8 million, of whom 98 percent are Muslim (predominantly Sunni), 1 percent Christian, and 1 percent Jewish or of other faiths. Ethnically, 98 percent identify as Arab, while Europeans, Jews, and others each comprise 1 percent. Although Arabic is the official language, French remains widely used. Islam is enshrined as the state religion, and the President must profess Islam. In the realm of fiqh, the Mālikī school predominates in Tunisia.⁴

Tunisia achieved independence on 20 March 1956 after 75 years of French colonial rule (1881–1956). Habib Bourguiba - educated in French law - became the country's first President. Renowned for his secularist ideology, Bourguiba sought to implement a secularisation agenda in a nation with a 99 percent Muslim majority. A principal aim during

⁴ Anis Hidayatul Imtihanah, "PEMBAHARUAN HUKUM KELUARGA ISLAM DI TUNISIA," *JURNAL LENTERA: Kajian Keagamaan, Keilmuan Dan Teknologi* 16, no. 2 (30 September 2017): 105, <https://doi.org/10.29138/lentera.v16i2.278>.

the early years of his presidency was the unification of the judicial system and the formulation of a modern family-law code.⁵

The drafting of Tunisia's family-law code was spearheaded by Shaikh Muḥammad Azīz Ju'aīt, a pre-eminent jurist and former Minister of Justice under the colonial administration. In 1948, Shaikh Ju'aīt authored the *Lā'ikhat al-Āḥkām al-Shar'iyyah*, an extensive Islamic legal compendium of 2,464 articles, approximately 800 of which pertained to family law. Although never formally promulgated - having been rejected by the French authorities - this compendium is regarded as the progenitor of contemporary Tunisian family law.⁶

In preparing the draft code, the legislative committee consulted three primary sources: first, Shaikh Ju'aīt's *Lā'ikhat al-Āḥkām al-Shar'iyyah*; second, family-law statutes from other Muslim jurisdictions (notably Egypt, Syria, and Iran); and third, the French Civil Code. When incorporating fiqh provisions, the drafters referenced not only the Mālikī madhhab, followed by the majority of Tunisian Muslims, but also considered interpretations from other schools, including the Ja'farī madhhab.⁷

The resulting legislation was formally enacted on 13 August 1956 as the *Majallah al-Āḥwāl al-Shakhṣiyyah*, commonly known as the Code of Personal Status (CPS). Comprising 170 articles across 12 chapters - addressing divorce (ṭalāq), waiting periods ('iddah), maintenance (nafqah), custody (haḍānah), filiation (nasab), foundlings, missing persons, inheritance, guardianship (al-ḥijr), wills, and gifts - the CPS has undergone subsequent amendments and expansions to address evolving societal needs.⁸

Upon the promulgation of the *Majallah al-Āḥwāl al-Shakhṣiyyah*, several provisions not originally drafted by the legislative committee were incorporated—most notably, the prohibition of polygamy, the abolition of the right of *ijbār*, and revised divorce (ṭalāq) procedures. These inclusions largely reflected President Habib Bourguiba's adoption of modernist principles advocating full gender equality, influenced in large part by the thought of Tāhir Haddad (1899–1935). In his controversial work *Imrā'atunā Fī al-Sharī'ah wa-al-Mujtama'*, Haddad criticized the subordinate status of women under classical Islamic law and called for a more inclusive social order.⁹

⁵ Permana, "Majallah Al Akhwal Ash-Shakhshiyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Di Tunisia," 3.

⁶ Muhamad Bozguiba, *Harakah Taqnīn al-Fiqh al-Islāmi Bi al-Bilad At-Tunisiyyah* (Tunis: Markaz An-Nathr Al-Jāmi'i, 2004), 307–9.

⁷ Sasi Ben Halīmah, *Muhādharat Fi Qānūn Al-Āḥwāl As-Shakhṣiyyah*, (Tunis: Markaz AnNathr Al-Jāmi'i, 2009), 8–9.

⁸ Permana, "Majallah Al Akhwal Ash-Shakhshiyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Di Tunisia," 4.

⁹ Permana, 4.

A closer analysis reveals that Haddad's ideas substantially shaped many articles of the CPS, to the extent that the code may be viewed as a "concrete realization" of his reformist vision - an observation Bourguiba himself later acknowledged. Yet the accelerated pace at which the CPS was crafted rendered it inseparable from the political exigencies of the era. Colonial France exerted considerable pressure on Bourguiba to enact a modern family-law statute swiftly, replacing Shaikh Ju'ait's *Lā'ikhat*, which the French deemed "traditional."¹⁰

Controversies in Tunisian Islamic Family Law

At the time of its introduction, the CPS was celebrated as the most progressive family-law statute in the Muslim world. However, several of its provisions were criticized for allegedly contravening established fiqh doctrines - and, in some views, even Qur'anic or ḥadīth texts. Inevitably, public opinion split into proponents and opponents of the new code. To allay concerns, the Tunisian government insisted that the CPS represented legitimate *ijtihād* within the bounds of Sharī'ah. In his inaugural address, Bourguiba affirmed that the CPS "does not conflict with any explicit verse of the Glorious Book; rather, it honors the spirit of its noble injunctions and implements them."¹¹ Likewise, then-Minister of Justice Ahmad Mestiri issued a circular declaring that the CPS "was accepted by all parties, praised by scholars, and deemed appropriate to the demands of the age, since it bases its provisions on Sharī'ah via multiple sources without strict adherence to any single madhhab or jurist." Outlined below are key elements of Tunisia's family law that have engendered particular controversy:

The Abolition of the Right of Ijbar

Tunisian family law grants women unequivocal autonomy in selecting their life partners, marking a radical departure from classical fiqh doctrines that permitted paternal imposition of marriage. Under Article 3 of the Code of Personal Status (CPS), "Marriage shall not occur except with the free consent of both parties."¹² This clause not only enshrines the individual's agency as a legal prerequisite but also reconfigures the marriage contract as a mutual covenant rather than an arrangement dictated by family elders. The requirement for "free consent" demands that both bride and groom articulate their willingness explicitly, thereby institutionalizing transparency and voluntariness into what was traditionally a family-driven negotiation.

The abolition of *ijbār* reflects a broader shift toward individual rights and gender parity. Historically, the doctrine of *ijbār* had allowed a guardian - most often the father - to compel

¹⁰ Muhamad Ridha al-Ajhouri, *Al-Khalfiyah Al-Islamiyah Li Majallat Al-Akhwāl As-Shakhshiyah* (Tunis: Dār al-Ma'āli Tunis, 2012), 12.

¹¹ Muhamad Ridha al-Ajhouri dalam Permana, "Majallah Al Akhwal Ash-Shakhshiyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Di Tunisia," 5.

¹² Mounira M Charrad, "FAMILY LAW REFORMS IN THE ARAB WORLD: TUNISIA and MOROCCO," t.t., 3.

his daughter into matrimony, ostensibly to secure her welfare. By eliminating this mechanism, Tunisia aligned its family law with modern human-rights norms, foregrounding personal dignity and the freedom of choice. This reform also served to mitigate coerced unions, which were associated with higher rates of marital discord and abandonment, by ensuring that marriage originates from mutual affinity rather than unilateral compulsion.

The philosophical foundation for this reform draws directly on Tāhir Haddad's seminal argument that "marriage is founded on affection and compassion cultivated between individuals."¹³ Haddad's critique of paternal coercion challenged entrenched social conventions by asserting that authentic marital bonds arise from consent rooted in emotional and intellectual compatibility. His writings underscored the asymmetry inherent in guardian-imposed unions, arguing that paternal decisions often reflected social or economic calculations rather than genuine concern for the woman's well-being. By foregrounding personal agency, Haddad's thought provided the ideological impetus for the CPS to redefine marriage as a contract premised on equality and shared commitment.

Although the abolition of *ijbār* empowers women, it also introduced new challenges in practice. Critics have observed that social pressures—stemming from familial expectations or communal norms - can still exert an informal coercive force, undermining the formal requirement of free consent. Moreover, while the legal text safeguards autonomy, disparities in educational attainment and economic dependence may limit some women's capacity to exercise genuine choice. Nevertheless, as Ratih Lusiani Bancin notes, the very recognition of a woman's fallibility alongside that of her father underscores a fundamental egalitarian principle: "the possibility of error in choice applies equally to both parties, making the woman's autonomy indispensable."¹⁴

Minimum age for marriage

The original Code of Personal Status (CPS) set a distinct minimum matrimonial age of twenty years for men and seventeen years for women. Article 5 explicitly provides that "A man under twenty years of age and a woman under seventeen years of age may not contract marriage. Marriages below these ages may be authorised only by special permission from the court, granted solely for exceptional reasons and in the best interests of both spouses."¹⁵ This statutory threshold represented a deliberate effort to protect young women - who had traditionally entered wedlock at much earlier ages under customary or tribal norms - by ensuring that consent was both legally and developmentally meaningful.

¹³ Permana, "Majallah Al Akhwal Ash-Shakhshiyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Di Tunisia," 4.

¹⁴ Ratih Lusiani Bancin, "Hukum Keluarga Islam Di Tunisia" 3, no. 1 (2016): 297.

¹⁵ "Tunisian Family Code," GOV.UK, diakses 3 Desember 2024, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tunisian-family-code>.

In 2007, under Law No. 32 of 2004 (as amended), the Tunisian legislature unified the minimum age for marriage at eighteen years for both sexes. Nonetheless, the revised Article 5 maintains a tailored exception mechanism: in pressing circumstances - such as imminent pregnancy or dire family necessity - a court may authorise an under-eighteen union without requiring prior judicial scrutiny for every case, provided that the welfare of the prospective spouses is demonstrably served.¹⁶ This nuanced flexibility acknowledges the complexity of rural and economically disadvantaged communities, where delaying marriage may impose social or financial hardships, while still preserving a legal safeguard against unregulated child marriages.

Article 6 complements this framework by delineating parental and judicial roles in safeguarding minors: “Marriage of a minor requires the consent of both father and mother. Should both parents withhold consent while the child remains intent on marriage, the matter shall be decided by the court. Any marital licence issued by the court shall be indisputable”.¹⁷ By vesting final authority in the judiciary, the law balances parental concerns with individual autonomy and prevents unilateral parental coercion - whether in favour of or against the marriage - thus upholding the minor’s best interests.

These provisions resonate strongly with Tāhir Haddad’s early twentieth-century critique of child marriage. Haddad maintained that parents should defer their daughters’ marriages until they attain full physical and psychological maturity and can exercise free consent, thereby mitigating the potential harms (madarrāt) of premature unions and ensuring readiness for childbearing and marital responsibilities.¹⁸ His insistence on maturity as a precondition for valid consent laid the intellectual groundwork for Tunisia’s pioneering age-restriction regime.

It is notable that classical Islamic jurists rarely prescribed rigid age thresholds, instead invoking broad criteria of mental capacity (*'aql*) and physical maturity (*bulūgh*). Consequently, historical jurisprudence often tolerated underage marriages, contingent upon the guardian’s discretion. By contrast, the CPS framers engaged in contextualised *ijtihād*, codifying clear age limits in response to modern public-health data, international human-rights norms, and rising educational attainment among women. This legal innovation recognises that marriage entails reciprocal rights and obligations requiring adult competence—an alignment of statutory law with social expectations and demographic realities. The CPS approach thus exemplifies how a Muslim-majority state can reinterpret

¹⁶ Aulia Rahmat, “Kompleksitas Hukum Keluarga Islam di Tunisia” V (2 Desember 2014): 36.

¹⁷ “Tunisian Family Code.”

¹⁸ Permana, “Majallah Al Akhwal Ash-Shakhshiyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Di Tunisia,”

classical fiqh principles through a contemporary lens, balancing respect for tradition with the imperatives of gender equality and child welfare.¹⁹

Obligations for Nafaqah

The CPS's stipulation that "The wife must participate in the maintenance of the family if she possesses assets" marks a significant departure from classical formulations of nafaqah by formally recognising spousal reciprocity in financial responsibilities. Article 23 redefines nafaqah as a joint endeavour, situating the wife not merely as a beneficiary but as an active economic partner within the household.²⁰ By conditioning this obligation on the existence of personal assets, the law carefully balances respect for individual property rights with the imperative of mutual support, thereby embedding gender equity into the very architecture of marital duties.

Subsequent implementing regulations clarify that the wife's contributory role is expressly supplementary and does not supplant the husband's primary obligation to sustain the family. While the husband remains legally bound to provide for all basic needs - food, clothing, shelter, and healthcare - the wife's financial participation is invoked only when she elects to deploy her own resources for communal benefit.²¹ This dual-tiered model facilitated a nuanced transition in Tunisian society, gradually eroding entrenched norms that confined women to the domestic sphere by acknowledging their capacity to contribute meaningfully to household welfare without displacing traditional male obligations.

In practice, Article 23 has provided the legal foundation for a marked increase in women's economic engagement. By late 2011, women had achieved significant representation across professional sectors - comprising 42 percent of physicians, 72 percent of pharmacists, 40 percent of university lecturers, 29 percent of judges, 31 percent of lawyers, and 43 percent of journalists. These statistics not only reflect broader educational gains but also demonstrate how the CPS's maintenance provisions empowered women to leverage their professional earnings toward familial support. Complementing this shift, Articles 41 and 52 grant wives unfettered discretion over their personal assets, alongside the right to seek reimbursement for family-related expenditures, thereby reinforcing financial autonomy within marriage.²²

Despite these advances, the dual-obligation framework presents challenges in adjudication and enforcement. Courts have occasionally grappled with quantifying "reasonable" contributions, particularly when wives' assets derive from informal or familial

¹⁹ Bancin, "Hukum Keluarga Islam Di Tunisia," 299.

²⁰ "Tunisian Family Code."

²¹ Mochammad Agus Rachmatulloh, "STUDI HUKUM KELUARGA ISLAM DI TUNISIA," *Al-Syakhsiyah: Journal of Law & Family Studies* 2, no. 2 (2020): 307–26, <https://doi.org/10.21154/syakhsiyah.v2i2.2598>.

²² Imtihanah, "PEMBAHARUAN HUKUM KELUARGA ISLAM DI TUNISIA," 110.

sources. Moreover, rural communities - where traditional gender roles remain deeply ingrained - sometimes resist invoking the wife's duty to contribute, resulting in underutilisation of Article 23's potential. Critics argue that without robust judicial guidance and public-awareness campaigns, the statute's transformative promise may remain unevenly realised. Nonetheless, by integrating conditional spousal participation into the family-law code, Tunisia continues to pioneer a model of Islamic jurisprudence that harmonises classical principles with contemporary imperatives of gender justice and economic partnership.

Divorce Procedures (Talāq)

Tunisian family law institutes a stringent, court-based framework to govern divorce, thereby curtailing unilateral repudiation and fostering procedural fairness. Under Article 30 of the CPS, "*Talāq may only be effected by the court. No ṭalāq may be pronounced unless the judge has undertaken reconciliation efforts and has been unable to reconcile the parties.*"²³ This stipulation abolishes the husband's autonomous power to dissolve the marriage - a prerogative traditionally recognised in classical *fiqh* - and transfers the authority exclusively to the judiciary. The court is required to convene formal hearings in which both spouses are heard; the judge must solicit and record the wife's views and consent, if any, before rendering a *ṭalāq* decree.

The judicial pathway for divorce under the CPS encompasses multiple modalities. First, a mutually agreed divorce is effected when both spouses jointly petition the court, enabling a consensual split that the judiciary ratifies after confirming that reconciliation has been earnestly pursued. Second, either spouse may apply for divorce on specified grounds, such as maltreatment, abandonment, or irreconcilable differences. When the petitioning party seeks a unilateral divorce, the court may grant the request provided the applicant fulfils any compensatory obligations mandated by law - often in the form of financial indemnities or deferred mahr. Crucially, judicial endorsement of *ṭalāq* is conditional upon the exhaustion of all conciliation measures, including mediation sessions and family-counseling interventions supervised by the court-appointed conciliator. Only upon failure of these efforts does the court proceed to formal adjudication, thereby underscoring the CPS's commitment to preserving marital stability and protecting vulnerable parties.

The CPS's procedural innovations were foreshadowed by Tāhir Haddad's advocacy for a specialised divorce tribunal (*mahākim at-ṭalāq*), which he proposed to ensure that divorce decisions adhered to Islamic legal norms while safeguarding women's rights. Haddad critiqued the unfettered unilateral *ṭalāq* as an instrument of injustice that could jeopardise a woman's social and economic security. He argued that a dedicated court would not only guarantee due process but also prevent capricious divorces inconsistent with *Shārī'ah*

²³ Ismail Marzuki dan Lathifah Munawaroh, "POLITIK HUKUM KELUARGA ISLAM DI TUNISIA," *Al-'Adl* 12, no. 1 (2019): 82, <https://doi.org/10.31332/aladl.v12i1.1384>.

principles.²⁴ Bourguiba's subsequent incorporation of these recommendations into the CPS reflected a deliberate policy to harmonise Islamic jurisprudence with modern legal safeguards.

The objectives of Article 30 extend beyond procedural regulation to encompass broader social and legal aims:²⁵

1. Upholding the *maqāṣid* of *Shari‘ah* by ensuring divorce is not pronounced impulsively but in conformity with justice and public interest.
2. Institutionalising the role of an independent judiciary in family-law matters to deliver equitable outcomes.
3. Clarifying that the husband's right to *ṭalāq* persists but is exercised only under court supervision, thereby protecting both spouses from arbitrary repudiation.
4. Prioritising collective social welfare by discouraging divorces that may inflict undue harm on women and children.
5. Enabling rigorous judicial scrutiny of divorce grounds to dismiss petitions based on unsubstantiated or frivolous claims.
6. Facilitating systematic data collection on divorce causes, equipping policymakers with empirical evidence to inform social programmes and legislative revisions.

Triple Divorce (Talāq Thalātha)

One of the most consequential reforms introduced by the CPS is the irrevocable treatment of triple divorce (*bain kubrā*). Under Article 19, “A husband may not remarry (*rujū‘*) the woman he has divorced by triple *ṭalāq*.²⁶ In classical Sunni fiqh, triple *ṭalāq* is typically considered revocable: the spouses may reunite if the ex-wife subsequently marries another man, consummates that marriage, and then enters her ‘iddah following its dissolution. By contrast, the CPS eliminates this reinstatement mechanism altogether, rendering any triple repudiation a permanent bar to remarriage.

This innovation serves multiple objectives. First, it acts as a powerful deterrent against impulsive or vindictive divorces; the permanence of the prohibition compels husbands to reflect carefully before issuing three pronouncements. Second, it aligns with the *maqāṣid* of *Shari‘ah* - particularly the preservation of lineage and family stability - by preventing the emotional and social trauma associated with repeated marital ruptures. Third, it simplifies legal administration by dispensing with the complex evidentiary requirements of a subsequent marriage and ‘iddah verification that classical doctrine entails. Critics have observed that this

²⁴ Permana, “Majallah Al Akhwal Ash-Shakhshiyyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Di Tunisia,” 9.

²⁵ Marzuki dan Munawaroh, “POLITIK HUKUM KELUARGA ISLAM DI TUNISIA.”

²⁶ Charrad, “FAMILY LAW REFORMS IN THE ARAB WORLD: TUNISIA and MOROCCO,” 4.

statutory approach may conflict with the spirit of reconciliation embodied in traditional jurisprudence, yet proponents argue that the social costs of misuse outweigh such concerns.²⁷

Comparatively, Tunisia's stance on triple ȝalāq stands in stark relief against other Muslim-majority jurisdictions. While some countries have proscribed triple pronouncements in a single sitting or rendered them subject to judicial review, few have abolished the possibility of remarriage after triple repudiation outright. Empirical studies suggest that in Tunisia, the permanent bar has contributed to a measurable decline in hasty or unconsidered divorces, without eliminating the overall divorce rate - indicating that couples are more inclined to seek mediation or pursue alternative legal remedies before opting for final separation.

Lifetime Divorce Stipend (al-Jirāyah al-‘Umriyah)

The CPS further innovates by entitling divorced women to a lifelong maintenance stipend, *al-jirāyah al-‘umriyah*. Article 31 specifies:

“The stipend shall be paid to the former wife once her ‘iddah has concluded, in an amount equivalent to the customary household maintenance during the marriage, including housing costs. This stipend continues until the former wife’s death, her remarriage, or her declaration of no longer requiring it. In the event of the husband’s death, the stipend is drawn from his estate by agreement of the heirs or by court decree as a lump sum, taking into account the former wife’s age at that time”.²⁸

This mechanism diverges sharply from pre-modern fiqh, which limited support to the ‘iddah period and permitted the ex-wife’s departure from the marital home thereafter. By contrast, *al-jirāyah al-‘Umriyah* ensures continuity of livelihood, effectively compensating women for the economic and social dislocation occasioned by divorce. It is grounded in a purposive *ijtihād* that recognises maintenance as a continuing right where the woman lacks alternative means of subsistence.

Implementation of this stipend has required the development of judicial guidelines to determine “customary” levels of household maintenance. Courts have drawn upon regional cost-of-living indices and testimony regarding the marital standard of living to set equitable amounts. Moreover, the requirement that heirs or courts secure payment from the deceased husband’s estate underscores the law’s commitment to safeguarding women’s post-divorce welfare, even in the absence of the former spouse.

While *al-jirāyah al-‘Umriyah* has been lauded as a groundbreaking protection of divorced women’s rights, it also presents administrative challenges. Critics cite difficulties in enforcing payments when heirs are uncooperative or when the ex-wife’s circumstances change (e.g., cohabitation with extended family). There is also ongoing debate over whether the stipend should be adjusted for inflation or tied to formal social-assistance indices. Nonetheless, the

²⁷ Muhajir, “REFORMASI HUKUM KELUARGA ISLAM TUNISIA PASCA ARAB SPRING,” 30.

²⁸ Bancin, “Hukum Keluarga Islam Di Tunisia,” 302.

continued application of Article 31 reflects Tunisia's pioneering model of integrating social-security principles into Islamic family law.²⁹

Adoption (Kafālah and Tabanni)

In 1958, Tunisia codified its approach to child guardianship and adoption through Law No. 27 on Guardianship and Adoption, which is structured into three chapters covering *kafālah* (Islamic foster-guardianship), formal adoption (*tabanni*), and general guardianship. Articles 9-16 specifically regulate formal adoption, setting precise eligibility criteria to ensure that prospective adoptive parents are suitably prepared for their responsibilities. They must be legally adult, married couples in full civil and legal capacity, of irreproachable moral character, and physically and mentally sound. Financial solvency is also mandated, requiring adopters to demonstrate sufficient resources to provide for the child's maintenance, education, and overall well-being. To preserve generational integrity, the law stipulates a minimum age gap of fifteen years between adopter and adoptee, thereby preventing arrangements that might blur family hierarchies or exploit vulnerable minors.³⁰

A cornerstone of these provisions is the explicit conferral of full legal status upon the adopted child. Article 15 proclaims:

“Legally, the relationship between an adoptive father and an adopted child is equivalent to that of a biological father and child. The adopted child enjoys the same rights as a natural child, and the adoptive father possesses the same rights as a biological father, as provided by law.”

This statutory equivalence guarantees the adopted child rights to inheritance, family name, and social identity that were traditionally restricted under classical fiqh, which recognised only *kafālah* without vesting the ward with lineage or succession rights. By contrast, Tunisia's formal adoption regime aligns with modern child-rights principles, acknowledging the psychological and social importance of clear lineage in a child's development.

Recognising the absence of unanimous scriptural directives on adoption in Qur'ānic texts and Prophetic traditions, the CPS framers situated formal adoption within the domain of *ijtihād*, or reasoned legal interpretation. They argued that adoption legislation should be neither categorically prohibited nor *laissé-faire*; instead, it should be enacted to fulfil *maṣlahah* - the public interest - by providing stable family environments for children lacking parental care. Post-legislative practice has seen Tunisian courts actively monitor adoption agreements, requiring prospective parents to obtain judicial approval and periodic welfare assessments of the adoptee, thus integrating procedural safeguards against potential abuses. Moreover, demographic data collected by the Ministry of Women, Family, and Children

²⁹ Permana, “Majallah Al Akhwal Ash-Shakhshiyyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Di Tunisia,” 13.

³⁰ “Tunisian Family Code.”

indicate that formal adoptions have contributed to a modest reduction in institutional care placements, underscoring the social impact of this legislative innovation.³¹

Prohibition of Polygyny in Tunisia

Tunisia's unequivocal ban on polygyny represents one of the most radical departures from classical fiqh norms in the Muslim world. Under Article 18 of the CPS, "Polygyny is forbidden. Any man who contracts a subsequent marriage while still legally wed to his first wife and has not obtained her divorce shall be liable to one year of imprisonment and/or a fine of 240,000 millimes."³² This prohibition applies equally to formally registered unions and customary (*'urfī*) marriages, ensuring that unrecorded second marriages cannot circumvent the ban.

The legislative debate preceding the CPS's enactment revealed deep considerations of women's rights and social welfare. Reformers highlighted empirical evidence of polygynous households in Tunisia - often characterised by unequal treatment of spouses, economic hardship, and familial fragmentation - and argued that abolition would promote marital stability and protect vulnerable women and children from abandonment.³³ In drafting Article 18, lawmakers consulted statistical analyses demonstrating that polygyny, though legally permissible in several Arab states, correlated with elevated rates of female illiteracy and child malnutrition, as well as legal disputes over succession and maintenance.

Modernist thinkers such as Tāhir Haddad and Muḥammad 'Abduh provided the intellectual underpinnings for the ban. Haddad denounced polygyny as a remnant of *jabiliyya* (pre-Islamic ignorance), arguing that Qur'ān 4:3's allowance for marrying orphaned women was a limited *rukhsah* (concession) intended to address specific social crises - not a permanent endorsement of multiple-spouse households. He insisted that perfect justice among wives was a divine ideal unattainable by ordinary humans, thus rendering polygyny practically incompatible with Islamic justice and the *maqāṣid* of marriage.³⁴ 'Abduh similarly contended that if a permissible practice proved injurious to societal welfare, Islamic authorities were empowered to curtail or prohibit it. He interpreted the Prophet's injunction to marry only one in cases of anticipated injustice as a broader mandate favoring monogamy under conditions where polygyny threatened family harmony.³⁵

³¹ Muhajir, "REFORMASI HUKUM KELUARGA ISLAM TUNISIA PASCA ARAB SPRING," 40.

³² Ahmad Bahauddin, "TINJAUAN SOSIO-POLITIK TERHADAP LARANGAN POLIGAMI (Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Tunisia)," *Familia: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 1, no. 2 (28 Desember 2020): 166, <https://doi.org/10.24239/familia.v1i2.16>.

³³ Permana, "Majallah Al Akhwal Ash-Shakhshiyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Di Tunisia," 5.

³⁴ Bencin, "Hukum Keluarga Islam Di Tunisia," 305.

³⁵ Bahauddin, "TINJAUAN SOSIO-POLITIK TERHADAP LARANGAN POLIGAMI (Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga Tunisia)," 162.

Despite such arguments, prominent traditionalist scholars challenged the CPS ban. Shaykh Yūsuf Qardāwī objected on three grounds: that Tunisia's law was issued by legislators lacking the requisite juristic authority; that proper *ijtihād* protocols were dismissed; and that the methodology used to derive the prohibition misapplied foundational hermeneutical rules. Qardāwī warned that proscribing what God had permitted risked undermining Sharī'ah's integrity and invited unintended social consequences, such as covert polygyny beyond the law's reach.³⁶

Notwithstanding these critiques, Tunisian enforcement mechanisms have demonstrated tangible effects. Between 1960 and 1980, prosecutions for polygynous unions led to several hundred convictions, signalling the state's seriousness. Inter-ministerial committees documented a steady decline in polygyny rates - from an estimated 15 percent of rural marriages in 1956 to under 2 percent by the 1990s - accompanied by increased female school enrollment and reductions in child mortality in regions previously associated with multiple-spouse practices. Comparative studies reveal that Tunisia's comprehensive prohibition, coupled with public-awareness campaigns and female-empowerment initiatives, has yielded more pronounced social benefits than the restricted or judicially regulated polygyny regimes of Morocco or Egypt

Moreover, exegeses by scholars like Quraish Shihāb have furnished theological support for Tunisia's approach. Shihāb argued that Qur'ān 4:3 addressed specific custodial concerns for orphans and was not intended to establish a general marital norm. He emphasised that polygyny predated Islam across various cultures and that the Qur'ānic verse's aim was regulatory - not prescriptive - underscoring the permissive nature of the concession rather than its normative permanence.³⁷

In sum, Tunisia's proscription of polygyny exemplifies a pioneering model of legal reform that reinterprets classical jurisprudence to address modern imperatives of gender justice, family welfare, and social cohesion. By combining legislative prohibition, penal sanctions, and socio-educational measures, Tunisia has forged a regional standard for monogamous family law, reinforcing the principle that legal reform grounded in *ijtihād* can harmonise religious tradition with contemporary societal needs.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Tunisian experience in formulating and reorganising Islamic family law transcended a simple codification of the Mālikī school; it inaugurated a bold, forward-looking legal architecture embodied in the Code of Personal Status (CPS). Drawing on both French

³⁶ Permana, "Majallah Al Akhwal Ash-Shakhshiyah Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Keluarga di Tunisia," 6.

³⁷ Bencin, "Hukum Keluarga Islam Di Tunisia," 305.

civil-law influences and the secular-nationalist ethos of post-colonial governance, Tunisian legislators engaged in contextualised *ijtihād* to resolve pressing social issues - annulling *ijbār*, standardising marriage and divorce procedures, promoting shared spousal maintenance, guaranteeing women's post-divorce stipends, authorising formal adoption, and outlawing polygyny - while remaining firmly anchored in *Shari'ah*'s higher objectives of protecting lineage, dignity, and public welfare. Far from deviating from Islamic principles, these reforms were motivated by a sincere commitment to advancing the common good, fostering social harmony, and securing the well-being of all Tunisians. In so doing, the CPS exemplifies how a human-crafted legal instrument can evolve in harmony with religious tradition, responding effectively to the imperatives of modern society.

To ensure the CPS's enduring impact, judicial capacity must be continually strengthened through specialised training in family-law adjudication that emphasises the *maqāṣid* of *Shari'ah*, gender-sensitive interpretation, and consistent application across urban and rural jurisdictions. Public legal literacy should be expanded through multi-lingual outreach - leveraging broadcast media, community workshops, and educational materials in Arabic, French, and regional dialects - to inform citizens of their rights under the CPS, particularly concerning free consent to marriage, reciprocal maintenance obligations, and court-supervised divorce. Equally vital is the systematic collection and analysis of CPS-related data - on marriage and divorce trends, maintenance stipends, adoption rates, and polygyny prosecutions - to identify implementation gaps and guide evidence-based policy refinements. Concurrently, socio-economic empowerment programmes - such as vocational training, microfinance schemes, and legal-rights education - should be scaled up to bolster women's financial autonomy, thereby reinforcing the CPS's vision of shared spousal responsibility. Finally, Tunisia should continue to foster regional and scholarly dialogue by hosting interdisciplinary forums and supporting comparative research on family-law reform, thereby contributing to a global conversation on the modernisation of Islamic legal frameworks. By pursuing these integrated measures, Tunisia can sustain the CPS's legacy as a dynamic model for equitable, stable, and inclusive family structures in the twenty-first century.

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TAHLILAN AND YASINAN AS PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPRESSIONS OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN INDONESIA

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini menganalisis tradisi *tahlilan* dan *yasinan* di Indonesia sebagai ekspresi konkret pengalaman keagamaan Islam menggunakan kerangka fenomenologi Joachim Wach. Metode penelitian berbasis kepustakaan meliputi studi primer pada karya Wach *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama* dan kajian literatur sekunder dari artikel jurnal SINTA dan internasional, disertasi, serta penelitian terdahulu tentang akulturasi budaya dan ritual keagamaan. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif, kemudian dikategorikan sesuai tiga dimensi ekspresi pengalaman keagamaan menurut Wach: kognitif (refleksi doktrinal), afektif-perilaku (praktik ritual), dan asosiatif (persekutuan). Hasil menunjukkan bahwa *tahlilan* dan *yasinan* merefleksikan ketiga dimensi tersebut: landasan doktrinal bersumber dari *al-Quran*, *Hadith*, *ijmā'*, dan *qiyās*; pelaksanaan ritus kolektif berupa pembacaan *Al-Quran*, sedekah, dan doa dengan batasan waktu dan tempat tertentu; serta pembentukan komunitas religius yang memperkokoh kohesi sosial. Tradisi ini tidak hanya mempertahankan nilai Islam warisan, tetapi juga beradaptasi secara dinamis dengan konteks sosio-kultural lokal, sehingga menguatkan keimanan individu dan solidaritas komunitas. Disarankan penelitian selanjutnya menggunakan pendekatan multidisipliner untuk menangkap perubahan praksis dan persepsi terhadap ritual ini.

Kata Kunci: *Tahlilan*, *Yasinan*, Pengalaman Keagamaan, Fenomenologi, Islam Nusantara

Judul: Tradisi *Tahlilan* dan *Yasinan* Sebagai Ekspresi Pengalaman Keagamaan Islam

Abstract: This study examines the traditions of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* in Indonesia as concrete expressions of Islamic religious experience through the phenomenological framework of Joachim Wach. Drawing upon a comprehensive library-based methodology, primary analysis focused on Wach's *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama*, while secondary sources included SINTA-indexed and international journal articles, dissertations, and prior research on cultural acculturation and religious rituals. Data were analyzed descriptively, with findings categorized into Wach's three dimensions of religious expression: cognitive (doctrinal reflection), affective-behavioral (ritual practice), and associative (communal fellowship). Results reveal that *tahlilan* and *yasinan* manifest all three dimensions: doctrinal foundations drawn from the Quran, *Hadith*, *ijmā'*, and *qiyās*; ritual enactments such as collective recitation, charity, and supplication bounded by specific temporal and spatial parameters; and the formation of enduring communal associations that reinforce social cohesion. These traditions not only preserve inherited Islamic values but also adapt dynamically to local socio-cultural contexts, thereby strengthening individual faith and community solidarity. Future research is recommended to adopt multidisciplinary approaches to capture the evolving practices and perceptions surrounding these rituals.

Keywords: *Tahlilan*, *Yasinan*, Religious Experience, Phenomenology, Islam Nusantara



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INTRODUCTION

Islam, as a universal religion, encompasses not only theological and vertical values - concerning the relationship between humans and God - but also regulates horizontal dimensions that govern human interactions with one another and with the natural environment. In accordance with its dynamic character, Islamic teachings have demonstrated considerable flexibility in adapting to local socio-cultural contexts, thereby offering solutions to a wide range of human problems across the globe. The interplay of Islamic thought and religious practice has often produced diverse forms of religiosity, shaped by historical backgrounds, cultural patterns, and the specific socio-cultural conditions of local communities. Such dynamics are particularly evident in Indonesia, where the spread of Islam between the 13th and 16th centuries CE took place through peaceful proselytization and cultural acculturation, giving rise to the distinctive and moderate features of *Islam Nusantara*.¹

The concept of *Islam Nusantara* underscores the view that local cultural values are integral to the dissemination and lived experience of Islam in Indonesia. Local culture was employed as an effective medium for da'wah, eliminating the need for a complete deconstruction of indigenous cultural practices. Muslim scholars and preachers in Indonesia strategically utilized traditional arts and local customs as instruments to bridge Islamic teachings with the existing cultural frameworks of society. As a result, a form of Islam emerged that not only adhered to textual doctrines but also respected local wisdom and practices. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that religion and culture operate within distinct domains: religion is fundamentally oriented toward dogma and creed, whereas culture is dynamic, often evolving with the passage of time. The symbiotic relationship between Islam and local culture in Indonesia has generated unique religious practices, including traditions such as *tahlilan* and *yasinan*, as products of centuries-long acculturation processes.

Indonesia is widely recognized as a multicultural society characterized by extraordinary ethnic, linguistic, customary, and social pluralism. This diversity has given rise to a broad spectrum of religious practices, many of which have become institutionalized and transmitted across generations. Within Muslim communities, such varied religious traditions serve not only as rituals of worship but also as mechanisms for strengthening social solidarity, fostering social cohesion, and maintaining intercommunal harmony. Through the continuous preservation of these practices, the collective identity of Indonesian Muslim communities is further consolidated, while simultaneously demonstrating tolerance for the diverse backgrounds of their members.²

¹ Ali Mursyid Azisi, "Islam Nusantara: Corak Keislaman Indonesia dan Perannya dalam Menghadapi Kelompok Puritan," *Empirisma: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Kebudayaan*, 29.2 (2020), hal. 124.

² Muhamad Bisri Mustofa et al., "Islam Dan Masyarakat Pluralistik Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Dakwah," *Dakwatuna: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi Islam*, 8.2 (2022), hal. 157.

One notable manifestation of this cultural acculturation and social stability is the tradition of *tahlilan* and *yasinan*. The *tahlilan* ritual, typically involving communal prayers for the deceased, and the *yasinan*, involving the collective recitation of Surah Yā Sīn from the Quran, have become routine practices within Islamic communities, especially in Java. Beyond serving as a form of respect for the departed, these traditions also function as important means of nurturing solidarity, a sense of togetherness, and mutual assistance among community members. Through these regular communal gatherings, religious values are collectively internalized, strengthening the social cohesion of society. Consequently, these practices are carefully preserved by many Nahdliyin communities and other local Islamic groups in Indonesia.³

Beyond their socio-cultural dimensions, the practices of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* fundamentally reflect a phenomenological dimension of religious experience within the community. These rituals are not merely performed out of tradition, but rather emerge from a deep understanding and internalization of Islamic doctrine, which is perceived to rest on a strong normative foundation. This normative basis may be traced through the interpretive framework of *sharī'a*, drawing upon the Quran, the prophetic hadith, scholarly consensus (*ijmā'*), and analogical reasoning (*qiyās*) that support collective prayer and the recitation of Yā Sīn as legitimate forms of remembrance (*dhikr*) and supplication for forgiveness on behalf of the deceased.⁴ Accordingly, *tahlilan* and *yasinan* are not simply cultural practices but represent structured expressions of religious experience embedded within the normative and theoretical framework of Islam.

Previous studies have investigated the *tahlilan* and *yasinan* traditions from a variety of perspectives. For instance, one study examined the values and the development of *tahlilan* practices among the Banjar community in Pahandut District, Palangka Raya City, highlighting the internalization of religious and social values through these rituals.⁵ Another investigation explored how perceptions of *tahlilan* within the Muhammadiyah community in Gulurejo Village, Lendah, Kulon Progo, Yogyakarta influenced their patterns of social relationships, with particular emphasis on processes of social change and religious perception among Muhammadiyah adherents.⁶ Mas'ari and Syamsuatir likewise analyzed *tahlilan* as a portrait of

³ Ali Mursyid Azisi, Wiwik Setiyani, dan Hotimah Novitasari, "Nahdlatul Ulama, Tradisi dan Wahabi: Penafian Pengikut Wahabi terhadap Tradisi *tahlilan* Masyarakat Nahdliyin," *Ansuruna: Journal of Islam and Youth Movement*, 1.1 (2022), hal. 2.

⁴ Ahmad Mas'ari dan Syamsuatir, "Tradisi *tahlilan*: Potret Akulturasi Agama dan Budaya Khas Islam Nusantara," *KONTEKSTUALITA: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial dan Keagamaan*, 33.1 (2017), hal. 80.

⁵ Husnul Hatimah, Emawati, dan Muhammad Husni, "Tradisi *tahlilan* Masyarakat Banjar di Kecamatan Pahandut Kota Palangka Raya," *Syaams: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 2.1 (2021).

⁶ Ana Riskasari, "Pengaruh Persepsi Tradisi *tahlilan* di Kalangan Masyarakat Muhammadiyah terhadap Relasi Sosial di Desa Gulurejo Lendah Kulon Progo Yogyakarta," *Panangkaran: Jurnal Penelitian Agama dan Masyarakat*, 2.2 (2019).

religious and cultural acculturation characteristic of *Islam Nusantara*, though their study primarily focused on its historical-cultural dimension rather than the subjective experiences of its participants.⁷ Furthermore, a study applying a living-hadith approach to the *tablilan* feast tradition in Jinggotan, Jepara, demonstrated how hadith texts are contextualized in local settings, although it remained largely limited to textual and ritual dimensions alone.⁸

A review of these studies indicates that most research has tended to concentrate on cultural values, social perceptions, or religious textual approaches, while explicit analysis of *tablilan* and *yasinan* as objects of study within a phenomenological framework of religious experience has been relatively absent. Yet a phenomenological approach, as formulated by Joachim Wach, provides a robust conceptual instrument for examining the dimension of *Erlebnis* (religious experience) in a comprehensive manner, encompassing cognitive, affective, and ritual behavioral aspects. Therefore, this study intends to fill that gap by investigating the *tablilan* and *yasinan* traditions as structured expressions of Islamic religious experience in Indonesia through the phenomenological perspective advanced by Joachim Wach.

METHOD

This study employed a purely library-based research design, focusing on the systematic exploration and critical examination of relevant literature, including scholarly books, peer-reviewed journals, undergraduate theses, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and other scientific works that are directly pertinent to the research variables. The primary source forming the conceptual foundation of this study was Joachim Wach's *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama: Inti dan Bentuk Pengalaman Keagamaan* (1984), which provided the essential framework for understanding the structure of religious experience from a phenomenological perspective. In addition, secondary sources were extensively reviewed, encompassing articles from SINTA-indexed and international journals, dissertations, and previous research addressing *tablilan*, *yasinan*, cultural acculturation, and the phenomenology of religion.⁹

After gathering and thoroughly reviewing the selected literature, the data were subjected to descriptive analysis in order to present an objective depiction of the *tablilan* and *yasinan* rituals within the broader context of religious experience. This descriptive analysis involved systematically categorizing the findings from the literature into three core experiential dimensions - cognitive, affective, and ritual behavioral - in alignment with the terminology conceptualized by Wach. Subsequently, these findings were synthesized into a comprehensive narrative that articulated the interconnections among these experiential dimensions. To

⁷ Mas'ari dan Syamsuatir, "Tradisi *tablilan*: Potret Akulturasi Agama dan Budaya Khas Islam Nusantara," (2017).

⁸ Abdul Wahab Saleem, "Tradisi Perjamuan *tablilan* (Studi Living Hadits Tradisi Perjamuan Tahlil 'Kematian' di Jinggotan, Jepara," *JASNA: Journal For Aswaja Studies*, 1.1 (2021).

⁹ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013), hal. 224.

maintain analytical rigor and strengthen the trustworthiness of the interpretation, this synthesis was further validated through theoretical triangulation, involving the comparison of the study's findings with other relevant secondary sources. Such triangulation ensured that the interpretation of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* as expressions of Islamic religious experience was rendered more robust and accurate.¹⁰

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Religion occupies a central position in human life, as human beings - unlike other living creatures - are endowed with reason, which enables them to question existence and its ultimate meaning. This faculty of reason, granted by God, empowers humans to interpret the "signs" (*āyāt*) scattered throughout the universe, so that they do not merely respond to the world instinctively but are also capable of interpreting and sacralizing every natural phenomenon as divine revelation guiding their lives.¹⁰ According to Muhammad Syaifudin, mystical experience in Islam arises when human consciousness transcends ordinary rationality and enters a dimension in which intellect and heart are harmoniously integrated within divine awareness. Through the processes of *tafakkur* (contemplation) and *tadhakkur* (remembrance), individuals are able not only to comprehend theological doctrines but also to personally and transformatively experience the presence of God.¹¹

Joachim Wach asserts that the religious potential of human beings is not something acquired later in life but is instead an innate endowment - a "permanent possibility of religion" - which motivates each individual to pursue and construct religious meaning throughout their existence. This inherent potential moves individuals to respond to ultimate reality (God) through religious experiences encompassing cognitive awareness of doctrine, affective resonance in worship, and ritual acts as the tangible manifestation of faith.¹² Dea Tara Ningtyas and Abdur Rahman Adi Saputera further argue that religious experience is not merely a fleeting emotional reaction but constitutes a dynamic process in which doctrinal understanding animates everyday actions, ranging from the habitual practice of *dhikr* to participation in religious social activities, thereby reinforcing the construction of religious identity and community cohesion.

Each person builds their religious expressions through an interplay of cognitive - affective frameworks and ritual forms, learned and internalized within their particular cultural contexts. According to Wach, such expressions are an inevitable consequence of the human

¹⁰ Suharsimi Arikunto, *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktek* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2014), hal. 25.

¹¹ Dea Tara Ningtyas dan Abdur Rahman Adi Saputera, "Pengaruh Kegiatan Keagamaan Di Lingkungan Sekolah Dan Keluarga Dalam Membentuk Pengalaman Beragama," *Tapis: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmiah*, 2.2 (2018), hal. 197.

¹² Ningtyas dan Saputera, "Pengaruh Kegiatan Keagamaan Di Lingkungan Sekolah Dan Keluarga Dalam Membentuk Pengalaman Beragama," hal. 200.

relationship with ultimate reality, wherein theological knowledge, the experience of the sacred, and ritual practice continuously interact within a coherent experiential structure. Consequently, the traditions of *tablilan* and *yasinan* in Indonesia cannot be reduced to inherited customs alone but should be recognized as concrete manifestations of how Islamic doctrines are deeply internalized, with local linguistic and cultural forms serving as effective media for religious meaning-making. To thoroughly understand these phenomenological nuances, it is necessary to first elaborate on the intellectual profile of Joachim Wach - including his biography, the development of his thought, and his contributions to the comparative study of religion - as the conceptual foundation for the subsequent analysis.

A Brief Profile of Joachim Wach

Joachim Ernst Adolphe Felix Wach was born on January 22, 1898, in Chemnitz, Germany, and pursued studies in philosophy, theology, and sociology at the University of Leipzig and the University of Heidelberg. Early in his academic career, he engaged deeply with phenomenological thought, seeking to understand religion not merely as a doctrinal system but as a concrete, lived experience of the subject. In 1935, amid the escalating political turmoil in Europe, Wach relocated to the United States, where he joined the faculty at the University of Chicago. There, he developed a descriptive methodology grounded in the phenomenological principles of Edmund Husserl, placing the “individual human subject” at the center of analysis for any given religious phenomenon. This approach opened the way for a more rigorous and scientific study of religion within a modern academic framework.¹³

At the same time, Wach’s scholarly contributions demonstrated profound historical and philosophical depth. He actively explored the development of major world religions through the lens of the history of religions and the philosophy of religion. His methodology is often categorized as scientific-positivistic, given his emphasis on empirical data and systematic observation, while still maintaining sensitivity to the transcendent dimension of religious experience. As a learned Jewish scholar, Wach approached religion from both internal and external perspectives, making him a distinctive figure whose philosophical grounding was balanced by a genuine appreciation of religious experience. Until his passing in 1955, Wach left behind a rich intellectual legacy, most notably his monumental work *The Comparative Study of Religions* (republished in 1988), which continues to serve as a principal reference for scholars in the field of comparative religious studies.¹⁴

¹³ Theguh Saumantri, “Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach,” *PATISAMBHIDA: Jurnal Pemikiran Buddha dan Filsafat Agama*, 4.2 (2023), hal. 64.

¹⁴ Wiza Atholla Andriansyah dan Achmad Tohari, “Understanding Religion in the Era of Smart Society from the Perspective of Joachim Wach,” *AURELIA: Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat Indonesia*, 2.2 (2023), hal. 706.

The Foundational Concepts in Joachim Wach's Thought

From an epistemological standpoint, Wach's thinking is clearly distinguished from that of traditional theologians, as he placed far greater emphasis on phenomenological and comparative approaches. More than merely exploring the theological dimensions of religion, Wach paid close attention to the religious experiences encountered by both individuals and communities. In broad terms, the principal focus of Joachim Wach's religious studies scholarship concerns religious experience itself and the expression of that experience, whether on an individual or collective level.¹⁵

Accordingly, a comprehensive understanding of Wach's foundational ideas must center on two interrelated aspects: religious experience and the expression of religious experience. These two dimensions can be described in detail as follows:

Religious Experience

In general terms, religious experience may be understood as a dimension of feeling within the consciousness of believers - an affective experience that gives rise to concrete action.¹⁶ According to Wach, religious experience constitutes an intimate relationship between human beings, as created beings, and ultimate reality, namely God. He explicitly defines religious experience as an inward dimension, encountered both individually and collectively, that shapes one's awareness of the divine.¹⁷

The indicators of such religious experience can be observed through the activities carried out by adherents of a faith, encompassing both inward and outward dimensions. These activities generate diverse patterns of feeling within systems of thought, social action, and communal life. Since every believer undergoes unique religious experiences, these experiences will inevitably vary from person to person. This variation arises from the dominant inner aspects inherent to each subject, which profoundly shape their experience of religion.¹⁸ Put simply, religious experience is essentially a deeply personal and spiritual phenomenon for each adherent.

Furthermore, religious experience is inherently variable due to differences in the intensity of belief, culture, and an individual's worldview. It is not surprising, therefore, that many regard religious experience as highly subjective and difficult to express through ordinary language. Wach proposes two primary strategies for investigating an individual's religious experience. First, one may study religion through its historical background, sects, or schools of thought, as this historical perspective provides insight into the socio-cultural and

¹⁵ Theguh Hidayatulloh, Taufik, Saumantri, "Kerukunan Beragama dalam Lensa Pengalaman Keagamaan Versi Joachim Wach," *Al-Adyan: Journal of Religious Studies*, 4.1 (2023), hal. 32.

¹⁶ Zakiah Daradjat, *Ilmu Jawa Agama* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 2005), hal. 12–15.

¹⁷ Joachim Wach, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama: Inti dan Bentuk Pengalaman Keagamaan* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1996), hal. 25.

¹⁸ Triyani Pujiastuti, "Konsep Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," *Syiar*, 17.2 (2017), hal. 66.

doctrinal contexts that shape individual perceptions and experiences. Second, one may examine and analyze the religious experiences of individuals or communities by observing how doctrines, worship rituals, and religiously motivated practices actualize the values of a given tradition. This approach provides a deeper understanding of adherents across diverse religious settings.¹⁹

In order for religious experience to be meaningfully structured, Wach offers four essential criteria:

1. the experience must represent a believer's response to what is perceived as ultimate reality (God);
2. it must involve total participation, meaning that the engagement should integrate not only thought and will but the entire self in a holistic manner;
3. it should be understood as the deepest personal experience attainable by the individual, though not every expression of religious sentiment necessarily indicates this level of intensity;
4. it must be practical, expressed through action stemming from a commitment that motivates individuals to carry out what is prescribed by religious doctrine.²⁰

From the preceding discussion, a clearer understanding of religious experience emerges. In definitive terms, according to Wach, religious experience is a profound spiritual relationship between human beings and ultimate reality (God), a relationship that is actualized through the implementation of religious teachings manifested in acts of worship, ethics, and other religiously motivated practices.

The Expression of Religious Experience

After establishing the conceptual essence of religious experience, an equally significant dimension in Joachim Wach's thought concerns the *expression* of religious experience. This refers to the ways in which individuals respond to and articulate their experiences of faith. Every person exhibits a unique attitude when confronted with their religious experience, a consequence of the inherently plural and subjective nature of such experiences. As a result of this subjectivity, the expression of religious experience itself likewise becomes subjective and individualized.²¹

According to Wach, the expression of religious experience may be observed through three principal forms: first, through thought (for example, doctrinal formulations); second, through action (ritual practices); and third, through communal association (religious

¹⁹ Saumantri, "Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 65.

²⁰ Syaifudin, "Agama dan Pengalaman: Pengalaman Mistik dalam Islam," hal. 135–36.

²¹ Wach, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama*...hal. 61.

fellowship).²² These three dimensions are logical consequences of religious experience, in which an individual wholly engages their rational, emotional, and spiritual faculties in responding to ultimate reality (God).²³

1. Thought as an Expression of Religious Experience

Individuals engage in contemplation, evaluation, and formulation of religious concepts, resulting in intellectual output. This process involves reflective understanding of both personal belief and religious teachings. The expression of experience in this form is often manifested spontaneously and transmitted through tradition.²⁴ Naturally, the expression of religious experience through thought differs from person to person, shaped by their cultural, social, and religious backgrounds.

Within every religion, the tangible form of such an intellectual expression appears in doctrinal structures. A person's understanding and reasoning about religious doctrine is inextricably influenced by these background factors. Functionally, according to Wach, doctrine in religious life serves three key purposes: affirming belief, explaining faith, and defending teachings (*apologetics*).²⁵

Moreover, Wach suggests that the expression of religious experience through thought may emerge from several motivating forces. First, there is an internal drive within an individual to express their intense personal relationship with ultimate reality. Second, there is the motivation to attract the attention of others, to have them see, hear, and understand the individual's religious experience. Third, this intellectual expression is fundamentally individual, in that it can only be articulated by the person who undergoes the experience themselves.²⁶

2. Action as an Expression of Religious Experience

Individuals actualize their religious values and beliefs through concrete actions. Such acts may take the form of ritual worship, charitable deeds, or moral conduct performed by each believer. This expression emerges as the natural outflow of one's understanding of faith and its associated values. When individuals manifest their religious experience through action, it cannot be separated from the dimensions of time, place, and mode of execution. In terms of timing, these actions may be performed at night, during the day, or at specific ritual moments. Concerning place, religious

²² Nanang Rustandi dan Yusuf Wibisono, "Persepsi Keagamaan Masyarakat Terhadap Situs Purbakala Gunung Padang Cianjur," *Tatar Pasundan: Jurnal Diklat Keagamaan*, 14.2 (2020), hal. 179.

²³ Adi Iqbal, "Pluralitas Agama dan Budaya dalam Dinamika Masyarakat Perkotaan: Studi Kasus Sungai Nibung Kota Kuala Tungkal Jambi," *Focus*, 4.2 (2023), hal. 96.

²⁴ Tia Sari, "Hakikat pengalaman keagamaan dan ekspresi keberagamaan dalam pandangan joachim wach," *Al-Aqidah*, 15.1 (2023), hal. 31.

²⁵ Faisal Muzzammil, "Pengalaman Keagamaan Masyarakat Industri: Studi pada Karyawan PT Indorama Synthetics Tbk Purwakarta," *Definisi: Jurnal Agama dan Sosial Humaniora*, 1.1 (2022), hal. 6.

²⁶ Saumantri, "Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 67.

experiences may unfold in a variety of settings, for example, in enclosed spaces, beneath trees, upon large stones, or other designated sacred sites. In terms of process, religious acts might include practices such as meditation, pilgrimage, or other ritual forms.

Wach classifies action into two primary categories: worship (*cultus*) and service (*ministerium*), which are inseparable in practice. Worship arises when an individual establishes intimacy with God. Wach, quoting Von Hügel, maintains that through complete devotion to God, an individual comes to recognize their own insignificance before the divine, giving rise to an attitude of humility.²⁷ From this form of worship, individuals perform religious acts that constitute their concrete responses to ultimate reality. In living out their religious experience, believers seek to implement what they understand as the commands and precepts of their tradition, performing ritual acts of obedience in adherence to religious obligations and prohibitions.

Service, by contrast, refers to an individual's "service" to both God and fellow human beings. This service may take the form of fulfilling religious obligations and avoiding prohibitions, sharing what brings happiness to others, and engaging in social activities inspired by religious values.²⁸ In understanding this dimension of religious expression through action, Wach emphasizes that these patterns of practice must always be interpreted in relation to their time, place, and manner of performance.²⁹

3. Communal Association as an Expression of Religious Experience

In their efforts to internalize and realize religious values, individuals often gather to form fellowships or communities, shaping the organizational structures that best reflect their religious experiences. Members of such religious communities typically adopt specific approaches to understanding God, authoritative religious sources, and religious teachings, all of which are oriented around their shared lived experience of faith. Each community possesses its own worldview, attitudes, and religious atmosphere, which inevitably differ from those of other communities, due to their distinct socio-cultural backgrounds.³⁰

Religious experience expressed through communal action plays a critical role in the formation of religious groups. The emergence of such groups is a natural phenomenon, since religion is not only the possession of individuals but also belongs to the collective body of believers who adhere to it. Religious experience may also function as an inspiration for adherents, enabling individuals and groups to perceive

²⁷ Wach, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama*...hal. 153.

²⁸ Wach, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama*...hal. 148.

²⁹ Pujiastuti, "Konsep Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 69–70.

³⁰ Saumantri, Saumantri, "Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal.

God's presence or to imbue their everyday lives with a deeper sense of meaning and purpose.

Several factors contribute to the formation of these communal associations. Some are directly religious in nature, such as spiritual talents for worship, teaching, or service. Other factors are non-religious, including age, social status, ethics, or family background.³¹

Wach further notes that within these religious communities, differentiation naturally emerges based on a range of factors, including function, charisma, age, gender, lineage, and social status. These distinctions may be described as follows:

First, functional differentiation. A religious community consists of individuals bonded through shared religious experience, but within it, members may hold differing roles. Some serve as religious leaders (*imam*), while others as congregants (*ma'mum*). This diversity of function results in distinct religious experiences for each member.

Second, differentiation by charisma. While religious communities may ideally adhere to egalitarian ideals, they often recognize individuals who possess a higher spiritual prestige or charisma, believed to have been granted by God. Such charismatic individuals are regarded as chosen and spiritually gifted, and their religious expressions are often perceived as different from those of other community members.

Third, differentiation based on age, gender, and lineage. Generational differences, for example, shape the roles of elders and youth in both individual and collective religious life. Similarly, men and women typically assume different roles within religious rituals, reflecting established religious gender norms. Regarding lineage, these differences usually pertain to the social sphere, where those with respected ancestry are expected to maintain their ancestral religious legacy.

Fourth, differentiation by status. This factor is hybrid in nature, combining aspects of the previous factors. Although democratic notions of equal rights and responsibilities among believers have emerged in the history of world religions, such ideals are rarely fully realized in practice.³²

The Traditions of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* in Indonesia

As previously discussed, religious adherents continuously actualize and develop the teachings of their faith, a process that evolves dynamically over time. From an individual's total devotion and immersion toward God, distinct attitudes, thoughts, and actions naturally emerge. Within Islam, for example, a diversity of religious schools of thought, values, and practices can be observed. In Indonesia, these range from Sunni to Shia, as well as

³¹ Pujiastuti, "Konsep Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 70–71.

³² Pujiastuti, "Konsep Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 71–72.

Ahmadiyya and other traditions, all reflecting the varied perspectives that flourish even within a single religious tradition.³³

Islam itself may be regarded as a complex and comprehensive religion, which does not negate the socio-cultural contexts present in its diverse missionary landscapes.³⁴ Cultural expressions and traditions embedded in society often serve as reflections of both social and spiritual experiences.³⁵ Rather than eradicating indigenous traditions, Islamic teachings have often embraced them as effective medium for *da'wah*. Such an approach has been particularly evident in the Indonesian context.

Historically, the process of cultural acculturation carried out by Islamic preachers in Indonesia did not seek to entirely abolish pre-existing traditions. Instead, they transformed the substantive values within those traditions, harmonizing them with Islamic principles. Within this framework of cultural adaptation, one of the most prominent religious practices that continues among many Indonesian Muslims is *tablilan* and *yasinan*.³⁶ These practices are generally performed on specific days following a person's death, including the seventh day, the hundredth day, the thousandth day, and annually in what is known as *haul*.³⁷

The term *tablilan* is derived from the Arabic root “*tablil*,” which, upon entering the Indonesian - particularly Javanese - linguistic sphere, was modified with the suffix “-an” in both pronunciation and writing. *Tablil* itself is a verbal noun (*masdar*) originating from *ballala-yuhalliliu-tahlilan*, meaning the utterance of the phrase *la ilaha illallah*. However, when adapted as *tablilan* with the suffix “-an,” the term underwent a semantic shift. It no longer refers solely to the recitation of *la ilaha illallah*, but denotes a ritual or event that intrinsically involves the recitation of selected Quranicverses, various *kalimat thayyibah* (good phrases), and prayers.³⁸

In general, *tablilan* has become a well-established religious ritual and tradition among Indonesian Muslims, particularly in Java, and continues to be widely practiced.³⁹ In its implementation, *tablilan* is carried out collectively on certain designated days, such as weekly

³³ Sari, Tia Sari, “Hakikat pengalaman keagamaan dan ekspresi keberagamaan dalam pandangan joachim wach,” hal. 34–35.

³⁴ Hisny Fajrussalam et al., “Eksplorasi Kebudayaan Tahlil Dalam Perspektif Agama Islam Dan Masyarakat di Indonesia,” *DIROSAT: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 7.1 (2022), hal. 19.

³⁵ Michael Yoel Panjaitan, I Nyoman Suarsana, dan I Ketut Kaler, “Tradisi Rabo-Rabo: Sebuah Cerminan Ekspresi Identitas Komunitas Mardijkers di Kampung Tugu, Kelurahan Semper Barat, Jakarta Utara,” *Sunari Penjor: Journal of Anthropology*, 8.1 (2024), hal. 29.

³⁶ Rido Awal Pratama, “Tradisi *yasinan* Dan *tablilan* Dalam Meningkatkan Nilai- Nilai Pendidikan Islam Di Masjid Nur Amanah Yogyakarta,” *Tarbanjy: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10.1 (2023), hal. 13.

³⁷ Fajrussalam et al., Hisny Fajrussalam et al., “Eksplorasi Kebudayaan Tahlil Dalam Perspektif Agama Islam Dan Masyarakat di Indonesia,” hal. 19.

³⁸ Mas'ari dan Syamsuatir, Mas'ari dan Syamsuatir, “Tradisi *tablilan*: Potret Akulturasi Agama dan Budaya Khas Islam Nusantara,” hal. 79.

³⁹ Saleem, “Tradisi Perjamuan *tablilan* (Studi Living Hadits Tradisi Perjamuan Tahlil ‘Kematian’ di Jinggotan, Jepara,” hal. 68.

gatherings or upon the passing of a community member. After the deceased has been buried, residents in the surrounding area typically organize a *tahlilan* ritual for seven consecutive days.⁴⁰ Beyond its function as a form of Islamic devotional practice, this ritual also serves to comfort the bereaved family and acts as a vehicle for religious propagation through communal gathering.⁴¹

In addition to *tahlilan*, another religious ritual commonly practiced among segments of the Muslim community in Indonesia is *yasinan*. This tradition is rooted in the recitation of Surah Yā Sīn from the Quran, which consists of 83 verses. Among Indonesians - especially Javanese communities - this surah has attained widespread popularity, such that many participants are already familiar with its verses due to their frequent recitation during *yasinan* gatherings. Simply put, *yasinan* refers to the communal and routine recitation of Surah Yā Sīn..⁴²

More precisely, *yasinan* constitutes a religious ritual performed by Indonesian Muslims as a means of conveying prayers for well-being, supplications on behalf of the deceased, and as an opportunity to enhance the community's spirituality.⁴³ In practice, *yasinan* closely resembles *tahlilan*. During a typical *tahlilan*, participants generally recite brief chapters of the Quran and send prayers for the deceased. However, in *yasinan*, these activities are performed simultaneously within a more structured ritual sequence.

The standard sequence of *yasinan* ceremonies generally unfolds as follows: first, participants recite prayers for deceased predecessors - including Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), his companions, religious scholars, *waliyullah* (saints), and their ancestors - beginning with Surah Al-Fātiḥah, followed by Surah Yā Sīn. Second, the ritual proceeds with the recitation of *tahlilan*, initiated by reading Surah Al-Fātiḥah, Surah Al-Falaq, Surah An-Nās, and selected verses from Surah Al-Baqarah (verses 1-5, 165, and 255). Third, participants collectively recite *istighfar*, *tahlil*, and *ṣalawāt*, before concluding with a final communal supplication.⁴⁴

Tahlilan and Yasinan as Expressions of Islamic Religious Experience

Following the discussion of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* as religious traditions practiced by the majority of Indonesian Muslims, this section provides a descriptive analysis of these two

⁴⁰ Taufik Ismail, Muhammad Umar, dan Zulfi Mubaraq, "Tahlil Kematian Sebagai Tradisi Dalam Ajaran Islam Perspektif M. Quraish Shihab," *Risalah: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Islam*, 9.1 (2023), hal. 1187.

⁴¹ Fajrussalam et al., "Eksplorasi Kebudayaan Tahlil Dalam Perspektif Agama Islam Dan Masyarakat di Indonesia," hal. 21.

⁴² Ahmad Naufal Hafidh, "Tradisi Pembacaan Surat Yasin Sebelum Salat Jumat (Studi Living Qur'an Di Masjid Taaroful Muslimin)," *MASHAHIF: Journal of Qur'an and Hadits Studies*, 1.2 (2021), hal. 4.

⁴³ Anma Muniri, "Tradisi Slametan: *yasinan* Manifestasi Nilai Sosial-Keagamaan di Trenggalek," *Jpips: Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, 6.2 (2020), hal. 76.

⁴⁴ Pratama, Rido Awal Pratama, "Tradisi *yasinan* Dan *tahlilan* Dalam Meningkatkan Nilai- Nilai Pendidikan Islam Di Masjid Nur Amanah Yogyakarta," hal. 14.

rituals through the lens of Joachim Wach's theoretical framework on the expression of religious experience. In essence, this analysis seeks to explain how *tablilan* and *yasinan* function as manifestations of Islamic religious experience, interpreted through Wach's conceptual categories. As practices continuously transmitted across generations, *yasinan* and *tablilan* can be seen in practice as enduring expressions of Islamic religious experience. Viewed through Wach's epistemological perspective, these traditions can be explained as follows:

First, *tablilan* and *yasinan* as expressions of religious experience in the form of thought. For Wach, this form of expression refers to the reflective understanding of religious doctrine by an individual. From such reflective activity arises a stream of thought that is both spontaneous and traditional. The traditional element here signifies that religious thought becomes a form of legacy, transmitted to future generations. In the same way, the understanding of *tablilan* and *yasinan* represents a reflective expression rooted in Islamic religious thinking. These practices would not be performed if they lacked a sound doctrinal basis grounded in the fundamental values of Islam, including references from the Quran, Hadith, *ijmā'*, and *qiyās*. Beyond these canonical sources, community traditions have also been taken into account by earlier scholars, transforming them into religious practices as they exist today.

Second, *tablilan* and *yasinan* as expressions of religious experience in the form of action. As actualizations of deep understanding and total internalization of religious teachings, these practices give rise to practical acts performed collectively and individually by the faithful. In this context, *tablilan* and *yasinan* can be seen as expressions of religious experience through concrete behavior. Muslim communities enact the commands of Islam in a form adapted to local settings, reciting Quranic verses, giving charity, engaging in *dhikr*, and performing communal supplication. This is fully consistent with Wach's articulation of religious experience as an embodied, enacted response. Moreover, Wach maintains that such action-oriented religious experiences cannot be separated from their temporal, spatial, and procedural dimensions.⁴⁵

In terms of time, as mentioned previously, *tablilan* and *yasinan* are usually performed on a routine basis - for instance, weekly, on the seventh day, the hundredth day, the thousandth day, or annually at the haul. If someone passes away, the rituals are often conducted for seven consecutive days. Regarding place, two typical patterns emerge: first, the conditional setting, for example, in the house of the bereaved family; and second, in a rotational pattern, moving among members of the *tablilan* and *yasinan* community. Concerning the procedure, these traditions follow a specific sequence, generally starting with the recitation of Surah Al-

⁴⁵ Pratama, Rido Awal Pratama, "Tradisi *yasinan* Dan *tablilan* Dalam Meningkatkan Nilai- Nilai Pendidikan Islam Di Masjid Nur Amanah Yogyakarta," hal. 15.

Fātiḥah for the deceased, followed by a series of prayers, and concluding with a collective supplication.

Third, *tahlilan* and *yasinan* as expressions of religious experience in the form of communal association. According to Wach, individuals will gather to form fellowships or religious groups, and within these groups, participants collectively determine the essence and organizational form that aligns with their religious experience. They thus develop their own attitudes, worldviews, and distinct religious atmospheres.

In this sense, the practices of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* clearly possess a social and collective dimension. The values of harmony and mutual support among participants reflect the associative character inherent in these rituals.⁴⁶ These religious traditions, continuously performed among Indonesian Muslim communities, have given rise to *tahlilan* and *yasinan* groups that serve as loci of shared religious life.⁴⁷ Regional variations in these practices can be observed, reflecting the different socio-cultural backgrounds of each community.

In line with the discussion above, it becomes clear that *tahlilan* and *yasinan* represent concrete, associative expressions of Islamic religious experience as practiced by many Indonesian Muslims. From a sociological perspective, these traditions hold profound significance in the lives of the faithful. Beyond strengthening individual faith, they also contribute meaningfully to the social cohesion and solidarity of the wider community.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, Joachim Wach's theoretical contributions have significantly enriched the study of religions, including the academic exploration of Islam. Wach's concepts of religious experience and its expression offer a robust analytical framework for interpreting phenomena within religious realities. In particular, his typology of religious experience - expressed in the forms of thought, action, and communal association - deepens our understanding within the field of religious studies.

In the context of Indonesian Islam, there are religious traditions that have been continually practiced and adapted, most notably the *tahlilan* and *yasinan* rituals. These practices are the products of a long process of cultural acculturation initiated by earlier Islamic scholars and preachers. They have evolved into distinctive features of Indonesian Islam, with the details of their implementation - including timing, place, and procedural elements - carefully structured by those scholars who first propagated Islam in the archipelago.

⁴⁶ Muniri, "Tradisi Slametan: *yasinan* Manifestasi Nilai Sosial-Keagamaan di Trenggalek," hal. 77.

⁴⁷ Hatimah, Emawati, dan Husni, "Tradisi *tahlilan* Masyarakat Banjar di Kecamatan Pahandut Kota Palangka Raya," hal. 4.

Based on the findings of this study, using the analytical lens provided by Joachim Wach's thought, *tablilan* and *yasinan* clearly represent authentic expressions of Islamic religious experience. These traditions manifest across Wach's categories: as expressions of religious thought, religious action, and religious communal association. This demonstrates that *tablilan* and *yasinan* constitute religious expressions rooted in a profound, inherited understanding, internalization, and actualization of Islamic values across generations.

In light of these insights, this study recommends that the topic of *tablilan* and *yasinan* in Indonesia be further explored through multidisciplinary research. Such approaches will help to generate a more comprehensive understanding of these longstanding community practices. It is also important to anticipate that, over time, the implementation of these rituals and public perceptions toward them may shift. Therefore, future studies should address these transformations through rigorous scientific inquiry.

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POLITICAL OF RELIGION IN DIGITAL ERA: ANALYSIS OF JEAN BAUDRILLARD'S THOUGHTS

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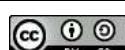
Abstrak: Teknologi berkembang dengan pesat di era modern, menyebabkan masyarakat selalu dituntut untuk beradaptasi dengan cepat. Perkembangan teknologi menghadirkan dampak yang signifikan baik sebagai peluang dan sekaligus sebagai tantangan bagi masyarakat modern. Politisasi agama di era digital merujuk pada tindakan memanipulasi atau menggunakan agama dalam politik yang dilakukan dengan menggunakan teknologi digital seperti media sosial dan platform online lainnya. Media dalam postmodern merupakan elemen yang paling penting dalam mendistribusikan agama sebagai produk sekaligus komoditas yang dikonsumsi oleh masyarakat dan tidak jarang juga digunakan oleh para elit-elit politik yang memiliki kepentingan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian deskriptif analisis, guna untuk melihat fenomena politisasi agama dengan menggunakan analisis teori Jean Baudrillard. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini adalah media merupakan hal yang paling berpengaruh terhadap politisasi agama di masa sekarang. Media dalam sebutan Baudrillard menyebutnya sebagai dunia virtual, citra atau simulacra. Politisasi agama menggunakan media dengan menampilkan simulacrum atau simulasi-simulasi palsu untuk menampilkan citra semu kepada masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: Politisasi Agama, Media, Simulacra, Hiperrealitas, Jean Baudrillard

Judul: Politisasi Agama di Era Digital: Analisis Pemikiran Jean Baudrillard

Abstract: The rapid development of digital technology has profoundly reshaped the socio-political landscape, including the domain of religion. This article examines the phenomenon of religious politicization in the digital age through the lens of Jean Baudrillard's theories, particularly simulacra and hyperreality. Employing a descriptive-analytical approach, the study explores how digital media serve not only as communication channels but also as mechanisms for producing and manipulating religious meanings for political purposes. In the postmodern context, religion becomes a commodified entity, symbolically reproduced through media to create fabricated images that blur the boundaries between the sacred and the profane. These religious simulacra construct a hyperreal environment in which public perceptions of religion are shaped by artificial representations, often exploited by political actors to gain influence and legitimacy. The article concludes that religious politicization in the digital era constitutes a form of simulation with significant implications for how religion is interpreted and experienced in contemporary society.

Keywords: Religious Politicization, Media, Simulacra, Hyperreality, Jean Baudrillard



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INTRODUCTION

Modern and postmodern Western civilizations consistently highlight material progress and welfare as the primary sources of human happiness,¹ often equating technological innovation with social advancement and individual fulfillment. This discourse finds its roots in Enlightenment ideals, where the promise of reason and scientific mastery over nature became synonymous with moral and societal betterment. However, postmodern critiques have problematized this linear narrative of progress, emphasizing fragmentation, plurality, and the destabilization of grand narratives that once underpinned Western thought. In practice, however, the disproportionate advance of technology relative to religious communities has rendered technology dominant, prioritizing material well-being for certain individuals, groups, and nations at the expense of broader societal and spiritual concerns.²

Building upon these transformations, the rapid evolution of digital tools and platforms during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries presents both unprecedented opportunities for connectivity and significant challenges for communal cohesion. Technological developments have precipitated what some scholars term a “moral emergency” in public life, as the boundaries between private and public spheres blur and the pace of information exchange accelerates. Consequently, these innovations influence social interactions in both face-to-face and online environments, reshaping norms of communication, authority, and trust.³

In this increasingly digitized society, social media has transformed from a secondary luxury into an indispensable necessity, deeply embedded in daily life and civic discourse. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram not only facilitate interpersonal connections but also serve as primary sources for news consumption, cultural exchange, and identity formation. While this digital ecosystem offers unprecedented avenues for community building and religious expression, it equally facilitates the rapid spread of negative values - such as provocation, misinformation or fake news (hoaxes), hate speech, and issues related to race, religion, and intergroup relations - both at the collective and individual levels.⁴

These developments are closely linked to the postmodern context, in which media constitutes the principal mechanism for distributing religion as both a product and a

¹ Sumiati, Sitti Satriani, “Dampak Ilmu Pengetahuan Teknologi Terhadap Iman dan Takwa Mahasiswa”. *Jurnal Tarbawi*, Vol. 2, No. 2, (2017): 112.

² J. Sudarminta, *Agama Dan Kosmologi, Orientasi Baru* (Jogjakarta: CRCS, 2006).

³ Andika Andika, “Agama Dan Perkembangan Teknologi Di Era Modern,” *Abrahamic Religions: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 2, no. 2 (2022): 129, <https://doi.org/10.22373/arj.v2i2.12556>.

⁴ Efgi Sukma Baihaki, “Islam Dalam Menyikapi Era Digitalisasi”, *Sangkep: Jurnal Kajian Sosial Keagamaan*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (2020): 185-208.

commodity consumed by society, frequently harnessed by elites pursuing specific agendas.⁵ Through carefully crafted imagery, curated narratives, and algorithmically driven content distribution, media actors manipulate public perception, at times blurring the lines between sacred traditions and commercialized representations. Moreover, media possess the capacity to manipulate facts and disseminate constructed religious images, which are then consumed by postmodern audiences seeking meaning and belonging in a mediated world.⁶

The dissolution of conventional boundaries between space and time in the digital era has fundamentally transformed how communities access and assess information, rendering societies acutely susceptible to both authentic and contrived content. This phenomenon stems from the instantaneous nature of online communication, where algorithm-driven feeds privilege sensational or emotionally charged material over measured analysis. As a result, powerful actors - including political elites, interest groups, and commercial stakeholders - exploit these dynamics to disseminate tailored narratives that advance their own agendas, often at the expense of nuanced public discourse and social cohesion.⁷

In this context, politics and religion emerge as deeply interwoven domains within postmodern societies, each exerting reciprocal influence on collective identity and power structures. The politicization of religion in the digital age denotes the systematic manipulation or instrumentalization of faith-based symbols and rhetoric to achieve political objectives via digital platforms such as social media, blogs, and messaging applications. Technological affordances - such as virality, microtargeting, and peer-to-peer amplification - have accelerated the spread of content, enabling actors to craft persuasive yet misleading narratives. A prominent manifestation of this trend is the strategic release of fabricated reports or orchestrated hoaxes that harness religious sentiments to sway public opinion, undermine rival groups, or legitimize policy agendas.⁸

Furthermore, the pervasive integration of social media into everyday life has elevated these platforms from optional communication channels to central arenas for political engagement and identity formation. Campaigns leveraging religious symbolism and moral appeals can rapidly mobilize online communities, yet they also deepen societal rifts by reinforcing in-group/out-group mentalities. Such practices frequently give rise to polarizing

⁵ R Asharudin, "Analisis Pemikiran Jean Baudrillard Tentang Simulasi Dan Realitas Dalam Konteks Era Digital," *Gunung Djati Conference Series*, 2023, <http://conferences.uinsgd.ac.id/index.php/gdcs/article/view/1682>.

⁶ Ahmde, *Posmodernisme and Islam: Predicament and Promise*, Routledge, (2013):

⁷ Ahmad Junaidi, *Media Dan Komunikasi Politik, Media Dan Komunikasi Politik* (Depok: Mbiridge Press, 2018).

⁸ Noor Achmad, "Politisasi Agama di Era Digital dan Penanganannya", *e-Publikasi Ilmiah Unwahas*, (2018): 141-145.

rhetoric, heighten interfaith tensions, and institutionalize discrimination against minority faith communities both online and offline.⁹

Simultaneously, political actors and organized movements deliberately employ digital tools to cultivate and consolidate religious identities among target constituencies. Through coordinated content strategies - including livestreamed sermons, faith-infused political messaging, and algorithmically optimized advertisements - these groups aim to galvanize mass support by framing electoral choices as moral imperatives. This conflation of sacred values with partisan politics not only strengthens loyalties within the majority group but also marginalizes dissenting voices and undermines democratic pluralism.¹⁰

Yet, the same digital infrastructures that underpin religious politicization also furnish opportunities for progressive and civil society actors to champion religious freedom, interfaith dialogue, and humanitarian causes. By deploying data-driven advocacy campaigns, online petitions, and virtual forums, these stakeholders can amplify marginalized perspectives, foster inclusive communities, and catalyze constructive debate on pressing social issues. In doing so, digital religion transcends its instrumentalization for political ends and becomes a vehicle for empowerment and transformative social change.¹¹

METHOD

The descriptive-analytical method is a research approach designed to describe, present, and explain the phenomena or objects under investigation in a detailed and comprehensive manner. It collects existing data to identify emerging patterns, trends, and characteristics. This method proves particularly effective for generating an in-depth understanding of the subject matter, as it enables the production of accurate and richly detailed descriptions of all observed elements.

According to Sugiyono, research methodology constitutes the scientific means of acquiring valid data with the objectives of discovering, verifying, and expanding knowledge, which can subsequently be employed to understand, solve, and identify problems within any given domain.¹²

⁹ Harun Harsono, “Politik Identitas Dan Partisipasi Politik Di Media Sosial: Analisis Model Struktural Pada Generasi Z Di Kota Malang,” *Electoral Governance Jurnal Tata Kelola Pemilu Indonesia* 4, no. 2 (2023): 166–87, <https://doi.org/10.46874/tkp.v4i2.752>.

¹⁰ Budi Kurniawan, “Politikisasi Agama di Tahun Politik: Politik Pasca-Kebenaran di Indonesia dan Ancaman bagi Demokrasi”, *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama*, Vol. 12, No. 1, (2018): 133-154.

¹¹ Abdullah Muslich Rizal Maulana, “Agama Digital (Digital Religion) dan Relevansinya Terhadap Studi Agama Interdisipliner: Sebuah Tinjauan Literatur”, *At-Takfir: Jurnal Pendidikan, Hukum dan sosial keagamaan*, Vol. 15, No. 2, (2022): 35-56.

¹² Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, kualitatif dan R&D*, Bandung: Alfabeta, (2009), 2.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Historical and Intellectual Setting of Jean Baudrillard

Jean Baudrillard, born on 20 July 1929 in Reims, France, emerged as one of the most incisive critics of consumer society and mass media in the latter half of the twentieth century. After studying German and sociology at the University of Paris–Nanterre, he joined its faculty and later taught at the University of Paris-X (Nanterre), influencing a generation of scholars and activists. In *The Consumer Society* (1970), Baudrillard argued that consumer culture had moved beyond satisfying needs to creating identities through the acquisition and display of objects. Modern consumption, he showed, operates through social signs, displacing traditional moral and communal values and immersing individuals in a relentless cycle of desire and obsolescence.¹³

Baudrillard's intellectual development was further shaped by Marshall McLuhan, whose dictum “the medium is the message” underscored the formative power of communication technologies. Extending McLuhan's insights, Baudrillard contended that media do not merely transmit content but generate new systems of signification, where representations precede and determine perceived reality. The political upheavals of May 1968 at Nanterre also shaped his thinking, exposing him to student-led challenges against ideological structures. His involvement with the radical journal *Utopie* deepened his engagement with anarchosituationist critiques of spectacle and structuralist Marxism, situating his thought at the crossroads of cultural critique and political radicalism. During this formative period, he drew on Marcel Mauss's analyses of social exchange, Georges Bataille's studies of transgression and eroticism, Freud's psychoanalytic models, and Marxist critiques of capitalism. These interdisciplinary encounters enabled Baudrillard to develop a dense theoretical framework foregrounding symbols, power, and desire.¹⁴

Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981) offers a foundational critique of how postmodern societies experience reality through mediated images and symbols. He argued that rather than reflecting external truths, signs in late capitalism create a self-contained universe of simulations that precede and define the real. Baudrillard mapped successive orders of simulacra - from simple counterfeits to advanced hyperrealities — where originals become indistinguishable from their copies. Iconic examples include theme parks that compress history into spectacles and news media that script events as dramatic narratives. In

¹³ Fadhilah, “Relevansi Logika Sosial Konsumsi dengan Budaya Konsumerisme dalam Perspektif Epitimologi Jean Baudrillard”, *Jurnal Kybernan*, Vol. 12, No. 1, (2011): 40-57.

¹⁴ Muhammad Azwar, “Teori Simulacrum Jean Baudrillard dan Upaya Pustakawan Mengidentifikasi Informasi Realitas”, *Al-Hikmah: Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan dan Kearsipan Khizanah*, Vol. 2, No, 1, (2014): 39-40

such environments, individuals no longer engage with unmediated reality but inhabit a realm of continuous sign-production, erasing the boundary between reality and its representation.¹⁵

This notion of hyperreality is even more pronounced in today's social media platforms. User feeds are algorithmically curated to privilege emotionally charged or sensational content, producing personalized echo chambers. Visual filters, staged "authenticity," and viral trends create experiences that feel genuine but are highly engineered. For instance, urban food influencers transform routine dining into hyperreal spectacles, offering "perfect bites" that simulate and even surpass actual taste. In these contexts, the simulated image does not merely distort the original but entirely replaces it, creating a collective orientation toward symbols over substance.¹⁶

Baudrillard extended his analysis to political life, arguing that it has become a spectacle of consumer culture. Political figures assume the aura of celebrities, deploying choreographed appearances, brand partnerships, and social-media endorsements to cultivate curated personas. Campaign rallies function less as forums for substantive debate than as media events designed to generate favorable imagery. Policy proposals are often secondary to the production of compelling soundbites and visual memes. Consequently, political "content" operates as a stream of symbolic gestures, with public opinion shaped by the coherence of the constructed image rather than by the material impact of governance.¹⁷

The intersection of religion and politics in the digital age exemplifies a similar transformation. Faith traditions are repackaged as media brands: televised sermons adopt cinematic techniques, and virtual pilgrimages are gamified to maximize engagement metrics. Religious symbols are optimized for shareability, while influencers monetize spiritual narratives through sponsored content. In this simulacral environment, rituals become performative displays divorced from communal practice, and theological nuance is traded for polarizing soundbites. Religion thus becomes another vector for image-based persuasion, deployed by actors who mobilize devotional affect to achieve political ends.

Despite this pervasive immersion in simulacra, Baudrillard gestured toward the potential of the sublime as a momentary rupture in the cycle of simulation - an experience that jolts individuals into an awareness of the underlying absence created by hyperreality. Such moments, he suggested, could foster critical distance and open pathways to reconsider the very frameworks through which reality is mediated.

¹⁵ Fitria, "Hiperrealitas Dalam Social Media (Studi Kasus: Makan Cantik Di Senopati Pada Masyarakat Perkotaan)". *Informasi*, Vol. 45, No. 2, (2016): 87

¹⁶ Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulations."

¹⁷ Oktavianingtyas, Seran, Ridzki, "Jean Baudrillard and His Main Thoughts", *Propaganda*, Vol. 1, No. 2, (2021): 113-121.

Religious and Political Expressions in the Postmodern

Religious and political expressions in the postmodern era are inherently multifaceted and dynamic. Postmodernism, emerging in the twentieth century as a reaction to the certainties of modern thought, has profoundly reshaped cultural, religious, and political practices by challenging established traditions and epistemologies. Although no single definition fully captures its complexity, three key features are widely recognized: (1) the rejection of grand narratives, which deny any totalizing explanation of social phenomena; (2) pluralism and relativism, which embrace complexity and heterogeneity; and (3) the primacy of debate and critique, encouraging sustained critical engagement and reflexivity amid contested issues.¹⁸

Within this paradigm, religious and political discourses spread across diverse “micro-narratives,” each constructing its own symbolic order and interpretive logic. Digital media accelerates this fragmentation by curating niche audiences and amplifying affective content, simultaneously empowering marginalized voices while heightening intergroup tensions. As a result, communities deploy strategic narratives invoking religious imagery or political symbols to negotiate identity, mobilize support, and challenge authority, producing constant renegotiation of communal boundaries.¹⁹

Religious and political expressions in the postmodern era exhibit marked diversification and complexity, underpinned by an epistemological shift away from unified dogmas toward pluralistic, individualized practices. Within the sphere of religious life, adherents frequently engage in syncretic spiritualities, integrating motifs and rituals across multiple faith traditions or even embracing non-denominational belief systems. Such fluidity foregrounds the primacy of personal, subjective experience: religious value is increasingly gauged by individual encounter and meaning-making rather than by adherence to fixed doctrinal codes.²⁰

Concurrently, postmodern political expression undergoes analogous fragmentation. Traditional ideological paradigms lose their hegemony, giving way to a mosaic of competing perspectives that reject any claim to absolute political truth. This climate elevates issues of identity-gender, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation—as central axes of mobilization and political discourse. Campaigns and movements foreground social justice, championing the rights of marginalized and minority groups while repudiating authoritarian or monolithic governance models. The resultant political landscape is characterized by pluralism,

¹⁸ Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition (Theory and History of Literature; v. 10)*, *Journal of Linguistics*, vol. 1, 1984.

¹⁹ Piliang, *Dunia yang Dilipat: Tamasya Melampaui Batas-Batas Kebudayaan*, Cantrik Pustaka, (2019),

²⁰ Miftahul Munir, “Postmodernisme: Sebuah Dekonstruksi Dan Kritik Dalam Seni,” *EKSPRESI: Indonesian Art Journal* 10, no. 1 (2010): 42–57, <https://journal.isi.ac.id/index.php/ekspresi/article/view/7851>.

contestation, and an ongoing negotiation of values in pursuit of more inclusive, participatory forms of governance.²¹²²

In the postmodern era, these transformations are further accelerated by digital media.²³ Firstly, digital religious consumerism reflects paradigm shifts described by Jean Baudrillard, who argued that religion has become a public spectacle and a commodity consumed via social platforms. In this framework, simulacra constitute the “reality” encountered by society, presenting the authentic as a replica and shaping cognitive schemas and behaviors of the faithful. Secondly, postmodern political engagement intensified around 1998, when religion-infused political issues rose prominently within a contested democratic environment, evolving into a form of social-media entertainment.²⁴

Baudrillard further argued that postmodernity is dominated by media and simulation, with mass communication replacing tangible reality with an artificial construct. The digital realm offers a proliferation of imaginaries illusions, conceptual artefacts, hallucinations that stand in for direct experience. This is described as the “virtual world,” “simulation,” “image,” “simulacra,” or “hyperreality,” illustrating how media mediate and sometimes replace authentic engagement with reality.²⁵

Contemporary religious expression increasingly unfolds within virtual environments, employing photography, illustrations, video, and film to transmit spiritual narratives and rituals to global audiences.²⁶ This mirrors Baudrillard’s notion of simulacra, in which mediated representations form a “second reality” that displaces deeper religious substance. Although such simulacra project vivid images of faith communities and practices, they do not reference the substantive core of lived religiosity, instead emphasizing surface aesthetics and stylized reenactments. As a result, digital faith expressions may appear convincing while remaining detached from authentic experiential and communal dimensions of religion.²⁷

²¹ Krida Amalia Husna, “Dari Tradisional Ke Post Modern: Perkembangan Historiografi Indonesia,” *SENTRI: Jurnal Riset Ilmiah* 3, no. 1 (2024): 434–41, <https://doi.org/10.55681/sentri.v3i1.2197>.

²² Darsitun, “Menakar Ulang Hermeneutika dalam Studi Alquran di Era Modern dan Kontemporer (Pendekatan Sastra, Sejarah dan Sains), *Islamadina: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, Vol. 22, No. 1, (2021): 40-57.

²³ Brian McHale, *The Cambridge Introduction to Postmodernism*, *The Cambridge Introduction to Postmodernism*, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.1007/CBO9781139108706>.

²⁴ Theguh Saumantri, Taufik Hidayatulloh, and Dhea Dayuranggi Meghatruh, “Konsumerisme Beragama Di Era Digital: Analisis Paradigma Postmodernisme Jean Baudrillard Terhadap Fenomena Beragama Umat Islam Di Indonesia,” *Islamadina: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 24, no. 2 (2023): 273, <https://doi.org/10.30595/islamadina.v24i2.14961>.

²⁵ Islam, “Simulacra Sebagai Kritik Atas Modernisme (Studi Analisis Atas Pemikiran Jean P. Baudrillard)”, *Jaqfi: Jurnal Aqidah Dan Filsafat Islam*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (2017): 88-112.

²⁶ Achmad, “Politisasi Agama di Era Digital dan Penanganannya”, *Prosiding Senaspolhi*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (2018); 141.

²⁷ Jauhari, “Media Sosial: Hiperrealitas dan Simulacra Perkembangan Masyarakat Zaman Now dalam Pemikiran Jean Baudrillard”, *Jurnal Al-‘Adalah*, Vol. 20, No. 1, (2017): 117-136.

Simulacra and the Hyperreality of Media Culture

Simulacra, the plural form of simulacrum, originates from the Latin *simulare*, meaning to copy, represent, or imitate. According to Merriam-Webster, a simulacrum refers to a representation or likeness of reality. However, as theorized by Jean Baudrillard, simulation is not merely the act of representing reality but rather a process in which reality itself is replaced by its representation. In this framework, simulacra condition our ways of interpreting the world and ourselves, as we increasingly engage with representations and simulations rather than with actual reality.²⁸

Baudrillard also highlights the concept of the sign as a crucial pillar of his thought. In his analysis, signs no longer maintain a direct relationship with their referents; they have lost their original reference and instead function autonomously as simulations of reality. In contemporary society, especially within the digital era, signs and simulations increasingly dominate our lived experience, giving rise to a state of hyperreality in which physical reality and its representations become ever harder to distinguish. The sign thus emerges as a fundamental component in constructing simulations. Baudrillard argues that signs can no longer adequately represent the authentic meaning of the world; instead, they transform and become independent of reality, producing meanings that are detached from the objects they originally signified.²⁹

Baudrillard categorizes signs into three types.³⁰ First, *real signs*, which directly represent phenomena in the material world and maintain a clear correspondence to their referents — for example, traffic signs, natural symbols, or words that describe tangible objects. Second, *simulacra*, which represent realities already supplanted by simulation. These signs no longer connect directly to physical referents but instead construct an autonomous world of simulation. Examples include television images, films, or digital visuals that generate realities separated from actual physical contexts. Third, *false simulacra*, or *simulacrum*, which serve to support and extend the simulation process, creating an artificial reality fully detached from the material world. These signs no longer attempt to represent reality at all, but rather strengthen the simulation itself — as seen, for instance, in video games, where participants inhabit a virtual world entirely disconnected from physical experience.³¹

This typology clarifies how signs have evolved from simple representations of physical reality into independent constructors of meaning within an era of simulation and hyperreality. It underscores how our contemporary world is increasingly immersed in symbolic

²⁸ Saumantri, Hidayatulloh, and Meghatrih, “Konsumerisme Beragama Di Era Digital: Analisis Paradigma Postmodernisme Jean Baudrillard Terhadap Fenomena Beragama Umat Islam Di Indonesia.”

²⁹ Saumantri, “Hyper Religiusitas Di Era Digital: Analisis Paradigma Postmodernisme Jean Baudrillard Terhadap Fenomena Keberagamaan Di Media Sosial.”

³⁰ Baudrillard, “Simulacra and Simulations.”

³¹ Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*.

environments and mediated representations that operate separately from actual, material reality.

In the context of the digital era, information technology and social media play a crucial role in amplifying the dynamics of simulation and hyperreality. Baudrillard's concepts of simulation and the sign are especially relevant for understanding how religious reality is produced through media and technology. Increasingly, individuals engage with the virtual realm of social media, where their identities and interactions are shaped more by digital self-representations than by direct, embodied experiences in the physical world. Thus, Baudrillard's framework of simulation and the sign provides a critical foundation for analyzing how contemporary reality is mediated. In the digital era, representations and simulations have come to dominate lived experience, distorting physical reality through an ever-expanding symbolic universe.³²

The hyperreal *simulacra* of media culture refers to the phenomenon in which the material world is progressively reduced to a distorted representation, effectively replaced by media-driven realities that more powerfully shape public perceptions.³³ In the postmodern condition, media exercise extraordinary influence over how individuals understand and interpret the world around them. Hyperreal simulacra in media culture occur when images, signs, and symbolic codes supplant authentic experience and are collectively recognized as the dominant reality. Media, in this sense, present highly idealized and stylized portrayals that frequently diverge from lived actuality.³⁴ In shaping this manufactured reality, media function as powerful agents that reconfigure how society perceives, understands, and navigates the world.

For example, the hyperreal simulacra of media culture are evident in the beauty industry, which routinely employs sophisticated photo-editing and retouching techniques to craft highly idealized images of the human body and face that rarely reflect actual, lived reality. As a result, media-generated ideals of beauty and body image often remain unattainable and unrealistic, shaping self-perceptions in ways that can be profoundly damaging to individual self-esteem and mental health. In this way, media images function not as transparent reflections of reality but as hyperreal constructs that establish distorted standards against which individuals measure themselves.

The same mechanisms of hyperreal simulacra are equally apparent in the political sphere, where media representations exert considerable power in shaping public perceptions

³² Saumantri, "Hyper Religiusitas Di Era Digital: Analisis Paradigma Postmodernisme Jean Baudrillard Terhadap Fenomena Keberagamaan Di Media Sosial."

³³ V R Masut, R Wijanarko, and P Pandor, "Objektivikasi Subjek Dalam Budaya Kontemporer Berdasarkan Konsep Hiperrealitas Jean Baudrillard," *Jurnal Filsafat Indonesia*, 2023.

³⁴ Haroyono, "Kepalsuan Hidup dalam Hiperrealitas Iklan", *Profetik: Jurnal Komunikasi*, Vol. 12, No. 2, (2020): 232.

of political leaders, parties, and policy issues. Media narratives can fabricate idealized images or manipulate factual information to bolster a politician's popularity or, conversely, to discredit opponents. By privileging spectacle over substance, political communication in the hyperreal realm reduces complex policy debates to easily consumable visual tropes and emotionally charged messages, contributing to a culture of superficial political engagement.

In certain instances, the influence of hyperreal simulacra in media culture produces a profound ambiguity between reality and its representation, leaving individuals unable to distinguish what genuinely occurs from what is portrayed through mediated channels. This blurring of boundaries has far-reaching consequences for crucial dimensions of human experience, including culture, politics, and personal identity. In the digital era, social media and the internet have significantly amplified and accelerated the power of media in everyday life, expanding the scope and intensity of its symbolic influence. These developments underscore the central argument of postmodern theory that media now play an indispensable role in constructing public perceptions and shaping our collective sense of reality.³⁵

The Politicization of Religion in the Digital Era

According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (the authoritative Indonesian language dictionary), “*politisasi*” refers to the act of rendering a situation, action, or idea political in character. Applied to religion, *politisasi agama* thus signifies the transformation of religious practices, symbols, or ideas into tools of political strategy, subordinating their spiritual or theological dimensions to political objectives.³⁶

In the digital era, the politicization of religion increasingly involves the strategic use of social media to advance political agendas rooted in specific religious worldviews. Politicians and political groups deploy digital platforms to mobilize religious identities as cohesive voting blocs, often leveraging religious narratives or politicized sermons to rally electoral support. Such practices can exacerbate polarization and intensify conflict between different religious communities, while also promoting discrimination or intolerance toward minority faith groups.³⁷

Moreover, the politicization of religion in digital contexts often features targeted online campaigns that seek to influence electoral outcomes by exploiting sensitive religious issues. These campaigns may circulate content designed to persuade voters to support candidates who align with their religious identity, sometimes manipulating emotions around sacred symbols to do so. The potential for such manipulation raises profound concerns about the integrity of democratic processes and the ethical use of religious discourse in public life.

³⁵ Haroyono, “Kepalsuan Hidup dalam Hiperrealitas Iklan”, *Profetik: Jurnal Komunikasi*, Vol. 12, No. 2, (2020): 232.

³⁶ Malik dan Batubara

³⁷ Budi Kurniawan, “Politikasi Agama di Tahun Politik: Politik Pasca-Kebenaran di Indonesia dan Ancaman bagi Demokrasi”, *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama*, Vol. 12, No. 1, (2018): 133-154.

Nonetheless, the digital politicization of religion is not exclusively negative. Digital platforms can equally serve as channels for progressive and humanitarian actors to advocate for religious rights, promote interfaith tolerance, and highlight social justice issues relevant to religious communities. The broad diffusion of information has enabled greater public awareness of critical religious concerns, opening opportunities for more inclusive and rights-based engagements in the public sphere.³⁸

The role of religion in political life can vary substantially depending on a nation's historical context, cultural traditions, and dominant belief systems. In some countries, religion exerts a profound influence on politics, with political parties explicitly grounded in religious ideology or moral values that shape public policy and legislation. In these settings, religion often provides a normative framework through which laws and policies are legitimized, reflecting broader communal values and ethical standards. Furthermore, religion can serve as a powerful instrument for consolidating political power. Political leaders may strategically employ religious rhetoric and symbols to garner popular support and legitimize their authority in the eyes of the public, effectively merging spiritual legitimacy with political power.

By contrast, in states that adhere to secular principles and maintain a strict separation of religion and politics, religious belief is expected to remain a matter of private conviction, without direct influence over political decision-making. Within these secular environments, religion is largely confined to the personal and communal spheres, preserving a clear boundary between religious practice and state governance.

However, in recent years, particularly against the backdrop of increasingly polarized and complex political climates, religion has reemerged as a significant factor in political discourse and decision-making. The rise of religious movements, whether organized or individual, has encouraged more active participation in political debates and policy issues deemed vital to religious communities. This growing engagement reflects a broader global trend in which religious identity becomes a vehicle for collective mobilization, advocacy, and even resistance.

Nevertheless, numerous critics have expressed concern about the potential dangers of religion's involvement in politics. They argue that religious influence may undermine human rights, restrict individual freedoms, and provoke social conflict. The debate over the politicization of religion also emphasizes how religious language and symbolism can be instrumentalized to pursue political ambitions and consolidate power, raising questions about authenticity and manipulation. In response, some scholars have proposed frameworks such

³⁸ Abdullah Muslich Rizal Maulana, "Agama Digital (Digital Religion) dan Relevansinya Terhadap Studi Agama Interdisipliner: Sebuah Tinjauan Literatur", *At-Takfir: Jurnal Pendidikan, Hukum dan sosial keagamaan*, Vol. 15, No. 2, (2022): 35-56.

as “political religion” or “religious politics” to better conceptualize and analyze the complex interactions between religion and politics. These frameworks aim to capture the multiple dimensions of religious thought, identity, and collective action that shape political processes on both local and global scales.

CONCLUSION

In the digital era, information technology and social media have assumed a pivotal role in amplifying the dynamics of simulation and hyperreality. Drawing on Baudrillard's framework of simulation and the sign, one can see how contemporary religious realities are increasingly produced, circulated, and consumed through digital media. Individuals and communities now operate within virtual environments where personal identities and social interactions are shaped far more by curated digital representations than by direct, embodied experience. This profound shift reconfigures how people perceive themselves and their social worlds, as mediated symbols and images gradually displace authentic, lived realities. In this context, the boundaries between the virtual and the physical become increasingly blurred, encouraging forms of engagement that prioritize spectacle and surface-level symbolism over depth, tradition, or shared meaning. Such transformations highlight the urgency of critically examining how the digital environment not only mediates but actively reshapes religious belief, ritual practices, and communal affiliations in ways that challenge established understandings of the sacred and the communal.

Simultaneously, the politicization of religion in the digital sphere further illustrates these dynamics of simulation. Social media platforms have become powerful tools for advancing political agendas rooted in religious worldviews, enabling politicians and affiliated groups to reinforce religious identities as cohesive bases of electoral support. These strategies often intensify polarization, deepen intergroup conflict, and foster discrimination against religious minorities, particularly when sensitive symbols or theological themes are strategically deployed to stoke sectarian sentiments. Moreover, targeted online campaigns can manipulate religious loyalties to influence electoral outcomes, thereby distorting democratic processes and undermining pluralistic values. Nevertheless, the same digital infrastructures also open pathways for progressive actors, civil society organizations, and interfaith networks to promote religious freedom, advance humanitarian concerns, and support inclusive public dialogue. These counter-movements demonstrate how digital platforms, despite their risks, can still serve transformative purposes by fostering cross-cultural understanding and empowering marginalized voices. In sum, the digital era has profoundly transformed both the religious and political landscapes, demanding nuanced and ethically grounded approaches to questions of simulation, hyperreality, and the contested place of religion in contemporary society.

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INTEGRATING TAWAZUN AND WASATIYYAH: A QUALITATIVE LITERATURE STUDY ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM CONTEZTS

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Abstrak. Era Islam kontemporer menuntut masyarakat Muslim menyeimbangkan tuntutan pekerjaan dengan kebutuhan spiritual dan sosial. Kajian pustaka kualitatif ini menelaah konsep work - life balance melalui paradigma *tawazun* (keseimbangan) dan *wasatiyyah* (moderasi). Sumber yang dianalisis berupa artikel jurnal, monograf, dan laporan penelitian terbitan 2000-2024. Analisis tematik mengungkap tiga kelompok faktor penentu keseimbangan hidup: (1) internalisasi nilai-nilai Islam; (2) dinamika budaya kerja serta tekanan sosial; dan (3) pemanfaatan teknologi digital untuk mendukung praktik keagamaan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa individu Muslim mampu mengharmonikan tuntutan dunia - pendidikan dan karier - dengan kewajiban ukhrawi melalui manajemen waktu disiplin, penguatan komitmen spiritual, dan penggunaan teknologi secara terarah. Strategi tersebut meningkatkan kesejahteraan psikologis dan menurunkan tingkat stres. Kajian ini memperkaya diskursus work-life balance dengan menghadirkan kerangka etika Islam yang relevan untuk menjawab tantangan kehidupan modern.

Kata Kunci: Keseimbangan Kerja-hidup, *Tawazun*, *Wasatiyyah*, Islam Kontemporer, Kesejahteraan Psikologis

Judul: *Integrasi Tawazun dan Wasatiyyah: Studi tentang Keseimbangan Kerja-idup dalam Konteks Muslim Kontemporer*

Abstract: Contemporary Muslim societies must balance demanding professional roles with enduring spiritual and social obligations. This qualitative literature review investigates work-life balance through the Islamic principles of *tawazun* (equilibrium) and *wasatiyyah* (moderation). A thematic analysis of peer-reviewed articles, monographs, and research reports published between 2000 and 2024 reveals three determinant clusters: (1) internalisation of Islamic values; (2) workplace culture and social pressures; and (3) strategic use of digital technologies to support religious practice. The findings show that Muslim professionals can harmonise worldly expectations - education and career - with eschatological commitments by adopting disciplined time management, strengthening spiritual devotion, and selectively leveraging technology. These strategies enhance psychological well-being and mitigate stress. By embedding Islamic ethical constructs within mainstream work-life-balance discourse, this study offers a culturally attuned framework for navigating modern life.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, *Tawazun*, *Wasatiyyah*, Contemporary Islam, Psychological Well-Being



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INTRODUCTION

The concept of work-life balance in contemporary Islam emerges as a pressing concern amidst the shifting dynamics of Muslim family life in the era of globalization and digitalization. As modern society experiences an acceleration in technological advances, shifting economic models, and increasing demands in both domestic and professional spheres, Muslim individuals find themselves challenged to reconcile their religious identity with the exigencies of modern living. The convergence of rapid social transformation and the digital economy necessitates the ability to manage and harmonize various life domains - family, career, personal development, and spirituality.

In this context, work-life balance in contemporary Islam is not a superficial arrangement between hours spent at work and time allocated to family. Rather, it is a deeply rooted ethical paradigm that encompasses material and non-material aspects of life. Islam recognizes the human need for both *al-umur al-dunyawiyyah* (worldly affairs) and *al-umur al-ukhrawiyyah* (spiritual affairs), integrating both into a holistic vision of human well-being. As such, work-life balance in Islamic discourse involves more than productivity - it touches on justice, personal responsibility, social harmony, and spiritual fulfillment.

The dimensions of balance as envisioned in Islam cannot be separated from its normative values. Concepts such as *'adl* (justice), *mas'uliyah* (responsibility), and *tawazun* (equilibrium) serve as ethical foundations for a meaningful and proportionate life. These values are not merely moral ideals but practical imperatives for Muslims navigating modern society. Work-life balance is thus both a personal discipline and a social necessity. An analytical study conducted by Andriyana and Saoki revealed that flexible working hours, positive family relationships, and work motivation can significantly enhance the productivity of Muslim employees, demonstrating that ethical balance has tangible effects on human performance and psychological well-being.¹

In exploring the philosophical foundation of work-life balance in Islam, the thoughts of Harun Nasution hold a particular significance. As a key figure in Indonesian Islamic modernism, Nasution represents a rationalistic school of Islamic thought that seeks to bridge the gap between traditional religious doctrine and contemporary socio-political realities.² His approach is not to negate Islamic orthodoxy but to reinterpret its core values in ways that

¹ Ahmad Saoki Andriyana and Supriansyah Supriansyah, "Konsep Work Life Balance Terhadap Produktivitas Pegawai yang Menerapkan Work From Home Pada Masa Pendemi Covid-19 (Studi Literatur)," *JENIUS (Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia)* 5, no. 1 (September 17, 2021): 1, accessed April 3, 2025, <http://openjournal.unpam.ac.id/index.php/JJSDM/article/view/13138>.

² ibrahim, "Pemikiran Islam Kontemporer (Studi Kritis Terhadap Pemikiran Harun Nasution)," *Jurnal Aqidah* Vol. II No. 2 (Thn 2016).

respond to modern challenges.³ For Nasution, the use of reason ('aql) is not antagonistic to revelation (*wahy*), but rather complementary. This dialectic allows for a formulation of Islamic life that affirms religious piety while embracing worldly responsibility.⁴

In the realm of work-life balance, Harun Nasution's rationalist framework offers a valuable lens through which the harmony between worldly needs and religious obligations can be understood. He maintained that religion should not alienate believers from societal progress, but instead provide ethical guidance to navigate it. His interpretation opens the possibility of constructing a work ethic rooted in Islamic spirituality, without neglecting rational engagement with the world. This harmonization aligns closely with the concept of *wasathiyah*, or moderation, as promoted in the Quran and Hadith.⁵ In this light, work-life balance becomes an embodiment of *wasathiyah* - a moderation not only in consumption and worship but also in how Muslims allocate their time and energy across various aspects of life.

By implementing the principles of work-life balance in everyday life, multiple implications can be observed. These include benefits on the psychological dimension - such as reduced stress and burnout; the interpersonal dimension - such as improved relationships within the family; the social dimension - such as increased communal participation; and even the religious dimension - such as enhanced devotion and *khushu'* in worship. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) modeled a life of balance: he was a spiritual leader, a statesman, a father, and a businessman. Each role was carried out with proportion and justice. In this prophetic model, Muslims are encouraged to live a balanced life that does not sacrifice one domain for another.

Therefore, according to the researchers, the concept of work-life balance in contemporary Islam should be understood as a vital bridge between the fulfillment of worldly needs and the obedience to divine commands.⁶ In this framework, religion is not merely a ritual system but the highest source of ethical knowledge that helps individuals use reason to navigate competing priorities⁷. As the Quran repeatedly commands believers to reflect (*yatafakkarun*) and to use intellect (*ya'qilun*), human rationality becomes a crucial tool in

³ Zul Azimi, "MOTIVATION IN ISLAM," *Tahqiqa Journal: Scientific Journal of Islamic Legal Thought* 18, no. 1 (January 30, 2024): 61–69, <https://doi.org/10.61393/tahqiqa.v18i1.209>.

⁴ Bambang Dwi Hartono, Sarji Sarji, and Anggita Windiana Sari, "Pengaruh work life balance dan lingkungan kerja terhadap kepuasan kerja karyawan generasi milenial di PT Telkom Indonesia pada unit digital operation and assurance dalam pengembangan karir dalam perspektif ilmu islam," *Ar Rasyiid: Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (February 23, 2024): 21–28.

⁵ Destry Yayu Ramdhani and Dr Rasto, "Keseimbangan Kehidupan Kerja (Work Life Balance) Sebagai Faktor yang Mempengaruhi Kinerja Karyawan," *Jurnal MANAJERIAL* 20, no. 1 (December 9, 2021): 98–106, accessed March 9, 2025, <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/manajerial/article/view/29670>.

⁶ Ade Irma Suryani, "Keseimbangan Kehidupan Kerja dan Kepuasan Hidup: Studi Meta-Analisis," *Jurnal Psikologi* 13, no. 1 (2020): 92–104, accessed March 9, 2025, <https://ejournal.gunadarma.ac.id/index.php/psiko/article/view/2697>.

⁷ Muhammad Basri, Juni Hati Hangoluan Siregar, and Nurtia Sumarni Hasibuan, "Islam di Indonesia Zaman Modern dan Kontemporer" (2024).

achieving balance in a complex world. This line of thinking echoes Harun Nasution's argument that religious knowledge should be grounded in both revelation and rational reflection.⁸

In the contemporary Islamic world, especially in Indonesia, Muslims are witnessing a reshaping of work culture due to the rise of digital labor, hybrid workspaces, and a growing emphasis on productivity. While these transformations offer flexibility, they also blur the boundaries between professional and personal life.⁹ Islamic ethics thus offers a set of principles to regulate this fluidity. The Quranic values of moderation, time consciousness, and the sanctity of family life provide the scaffolding for a balanced existence. For example, the regulation of prayer times throughout the day structures time in a way that naturally interrupts overwork and calls believers back to spiritual grounding.¹⁰

Within this research, the discussion of work-life balance will be framed using the concepts of *tawazun* and *wasathiyah* as central categories. *Tawazun* emphasizes equilibrium in action, thought, and intention. It prohibits excessiveness and negligence alike.¹¹ *Wasathiyah* complements this by promoting a middle path - a stance that avoids extremes and encourages proportionality in religious and social conduct.¹² Together, these two values offer a cohesive paradigm through which Muslims can navigate the competing demands of work, family, and worship.

The researcher will also explore how the internalization of these principles contributes to an individual's ability to construct a sustainable lifestyle that is ethically coherent with Islamic teachings. In this exploration, the thought of Harun Nasution will be critically examined to understand how rational Islamic theology supports the implementation of work-life balance.¹³ By drawing on both classical Islamic sources and contemporary interpretations, the article seeks to build a bridge between normative ideals and empirical realities.¹⁴

⁸ Elan Nurhadi Purwanto, "Pengaruh Kompetensi Manajer melalui Kapabilitas Inovasi terhadap Tipe Inovasi UKM Berorientasi Ekspor di Indonesia," *INOBIS: Jurnal Inovasi Bisnis dan Manajemen Indonesia* 6, no. 4 (April 13, 2023): 488–505, accessed March 9, 2025, <https://inobis.org/ojs/index.php/jurnal-inobis/article/view/293>.

⁹ Muhammad Hidayat Sir and Muh Azis Muslim, "Work Life Balance bagi Prajurit Angkatan Darat dan Dampaknya pada Pengelolaan Personel," *jeya* 7, no. 2 (July 1, 2024): 1406–1415.

¹⁰ Sokhi Huda, "Struktur Pemikiran dan Gerakan Islam Kontemporer," *Al-Tabrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 18, no. 1 (July 27, 2018): 153.

¹¹ Farhah Desrianty Gimri et al., "Konsep untuk Menciptakan Keseimbangan Hidup Manusia dalam Sistem Pendidikan Islam," *Baitul Hikmah: Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman* 1, no. 2 (December 31, 2023): 108–122.

¹² Muhammad Nurcahyoadi et al., "Konsep Tawazun Dan Aktualisasinya Dalam Kehidupan Berbangsa Dan Bernegara," *Jurnal Studi Multidisipliner* Vol 8 (Desember 2024).

¹³ Muhammad Syawal Rosyid Darman, "Konsep Washatiyyah Islam Perspektif Quraish Shihab (Telaah Kritik Nalar Islam Mohammed Arkoun)," *Al Muhibidz: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Quran dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (August 30, 2022): 147–159.

¹⁴ Adinda Rahmatia Putri et al., "The Concept of Washatiyyah in Islam,"

METHOD

The research method used in this study is the literature study method (*library research*). This method was chosen because this study aims to examine in depth and comprehensively the application of *tawazun* and *wasatiyyah attitudes* in achieving work *life balance* in the contemporary Islamic era through searching various relevant written sources. Data were collected from various written sources such as books, scientific journals, articles, encyclopedias, written works, and other reliable sources either in written form or digital format that are relevant and related to the object being studied. Relevant keyword searches were conducted in catalogs, indexes, search engines, and full-text sources to narrow the search and find sources that were not captured under relevant subject headings.¹⁵

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Work-life balance (WLB) has emerged as a critical issue in the contemporary Islamic context, encompassing multifaceted dimensions that influence the quality of life for Muslim families navigating globalization and digitalization. Beyond merely allocating time between professional commitments and personal life, WLB in Islam extends to achieving a harmonious equilibrium between worldly success and spiritual fulfillment in the hereafter. This duality reflects the Islamic principle of *tawazun* (balance), which emphasizes proportionality in fulfilling material needs while prioritizing eternal rewards.¹⁶

The Quran explicitly advocates for this balanced approach, as illustrated in Surah Al-Qasas 28:77: “*Seek the pleasures of the Hereafter by means of what Allah has granted you, but do not neglect your share of this world.*” A textual analysis of this verse underscores the *wasatiyyah* ethos - permitting the enjoyment of worldly provisions while reminding believers of the ultimate accountability in the hereafter. This theological framework positions WLB not merely as a socio-economic concern but as a devotional act aligning human endeavors with divine commandments.¹⁷

Work Life Balance in the Contemporary Islamic Era.

Work-life balance represents the equitable allocation of time and resources between occupational duties and personal domains. Empirical evidence suggests that achieving such equilibrium significantly influences overall job satisfaction. For instance, Devina and Suherman found that work - life balance accounted for approximately 40 percent of variance in employee satisfaction, indicating that an optimal distribution between professional and

¹⁵ Miza Nina Adlini et al., “Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka,” *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (March 1, 2022): 974–980.

¹⁶ Nur Lailatul Lusiana et al., “Balance of Life in the Koran: Study of Tafsir tarbawy,”

¹⁷ Halya Millati and Mohammad Arif, “The Significance of Balance Life in Surah Al-Qasas Verse77,” *Kontemplasi: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 9, no. 2 (March 17, 2022): 249–268.

personal spheres plays a pivotal role in determining workers' contentment. Nonetheless, the same study revealed considerable heterogeneity: 33.33 percent of respondents reported moderate satisfaction, while 26.67 percent remained dissatisfied. This divergence underscores a persistent gap in cultivating ideal work - life balance practices within contemporary workplaces and signals the need for organizational interventions to enhance employee well-being.¹⁸

From an Islamic epistemology, life in this world (*al-hayāt ad-dunyā*) is framed as ephemeral, serving chiefly as preparation for the eternal abode of the hereafter². The Qur'anic injunction, "O my people, indeed the life of this world is only (temporary) pleasure, whereas the hereafter is the abode of permanence."¹⁹

Reminds believers that professional endeavour must be harmonized with spiritual obligations and familial responsibilities. Consequently, work-life balance in an Islamic paradigm transcends mere temporal allocation and encompasses ethical procurement of livelihoods, ritual observance, and preparation for the afterlife.

A large-scale survey by SEEK - parent company of Asia's leading career platforms JobStreet and JobsDB - interviewed 97,324 respondents across Indonesia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.²⁰ Findings indicate that 34 percent were actively seeking new employment, driven primarily by aspirations for elevated roles (49 percent), limited advancement prospects (30 percent), and remuneration dissatisfaction (27 percent). Notably, within Indonesia, 76 percent of participants reported receiving multiple job offers annually, illustrating intense market competition, while 43 percent identified work-life balance as a decisive factor in job selection. These statistics suggest that, beyond salary and career trajectory, prospective employees increasingly weigh holistic well-being in their occupational decisions.

Conceptually, work-life balance denotes the equitable distribution of time and cognitive resources between vocational duties and personal life, a construct empirically linked to reduced stress, enhanced psychosomatic health, and improved life quality.²¹ In the era of remote work, as examined by Lingkanbene et al. in North Sulawesi, the integration of domestic and professional spheres has yielded both opportunities for autonomy and challenges in boundary management. Their results reveal that while telecommuting enhances

¹⁸ Devina Damayanti and Enjang Suherman, "Analisis Work-Life Balance Terhadap Kepuasan Kerja Pada Pekerja Generasi Milenial" 02, no. 01 (2024).

¹⁹ "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Surah Ghafir Verse 39 غافر Complete Indonesian Translation Meaning," <https://daaralatsarindonesia.com/tafsir-040-039/>.

²⁰ Joan Imanuella Hanna Pangemanan, "Studi Buktikan Pekerja Di Indonesia Lebih Mementingkan Work Life Balance," *Media Indonesia*, March 1, 2023.

²¹ Gloridei Lingkanbene Kapahang, Mike Angelina Kelly Lovihan, and Meike Endang Hartati, "Keseimbangan Hidup dan Kerja: Dampak Bekerja dari Rumah pada Karyawan Di Sulawesi Utara," *Sebatik* 26, no. 1 (June 1, 2022): 164–172.

perceived autonomy, it simultaneously blurs role demarcations, necessitating deliberate strategies - such as designated workspaces and structured schedules - to maintain equilibrium.

Within the framework of contemporary Muslim families, the division of responsibilities is delineated along both material and spiritual lines.²² The husband is charged with securing lawful provision (*riqiq*) without neglecting spiritual guidance, thereby fostering an environment conducive to religious observance. Conversely, the wife orchestrates domestic affairs through the lens of worship (*ibadah*) and may contribute economically in a manner that preserves the sanctity of household harmony. This dual-role model exemplifies how Islamic teachings can be operationalized to achieve balance between professional professionalism and familial obligations.

Demographically, Indonesia's Gen Z cohort - comprising 34.7 percent of the population born between 1997 and 2012 - exhibits pronounced prioritization of work-life balance.²³ A study by Jangkara Data Lab and Jakpat, analysing social media discourse and surveying 1,185 individuals aged 16-29 between 1-3 June 2024, finds that flexible working hours and life-balance considerations outweigh traditional career incentives. This trend underscores a paradigm shift in employment preferences, compelling organizations to recalibrate job design and retention strategies in alignment with the values of emerging talent.

In sum, achieving work - life balance in the contemporary Islamic era entails synthesizing empirical insights with doctrinal imperatives. Organizations that embed flexibility, ethical earning practices, and spiritual-family integration into their culture are likely to foster sustainable well-being and loyalty among Muslim employees.

Implementation of Tawazun Attitude in the Contemporary Islamic Context

Balance (*tawazun*) in everyday life is evidenced by the manner in which individuals allocate temporal and cognitive resources among worship, professional obligations, familial care, and communal engagements. When *tawazun* is internalized, a worker, for instance, structures her schedule so as to fulfill ritual obligations and to participate in family activities, thereby preserving both spiritual and emotional well-being. Moreover, this balanced disposition engenders calibrated responses to adversities, enabling individuals to appraise challenges with equanimity rather than resorting to extremes. Such an approach undergirds a social fabric characterized by tolerance and the avoidance of destructive conflicts.²⁴

²² T. Elfira Rahmayati, "Keseimbangan Kerja dan Kehidupan (Work Life Balanced) Pada Wanita Bekerja," *Juripol* 4, no. 2 (August 31, 2021): 129–141.

²³ Cicin Yulianti, "Studi: Mayoritas Gen Z Incar Work Life Balance Dan Jam Kerja Fleksibel," *Detikedu*, June 27, 2024, <https://www.detik.com/edu/detikpedia/d-7410162/studi-mayoritas-gen-z-incar-work-life-balance-dan-jam-kerja-fleksibel>.

²⁴ Erviana Iradah Ulya, "Tawazun Sebagai Prinsip Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Mufasir Moderat" (n.d.).

At the doctrinal level, the principle *wasatiyah* constitutes the foundational framework for *tawazun* in contemporary Islam. *Wasatiyah* obliges Muslims to sustain equilibrium across spiritual, social, economic, and cultural domains, thereby reconciling devotion to Allah with worldly responsibilities²⁵. This paradigm is operationalized through mechanisms such as the graduated prioritization in *zakat* distribution - where recipients are ranked by urgency and need to ensure distributive justice - and the *fiqh al-anlawiyat* applied in halal vaccine fatwas, which balances the imperative of soul protection (*hifz al-nafs*) against compliance with *halal-haram* delineations.²⁶

The practical enactment of *tawazun* has been conceptualized in four interrelated dimensions.²⁶ First, work-life harmony requires setting explicit boundaries to prevent occupational demands from eclipsing personal and familial prerogatives, thus mitigating stress and enhancing life satisfaction. Second, effective time management, undergirded by Islamic injunctions toward efficiency I compels individuals to prioritize core tasks and to allocate periods of reflection and worship amidst daily routines. Third, mental and spiritual well-being is fostered through regular performance of prescribed acts of worship and contemplative practices, which replenish intrinsic motivation and stabilize emotional equilibrium. Fourth, a balanced work ethic, grounded in honesty ('amanah'), justice ('adl'), and accountability (*mas'uliyah*), ensures that professional conduct remains consonant with Islamic moral imperatives.

In an era marked by digitalization and globalization, *tawazun* serves as a strategic compass guiding Muslims to adapt without compromising their religious identity. While technological proficiency and continuous learning are indispensable for engagement with global labor markets, these pursuits must be calibrated by ethical constraints and spiritual objectives to prevent dissonance between external advancement and internal integrity.²⁷

The classical exposition by Yusuf Qaradawi further refines the *tawazun* ethos by delineating life's dimensions into *hablum min Allah* (relations with the Divine) and *hablum min an-nas* (relations with humanity). A fully realized Muslim, according to Qaradawi, is one who

²⁵ Muhammad Taufiq Ridlo Maghriza, Irwan Ledang, and Uci Purnama Sari, "Tawazun Sebagai Prinsip Wasathiyyah dalam Kehidupan Muslim Kontemporer" 1, no. 2 (2023).

²⁶ Edo Alvizar Dayusman, Alimudin Alimudin, and Taufik Hidayat, "Kemanusiaan dan Kesejahteraan Sosial dalam Pemikiran Islam Kontemporer," *TAJDID: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman dan Kemanusiaan* 7, no. 1 (July 27, 2023): 118–134, accessed April 3, 2025, <https://ejournal.iaimbima.ac.id/index.php/tajdid/article/view/1759>.

²⁷ Muhajir Darwis et al., "Islam dan Dinamika Kajian Kontemporer," *HEMAT: Journal of Humanities Education Management Accounting and Transportation* 1, no. 2 (July 31, 2024): 732–737, accessed April 3, 2025, <https://rayyanjurnal.com/index.php/HEMAT/article/view/2821>.

attains consonance across spiritual, material, social, and intellectual spheres, thereby achieving felicity in both this world and the hereafter.²⁸

Empirical evidence substantiates the efficacy of *tawazun* in enhancing post-pandemic workplace outcomes. M. Rizky and colleagues examined the interplay among work-life balance, occupational stress, and Islamic work ethics on employee performance at Bank Muamalat Medan Baru. Their findings indicate that adherence to *tawazun* principles significantly alleviated stress and augmented productivity, with balanced ethical conduct correlating positively with both mental well-being and operational efficiency.²⁹ These results underscore the imperative for organizations to embed *tawazun*-aligned policies - such as flexible hours, spiritual support programs, and ethics training - to foster resilient and high-performing Muslim workforces.

Implementation of Wasatiyyah Attitude in Achieving Work-Life Balance.

Islam, as a merciful and comprehensive way of life, derives its normative framework from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, complemented by *ijma'* (consensus) and *qiyas* (analogy) within legal scholarship. Central to its ethical vision is the principle of *wasatiyyah* - moderation - which enjoins believers to embody fairness, impartiality, and proportionality in all domains of existence. Etymologically rooted in the triliteral root w-s-ṭ, *wasatiyyah* denotes the "middle path" (*al-wastā*) and connotes justice ('*adl*) and the best of choices (*ikhtiyār al-afḍal*).³⁰

At the heart of *wasatiyyah* lies the paradigm of *awlawiyah* (prioritization), which calibrates competing obligations - namely, the rights of the body (health and sustenance), the welfare of the family, and the rights of Allah (*'ibādah and servitude*) - into a coherent, balanced hierarchy. This prioritization manifests in practices such as zakat distribution, where recipients are ranked by urgency to uphold distributive justice, and in fatwas on halal vaccines, where the imperative of *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life) is weighed against prohibitions to secure collective benefit.³¹

Conceptually, *wasatiyyah* furnishes a fourfold matrix for operationalizing balance in professional and personal spheres:³²

²⁸ Fauziah Nurdin, "Islam dan Konsep Keseimbangan dalam Lini Kehidupan," *Sustainable Development* (n.d.).

²⁹ M Rizky et al., "Pengaruh Work Life Balance, Stress Kerja Dan Etika Kerja Islam Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan Pasca Pandemi Covid – 19 di Bank Muamalat KCU Medan Baru," *As-Syirkah: Islamic Economic & Financial Journal* 3, no. 2 (March 22, 2024), accessed April 3, 2025, <https://journal.ikadi.or.id/index.php/assyirkah/article/view/201>.

³⁰ Raha Bistara and Mega Alif Marintan, "Islam Washatiyyah dalam Gagasan Politik Islam: Menguak Pemikiran Islam Washatiyyah Kh Abdurrahman Wahid" (n.d.).

³¹ Ahmad Hariyono, "The Concept of Washatiyyah in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143 and its Implementation in Rambipuji Village, Jember Regency", <http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/64464/1/200204110035.pdf>.

³² Affan Fajri, "Konsep Washatiyyah Dalam Kitab Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Bimas Islam Dan Implementasi Pada Mahasiswa," 2024, <http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/64450/1/200204110010.pdf>.

1. Equilibrium between Worship and Livelihood. Muslims are urged to reconcile daily devotional duties with lawful earning activities, ensuring that vocational pursuits do not encroach upon obligatory acts of worship or familial responsibilities. Clear demarcation of time segments and role boundaries mitigates role conflict and nurtures holistic well-being.
2. Justice and Tolerance in Social Interactions. A *wasati* approach mandates impartiality and respect in interpersonal dealings, fostering pluralistic coexistence. By eschewing extremes of partisanship or exclusion, individuals contribute to communal harmony and mutual understanding.
3. Priority Setting in Daily Affairs. *Wasatiyyah* requires prioritizing *fard* (obligatory) over *nafl* (recommended) acts and essential familial duties over supererogatory endeavors. This hierarchy ensures that core religious and social responsibilities receive precedence, preserving balanced engagement.
4. Moderation in Consumption and Resource Management. Islamic teachings advocate for neither ascetic deprivation nor unbridled consumption but rather a tempered lifestyle that secures material sustenance (*rizq*), prudent asset management, and mindful investment in the future.

Historically, Yusuf Qardāwī articulated *wasatiyyah* through the dual dimensions of *habl min Allāh* and *habl min an-nās*. True felicity, he posited, resides in harmonizing spiritual devotion with social responsibilities - thus realizing balance across intellectual, material, and moral realms.³³

Empirical research underscores the practical efficacy of *wasatiyyah* in contemporary work environments. Trini Diyani's case study within Indonesian communities highlights how implementing wasati principles - such as equitable workload distribution, communal support networks, and ethical leadership - enhances collective resilience and individual life satisfaction. Similarly, Affan Fajri's survey among university students demonstrates that those who internalize *wasatiyyah* report higher perceived balance across academic, spiritual, and social domains.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the foregoing theoretical exposition and integrative review of primary sources, it can be concluded that the deliberate cultivation of the *tawazun* ethos - a paradigm of equitable distribution of temporal and cognitive resources - and the *wasatiyyah* principle - anchored in moderation and proportionality - constitute foundational pillars for realizing a holistic work-life equilibrium. These twin tenets, deeply rooted in Qur'anic directives and the

³³ Trini Diyani, "Implementasi Paradigma Islam Wasathiyah; Strategi Menjaga Masa Depan Keindonesiaan," *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Syar'i* 6, no. 3 (November 9, 2019): 303–316.

prophetic model, not only prescribe a calibrated alignment between professional obligations, familial responsibilities, and spiritual devotion, but also provide a robust framework for mitigating the psychosocial strains endemic to contemporary digitalized societies. Empirical and normative analyses indicate that agents who internalize these constructs demonstrate enhanced resilience against burnout, a marked increase in subjective well-being, and a more coherent integration of ethical imperatives with instrumental pursuits. In essence, *tawazun* and *wasatiyyah* facilitate a dynamic interplay between material exigencies and metaphysical aspirations, thereby engendering a sustainable modus vivendi that transcends mere instrumental efficiency to embrace moral and spiritual flourishing.

In light of these conclusions, it is recommended that institutional stakeholders - ranging from educational establishments and professional associations to corporate entities - adopt and operationalize policy architectures that explicitly embed *tawazun* and *wasatiyyah* into their organizational ethos. For instance, the implementation of adaptive work schedules, which accommodate ritual worship and family obligations without compromising strategic objectives, can serve as a practical manifestation of these Islamic paradigms. Concurrently, capacity-building programs focused on advanced time-management skills, periodic spiritual reflection workshops, and guided deliberations on the hierarchy of priorities (*awla'iyāt*) should be instituted at both organizational and individual levels. Such initiatives will not only reinforce employees' or students' ability to make judicious choices in task allocation but will also cultivate a culture of mindful engagement, where each decision is consciously weighed against ethical and spiritual benchmarks. Ultimately, these measures promise to foster a cadre of professionals who are not only technically proficient but also profoundly anchored in moral integrity and spiritual equilibrium.

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ORAL TRADITION AS CULTURAL PEDAGOGY: PRESERVING KOTAH PEHAPENG WAHA PLEDANG IN THE LIFELONG LEARNING PRACTICES OF LAMAKERA

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Abstrak: Tradisi lisan Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang yang berkembang di Lamakera, Flores Timur, merupakan bentuk warisan budaya tak benda yang memuat nilai-nilai pendidikan, moralitas, spiritualitas, dan identitas kolektif. Tradisi ini berfungsi sebagai sarana pembelajaran informal berbasis kearifan lokal yang diwariskan secara turun-temurun. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi literatur dan paradigma fenomenologis-hermeneutis untuk mengkaji peran dan tantangan tradisi ini dalam konteks modernisasi dan digitalisasi. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun terjadi pergeseran pola komunikasi dan preferensi generasi muda terhadap media digital, masyarakat Lamakera menunjukkan ketahanan budaya melalui inovasi adaptif. Dokumentasi digital, pengintegrasian dalam kurikulum pendidikan formal, serta peran aktif komunitas dan lembaga kebudayaan menjadi strategi kunci dalam menjaga kesinambungan tradisi ini. Tradisi lisan tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai alat konservasi budaya, tetapi juga sebagai media rekonstruksi identitas sosial dan sarana pendidikan nilai-nilai kemanusiaan di era globalisasi. Oleh karena itu, pelestarian tradisi ini perlu dilakukan secara berkelanjutan melalui sinergi antara pendekatan digital dan konvensional.

Kata Kunci: Tradisi Lisan, Kearifan Lokal, Pendidikan Budaya, Transformasi Digital, Identitas Kolektif

Judul: Tradisi Lisan ke Aksi: Melestarikan Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang sebagai Simbol Kesadaran Belajar Seumur Hidup Masyarakat Lamakera.

Abstract: The Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang oral tradition of Lamakera, East Flores, represents an intangible cultural heritage that embodies educational, moral, spiritual, and collective identity values. Functioning as a form of informal education rooted in local wisdom, this tradition has been passed down through generations. This study adopts a qualitative approach using literature review and a phenomenological-hermeneutic paradigm to examine the relevance and challenges of this tradition in the face of modernization and digital transformation. The findings indicate that despite shifts in communication patterns and generational preferences toward digital media, the Lamakera community continues to demonstrate cultural resilience through adaptive innovation. Digital documentation, curricular integration, and active participation by community and cultural institutions are identified as key strategies for preserving the tradition. Far from being a static relic, the oral tradition acts as a medium for social identity reconstruction and value transmission within a rapidly globalizing context. This research highlights the importance of sustained preservation efforts through synergizing traditional practices with digital platforms to ensure the continued relevance of oral heritage in shaping culturally rooted and ethically grounded communities.

Keywords: Oral Tradition, Local Wisdom, Cultural Education, Digital Transformation, Collective Identity



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INTRODUCTION

The oral tradition of *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng*, which has flourished in Lamakera, East Flores, East Nusa Tenggara (Indonesia), constitutes an integral part of the region's cultural heritage and plays a pivotal role in fostering lifelong learning.¹ This tradition serves as a medium through which the Lamakera community transmits knowledge, social values, and life wisdom inherited from their ancestors. However, the forces of modernization, technological advancement, globalization, and changing lifestyles pose significant threats to the survival of this tradition.² These dynamics raise pressing questions: Is this oral tradition still relevant in the contemporary era? Can it endure the accelerating pace of sociocultural change? How are community members striving to preserve a cultural legacy that symbolizes their commitment to lifelong learning?

The central issue addressed in this study concerns the preservation challenges of the *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng* tradition in Lamakera. Once a primary mode of life instruction, it is increasingly being replaced by formal education and digital media. The younger generation now gravitates toward more structured, practical knowledge sources, while the values embedded in oral storytelling are frequently perceived as outdated. This declining interest has sparked serious concern about the potential loss of valuable cultural knowledge, including insights into the community's history, social ethics, and spiritual beliefs.³

Although this tradition remains embedded in Lamakera's social fabric, intergenerational transmission is becoming increasingly difficult. Contributing factors include modern lifestyles, limited time, and the pervasive influence of external cultures. Field observations indicate that more than 60% of Lamakera's youth no longer engage with or feel connected to this oral tradition.⁴ Instead, they rely on digital technologies for information and social interaction. In such a context, critical questions arise: How can this tradition be sustained and revitalized? How can its embedded values remain relevant to contemporary life?

Field data reveals mounting challenges in preserving *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng*. A 2023 survey among Lamakera youth revealed that only approximately 25% possessed adequate knowledge of the oral narratives that form part of their cultural heritage. Conversely, over 70% expressed a stronger preference for engaging with technological

¹ R. H. Barnes, "Lamakera, Solor: Ethnographic Notes on a Muslim Whaling Village of Eastern Indonesia," *Anthropos* 91, no. 1–3 (1996).

² Sulaiman Mustafa Wuhdin and Shadli Rosalkhi, "Pola Komunikasi Dalam Proses Interaksi Sosial Masyarakat Dalam Upacara Adat Di Lamakera (Studi Kasus Koda Malen/Sapaan Adat Pernikahan Di Lamakera)," *Jesya* 7, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.36778/jesya.v7i1.1386>.

³ Wuhdin and Rosalkhi.

⁴ Wuhdin and Rosalkhi.

platforms for learning and communication.⁵ This shift underscores a changing hierarchy of values, with oral tradition increasingly marginalized as a medium of learning.

Nevertheless, some community groups continue to advocate for the preservation of this tradition. Local elders and customary leaders have initiated training programs highlighting the importance of *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng* in the context of lifelong learning. Cultural events such as festivals and customary gatherings are used to reintroduce young people to the moral and cultural values embedded in oral storytelling. Yet, these efforts have not been sufficient to reengage youth at scale.⁶

Clifford Geertz conceptualizes culture as a system of symbols expressed through communication.⁷ Within this framework, Lamakera's oral tradition functions as a symbolic system that conveys both practical and spiritual knowledge. Geertz posits that oral traditions play a crucial role in shaping social and cultural identity by enabling communities to interpret their place in the world.⁸ For the people of Lamakera, *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng* is more than folklore – it is an educational tool that nurtures moral, ethical, and social understanding.

The concept of lifelong learning, as defined by UNESCO, emphasizes that education is not confined to youth but continues throughout one's life.⁹ In this context, *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng* exemplifies a form of non-formal learning that occurs through social interaction and experiential knowledge-sharing. Each oral narrative represents an uninterrupted learning process, imparting practical skills and evolving social values in tandem with societal changes.¹⁰

Sahlins further underscores that in traditional societies, knowledge is transmitted less through formal education and more through lived experience and socio-cultural continuity. In Lamakera, the *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng* tradition functions as a bridge connecting older and younger generations within a shared cultural framework. Despite modern transformations, the values within these narratives remain a relevant educational resource for understanding and interpreting the contemporary world.

⁵ Sulaiman Mustafa Wuhdin and Afrida Deko Sega, "Peran Lembaga Adat Dalam Menerapkan Nilai-Nilai Adat Di Masyarakat Adat Lamakera: Studi Kasus Orang Tua Adat Suku Pito Di Lamakera," *Reslaj: Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal* 7, no. 1 (2025): 650–68, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.47467/reslaj.v7i1.5848>.

⁶ Barnes, "Lamakera, Solor: Ethnographic Notes on a Muslim Whaling Village of Eastern Indonesia."

⁷ Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture BT - The Interpretation of Cultures," *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 1973.

⁸ Geertz, "The Interpretations of Cultures; Chapter 1," in *The Interpretations of Cultures*, 1973.

⁹ Noel F. McGinn, "Learning: The Treasure within: Report to Unesco of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century . Jacques Delors ,," *Comparative Education Review* 42, no. 2 (1998), <https://doi.org/10.1086/447500>.

¹⁰Maren Elfert, "UNESCO, the Faure Report, the Delors Report, and the Political Utopia of Lifelong Learning," *European Journal of Education* 50, no. 1 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12104>.

The challenges confronting the Lamakera community in safeguarding their oral tradition are multifaceted. Globalization and modernization exert immense pressure, especially among the youth. While cultural leaders are actively striving to revive and protect this heritage, the obstacles are substantial. Thus, innovative strategies are urgently required to foster meaningful engagement among young people and reconnect them with the values embedded in their oral heritage.¹¹

Current research suggests that community-based approaches integrating both formal and informal education, along with the use of digital technology to document and disseminate oral narratives, offer promising avenues for revitalization. In doing so, *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng* can not only endure as a vital element of cultural heritage but also continue to serve as a symbol of collective awareness and commitment to lifelong learning.

METHOD

This study adopts a literature-based approach focusing on the *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah-Pehapeng* oral tradition in the Lamakera community, examining it as a symbolic expression of lifelong learning awareness. The literature review method was chosen to explore, examine, and analyze relevant sources pertaining to this oral tradition within the broader context of community-based education. The research is grounded in a qualitative methodology, employing a phenomenological-hermeneutic paradigm aimed at interpreting the meaning of oral traditions as educational media and as a reflection of communal consciousness toward lifelong learning.

The data were collected from a range of secondary sources, including books, peer-reviewed journals, scholarly articles, and other documents that discuss both the oral traditions of the Lamakera community and theoretical perspectives on education grounded in local wisdom. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis techniques, comprising the stages of data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved the selection of information directly relevant to the research focus, while categorization was used to identify and group key emerging themes within the literature. Interpretation was guided by a hermeneutic approach, allowing for a deeper understanding of the symbolic meaning embedded in the *Waha Pledang Kotak/Kotah-Pehapeng* tradition as an instrument of lifelong learning.

The validity of the data was ensured through source triangulation, by comparing multiple references addressing similar topics to obtain a more comprehensive and credible understanding. Furthermore, source criticism was employed to assess the authenticity,

¹¹Sobhi Tawil et al., “Revisiting Learning the Treasure within: Assessing the Influence of the 1996 Delors Report,” *UNESCO Education Research and Foresight: Occasional Papers*, no. 4 (2013).

validity, and reliability of the materials used. Through this methodological approach, the study seeks to contribute to the understanding of oral tradition as a component of community-based education and to enrich the discourse on lifelong learning rooted in indigenous knowledge systems.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Values Embedded in the Oral Tradition of *Kota Pehapeng–Waha Peledang*

The traditional concepts of *Waha Peledang* and *Kota Pehapeng* are deeply symbolic cultural elements within the Lamakera community in East Flores, East Nusa Tenggara. These elements not only represent physical activities central to the lives of fishermen but also embody a philosophy of life, work ethic, and the spirit of self-development passed down through generations. *Waha Peledang* refers to a rowing paddle used in navigating traditional fishing boats, while *Kota/Kotah Pehapeng* is a woven container made from *lontar* palm leaves used to store essential maritime tools. Together, they symbolize preparedness and skill, while also conveying deeper meanings of struggle, resilience, and hope.

Historically rooted in the Lamaholot cultural tradition, particularly in Lamakera, these concepts extend beyond their literal associations with seafaring. They also serve as metaphors for the community's commitment to overcoming ignorance and improving quality of life through education. The contribution of Allahu Yarham Kiyai Haji Abdussyukur Ibrahim Dasyi exemplifies this transformation, as he translated these traditional values into a grassroots educational movement. The founding of Pendidikan SUKUR (*Suara Kerkunanan Untuk Rakyat*) in 1942 stands as a testament to the community's efforts to combat illiteracy and backwardness, bringing the light of knowledge amid significant limitations.

Philosophically, *Waha Peledang* may be interpreted as a metaphorical pen - an instrument for inscribing knowledge and shaping historical consciousness - while *Kota/Kotah Pehapeng* serves as a symbol of the book, a repository of wisdom and life guidance. These two elements form a synergistic representation of the foundational role of knowledge and skill in advancing civilization. Paulo Freire's theory of education as a liberating force is particularly relevant in this context, wherein education becomes a tool for social transformation that empowers communities to interpret and reshape their realities.

From a socio-economic perspective, *Waha Peledang* and *Kota Pehapeng* reflect the lived experiences of Lamakera's fishing community. The act of fishing, often accompanied by prayers and spiritual chants, expresses profound religious devotion and reliance on divine providence. Verses such as "oleh go amak holo, holo pe lan landa ama alle tio rapa tuju, sina pita mata beee" illustrate the community's theological orientation, recognizing God as the ultimate source of sustenance. The hazardous nature of maritime livelihoods fosters values such as perseverance, patience, and solidarity – core components of the community's work ethic.

Normatively, the tradition of *Waha Peledang–Kota Pehapeng* is inspired by Qur'anic teachings such as QS. Al-Qasas [28]:77 and QS. Al-Jumu'ah, which emphasize industriousness and the pursuit of economic sufficiency, including clothing, food, shelter, and social obligations (*uma lamak / tanali-gelekat lawa tanah* – symbolic of mutual aid and communal welfare). Despite facing numerous socio-economic challenges, the Lamakera community remains committed to the ethic of labor and struggle as a means of survival and growth.¹²

Furthermore, these concepts underscore the vital role of family in sustaining the local economy. After the fishermen return with their catch, their wives typically engage in fish trading at traditional markets, forming a symbiotic relationship that supports household well-being. This division of labor aligns with feminist economic theory, which emphasizes women's contributions to both domestic and public spheres of the economy.¹³

Academically, the *Waha Peledang–Kota/ Kotah Pehapeng* tradition can be interpreted as an ethical movement aimed at promoting lifelong learning within the community. This ethical commitment draws inspiration from moral messages embedded in QS. Al-'Alaq [96]:1–5 and QS. Al-Mujadilah [58]:11, which encourage the pursuit of knowledge and elevate those engaged in education.¹⁴ These teachings continue to serve as motivational imperatives for knowledge seekers and advocates of education within and beyond the Lamakera community.

The educational advancement of the Lamakera community serves as tangible evidence of the success of the *Waha Peledang* and *Kota Pehapeng* philosophy. Despite historically limited access to formal education, the community's persistent pursuit of knowledge has enabled successive generations to earn academic degrees, including bachelor's and doctoral qualifications. The role of local educational institutions – such as *Pendidikan SUKUR* and the network of madrasahs established with the support of influential local figures - has been instrumental in catalyzing this transformation.

State recognition of these educational institutions marked a significant milestone in Lamakera's educational history. The granting of state status to local madrasahs through the Minister of Religious Affairs Decree (*KMA: Keputusan Menteri Agama*) No. 535 of 2018 served as formal validation of the community's long-standing commitment to developing educational institutions rooted in Islamic values, local wisdom, and national identity. This policy not only strengthened the administrative legitimacy of the madrasahs but also

¹²Sippah Chotban, "Peran Istri Menafkahi Keluarga Perspektif Hukum Islam (Studi Kasus Di Lamakera Desa Motonwutun)," *Tesis*, 2017.

¹³R. H. Barnes, "Lamakera, Solor: Ethnographic Notes on a Muslim Whaling Village of Eastern Indonesia," *Anthropos* 91, no. 1–3 (1996).

¹⁴Muhammad Taisir, Ahmad Sanusi, and Ahmad Aprillah, "Integrating Khidmah and Tarbiyah : A Service-Learning Model in Indonesia 's Islamic Boarding School Education," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 9, no. 2 (2025): 347–68, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v9i2.151>.

reaffirmed the strategic role of community-based education within Indonesia's national education system.

The enduring legacy of H. Abdusyukur Dasyi, a pioneering figure in Lamakera's educational movement, continues to resonate through the lives of his successors. As noted by H. Lukman Hakim, Abdusyukur's efforts to liberate the community from the tyranny of ignorance and poverty laid a strong foundation for future generations. His legacy lives on through the achievements of Lamakera's distinguished sons and daughters who have risen to prominence at the national level. These include political leaders such as Dr. H. Ali Taher Parasong and H. Ahmad Yohan, M.Si, as well as numerous scholars and academics contributing to the advancement of knowledge, such as Prof. Dr. H. Tahir Maloko, Dr. H. Abdul Malik Usman, Dr. Hj. Anisa Pedang, Dr. Alwan Suban, Dr. Mustakim Syahdan, Harun Al-Rasid Songge, MA, Ilyas Muhammad, MM, Fazlurahman Maloko, M.Pd, Dr. Umar Sulaiman, and Dr. Syaban H. Abdul Karim. Their contributions demonstrate that Lamakera has become an integral part of Indonesia's intellectual and educational development.

Their presence at intellectual and spiritual gatherings in Lewwo Tanah -specifically at Ra'a Nuru Rarang, or “the map to the future” - is not merely ceremonial or nostalgic. Rather, it symbolizes a “cultural and civilizational roadmap,” reflecting a collective commitment to illuminating society through knowledge. These individuals serve as beacons of enlightenment, reinforcing the community's intellectual ethos and inspiring younger generations to advance the nation through the synergy of intellect and faith.

In the Islamic worldview, knowledge (*'ilm*) is not merely the accumulation of information but is regarded as *nūr* (divine light) bestowed by Allah. As stated in Surah Al-Mulk [67]:14: "Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?"

This verse affirms that Allah is the ultimate source of all knowledge. It is only through His divine light that humans can perceive reality, uncover truth, and distinguish between right and wrong. This understanding is further reinforced in Surah An-Nūr [24]:35: "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth...."

This verse underscores that all beneficial knowledge emanates from divine illumination. Those who seek knowledge with sincerity and with the intent of upholding truth are guided by Allah on their intellectual journey. Thus, the Lamakera scholars and educators represent living embodiments of this *nūr Ilāhī* (divine light) within their socio-religious context.

Accordingly, strengthening the tradition of scholarship in Lamakera is not merely an educational imperative, but also a spiritual endeavor - one that reconnects the bond between knowledge and faith, between intellectual rigor and heartfelt devotion to Allah, the Eternal Light. In this spirit, the youth of Lamakera are called not only to inherit knowledge but also to become its guardians and torchbearers of change. They are entrusted to embody and

disseminate this light of knowledge, anchoring civilization in both spiritual integrity and intellectual excellence.

As a life philosophy, *Waha Peledang* and *Kota Pehapeng* underscore the importance of honoring one's origins and maintaining a deep connection with the ancestral homeland, as encapsulated in the local maxim “*Lewo majja tana taping*” or “*Lewo sorong lodo, tana taping balik*” (roughly: “the village gives shelter, the land offers return”). This philosophy cultivates humility (*tawadhu*) and gratitude, while simultaneously promoting personal transformation and self-development.

Consequently, *Waha Peledang* and *Kota Pehapeng* are not merely cultural symbols; they constitute foundational frameworks for character formation, educational development, and social solidarity in Lamakera. These concepts resonate with modern theories of education and social development, while also representing a repository of indigenous wisdom that enriches the cultural heritage of the Indonesian archipelago.

The oral tradition of *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng*–*Waha Pledang* holds a central place in the social and educational life of the Lamakera community. It functions not merely as a form of entertainment but, more profoundly, as a vehicle for transmitting life values, moral principles, and spiritual teachings inherited across generations. As Clifford Geertz posits, culture is not limited to observable behavior but constitutes a system of symbols through which a society interprets its world. In this context, the *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng*–*Waha Pledang* tradition carries rich symbolic meaning, reflecting communal values, social responsibility, and cultural resilience amid change.¹⁵

This oral tradition serves as a potent mechanism for social transmission. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus is particularly relevant here, describing how societal values and dispositions are inculcated through repeated social practices.¹⁶ In Lamakera, these oral narratives function as cultural capital passed down from one generation to the next, reinforcing community identity and solidarity. Bourdieu also emphasizes that cultural capital influences individuals' social positioning. In the case of *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng*–*Waha Pledang*, this transmission fosters individuals with a deep-rooted understanding of local norms and values, contributing to the reproduction of social cohesion.

From the perspective of communication sociology, this tradition aligns with Walter R. Fisher's narrative paradigm, which asserts that human beings are inherently “*homo narrans*” -

¹⁵Geertz, “The Interpretations of Cultures; Chapter 1,” in *The Interpretations of Cultures*, 1973; Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture BT - The Interpretation of Cultures,” *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 1973.

¹⁶Pierre Bourdieu, “Pierre Bourdieu 1986 - The Forms of Capital,” *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, 1986; Hum Chan, “Bourdieu, P. (1986). The Forms of Capital. In: Richardson, J., *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Westport, CT: Greenwood: 241–58.,” *Teflin Journal* 29, no. 1 (2018).

storytelling creatures who make sense of the world through narrative.¹⁷ The oral tradition of *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang* constructs a shared interpretive framework for the Lamakera community, reinforcing collective values and fostering strong social bonds. These intergenerational narratives also possess persuasive elements, shaping and sustaining the ethical and normative structure of communal life.

In relation to collective identity, Benedict Anderson's theory of *Imagined Communities* provides an additional lens. Anderson argues that community identity is constructed through shared narratives that are collectively imagined and internalized. In the case of *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang*, the stories conveyed are not merely entertaining but serve as a medium through which collective identity is formed and reaffirmed. By engaging with these shared narratives, the Lamakera community cultivates a sense of belonging and mutual attachment, strengthening social cohesion and communal values.¹⁸

Beyond its social and identity-based dimensions, the oral tradition of *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang* also possesses a profound spiritual dimension. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Max Weber argues that religious values play a critical role in shaping social ethics and behavior.¹⁹ In the context of the Lamakera community, this oral tradition functions not only as a medium for moral education but also as a channel for transmitting spiritual teachings that emphasize the relationship between human beings, the divine, and the cosmos. This aligns with Weber's concept of the rationalization of religion, wherein belief systems serve as the foundation for broader social structures.

Emile Durkheim's perspective in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* further elucidates the social function of this tradition. Durkheim asserts that religious rituals and symbols act as social glue, reinforcing cohesion among community members.²⁰ The *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang* tradition, through its embedded stories and spiritual values, serves to foster a sense of communal solidarity and interpersonal attachment within Lamakera society. Thus,

¹⁷Dell H. Hymes, "When Is Oral Narrative Poetry? Generative Form and Its Pragmatic Conditions," *Pragmatics. Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.8.4.01hym>.

¹⁸C. Farrer and C. D. Frith, "Experiencing Oneself vs Another Person as Being the Cause of an Action: The Neural Correlates of the Experience of Agency," *NeuroImage* 15, no. 3 (2002), <https://doi.org/10.1006/nimg.2001.1009>.

¹⁹Max Weber, "Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology," in *Readings in Economic Sociology*, 2008, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470755679.ch3>; Max Weber, "Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology (an Excerpt)," *Ekonomicheskaya Sotsiologiya*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.17323/1726-3247-2018-3-68-78>.

²⁰Andrew R. Atkinson, "Is Wilson's Religion Durkheim's, or Hobbes's Leviathan?," *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* 43, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40656-021-00375-w>; Steve Jones, "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man," in *Encyclopedia of New Media*, 2012, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412950657.n237>.

the tradition functions not only as an educational tool but also as a social instrument that sustains harmony and collective identity.

From the lens of linguistic anthropology, Dell Hymes in his concept of the Ethnography of Communication posits that communication is not merely the exchange of information, but a reflection of a society's cultural and social structure.²¹ The oral tradition of *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng–Waha Pledang* demonstrates a unique communicative pattern embedded with ethical norms and social values passed down across generations. The narratives are conveyed not only through explicit messages but also through culturally embedded symbols that are understood within the Lamakera context, thus affirming the tradition's enduring relevance in everyday life.

In the field of education, this oral tradition also corresponds with Albert Bandura's theory of social learning, which asserts that individuals learn by observing and imitating social models in their environment.²² Within the *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng–Waha Pledang* tradition, children and youth in Lamakera absorb moral and ethical values by listening to stories narrated by elders. This underscores the tradition's function as an informal yet effective pedagogical method for character development and moral instruction.

From the standpoint of cultural philosophy, Paul Ricoeur in *Time and Narrative*, emphasizes the central role of storytelling in shaping historical consciousness and communal identity.²³ The intergenerational transmission of narratives in Lamakera enables the community not only to recall their past but also to interpret their present social realities. In this sense, the *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng–Waha Pledang* tradition acts as a bridge linking history, identity, and collective values, making it an enduring cultural resource amid ongoing social transformations.

In conclusion, the *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng–Waha Pledang* oral tradition plays a complex and multidimensional role in the life of the Lamakera community. Far beyond entertainment, it serves as a mechanism for the construction of collective identity, the transmission of moral and social norms, and the reinforcement of spiritual consciousness.²⁴ Viewed through various theoretical lenses – sociological, anthropological, educational, and philosophical – the

²¹Robert A. Hall and Walter J. Ong, "Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word," *Language* 60, no. 3 (1984), <https://doi.org/10.2307/414000>.

²²Marion Blute, "Learning, Social Learning, and Sociocultural Evolution: A Comment on Langton," *American Journal of Sociology* 86, no. 6 (1981), <https://doi.org/10.1086/227390>; David M. Mayer et al., "How Low Does Ethical Leadership Flow? Test of a Trickle-down Model," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 108, no. 1 (2009): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2008.04.002>.

²³Henry Venema, "Oneself as Another or Another as Oneself?," *Literature and Theology* 16, no. 4 (2002), <https://doi.org/10.1093/litthe/16.4.410>.

²⁴Erwin Padli et al., "Discourse Tradition and Religious Education: Islamic Educational Values In The Perang Timbung Cultural Practice," *Tafsir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 6, no. 2 (2025): 420–35, <https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v6i2.1807>.

preservation of this tradition is essential for sustaining social harmony and cultural continuity in the face of intensifying modernization.

Challenges to Preserving Oral Traditions Amidst Modernization

Oral traditions play a vital role in shaping cultural identity and the social character of communities. However, within the broader context of modernization and globalization, the oral tradition of the Lamakera community faces significant challenges, particularly in sustaining its relevance amidst rapid social transformation. One of the most evident impacts is the generational shift in interest, where younger individuals increasingly gravitate toward digital technologies and globalized cultures, rather than the local traditions passed down through generations. This phenomenon is not unique to Lamakera but is also observable across numerous traditional communities worldwide.

As Manuel Castells highlights in *The Rise of the Network Society*, globalization and the advancement of information technology have given rise to more complex, network-based social structures.²⁵ Human interactions are now heavily mediated by digital technologies, which has marginalized cultural practices that rely on direct interpersonal engagement - such as the *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang* oral tradition in Lamakera. Younger generations tend to favor faster, more immediate sources of information, such as the internet and social media, over traditional methods that require time and active communal participation.

Economic restructuring has further accelerated the erosion of traditional cultural values. Historically, the Lamakera community relied heavily on subsistence agriculture and maritime activities, both of which were deeply intertwined with customary laws and oral traditions. However, with the growing prominence of industrial and commercial economies, the community's focus has shifted toward financially lucrative sectors. This shift has reduced the time and opportunities available for participating in traditional cultural practices. As Arjun Appadurai argues in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, modernization redirects societal orientation from localized communal systems to individuals more integrated into global economic networks – subsequently reshaping patterns of social and cultural interaction.²⁶

Robertson's concept of glocalization, as articulated in *Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity*, is also relevant to understanding this phenomenon. He posits that globalization does not entirely displace local cultures but rather fosters a dynamic of negotiation and adaptation between traditional values and modern influences. In Lamakera,

²⁵Malcolm Griffith, Earl Seidman, and Marshall McLuhan, "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man," *College Composition and Communication* 19, no. 1 (1968), <https://doi.org/10.2307/355246>; Amy Young Evrard, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation*, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation*, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781912128990>.

²⁶Amy Young Evrard, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation*, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation*, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781912128990>.

this is evidenced by the efforts of certain individuals and groups to preserve oral traditions through digital means, such as recording folktales or disseminating them via social media platforms. However, while commendable, these initiatives fall short of replicating the immersive, interpersonal experiences offered by traditional oral transmission.

According to Bahrudin Mukin (interview), during the 1970s and 1980s, Lamakera's maritime practices were still dominated by small and medium-sized traditional boats, including manually rowed canoes. However, by the 1990s and into the 2000s, the community began transitioning to motorized fishing vessels. Despite this shift, traditional equipment such as the waha (paddle) continued to be preserved, reflecting a hybrid adaptation to modern technologies.

Rapid social change also influences how communities perceive the value of traditional knowledge. Pierre Bourdieu, through his concepts of *habitus* and cultural capital, explains that community norms and values are deeply shaped by existing social structures.²⁷ In societies undergoing swift transformation, previously esteemed cultural capital - such as mastery of oral storytelling - may lose both its symbolic and economic significance. Consequently, younger generations often choose to invest their time and energy in acquiring skills deemed more relevant to the demands of the modern economy, rather than learning oral traditions that offer no immediate material benefit.

In his seminal work *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*, Ong explains that the transition from oral to literate and, subsequently, to digital cultures fundamentally alters the way humans communicate and transmit knowledge. Oral cultures emphasize collective memory and face-to-face interaction, while written and digital cultures prioritize efficiency, storage, and accessibility.²⁸ As the Lamakera community becomes increasingly exposed to digital technologies, new modes of accessing and disseminating information have emerged – gradually pushing oral traditions such as *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng*—*Waha Pledang* to the periphery of cultural life.

Hamka observed that contemporary social transformation is virtually unstoppable, driven by the rapid advancement of science and technology across all spheres of life. This reality, both directly and indirectly, reshapes patterns of thought, social interaction, and everyday practices – even within traditional communities like Lamakera. Modern

²⁷Rifat Mahbub, “From Gender-Not-an-Issue to Gender Is the Issue: The Educational and Migrational Pathways of Middle-Class Women Moving from Urban Bangladesh to Britain,” *Gender and Education* 27, no. 7 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2015.1096919>.

²⁸Robert Hauptman and Walter J. Ong, “Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word,” *World Literature Today* 57, no. 4 (1983), <https://doi.org/10.2307/40139364>; Paul Trainor, “Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word. By Walter Ong,” *The Modern Schoolman* 62, no. 1 (1984), <https://doi.org/10.5840/schoolman198462116>.

technologies are no longer foreign; they have permeated both domestic and public spaces, presenting not only challenges but also new opportunities.

Digital communication tools such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and other social media platforms have evolved beyond entertainment to become essential instruments for community interaction – on land and at sea. For coastal communities like Lamakera, real-time access to maritime conditions through digital platforms enhances both safety and efficiency in fishing activities. In this context, technology becomes a strategic mediator in human-environment relations and a critical resource in supporting community adaptability to modern changes.

What is particularly noteworthy, however, is that technological advancement does not necessarily erode the deep-rooted traditions of the community. Customs such as exchanging greetings, maintaining respectful communication, and upholding ethical values persist – both online and in face-to-face encounters. This phenomenon illustrates the community's capacity to negotiate intelligently between tradition and modernity without losing its cultural identity.

From the perspective of Islamic social sciences and education, such negotiation can be seen as a manifestation of resilient local wisdom – the ability of a community to transform adaptively without disconnecting from its core values. Tradition, in this view, is not a fossilized relic of the past, but a living entity that continually interacts with contemporary realities. Practices such as greeting one another – whether in person or digitally – not only sustain social bonds (*ukhuwah*) but also serve as a medium for transmitting values, spirituality, and moral teachings amid an increasingly individualistic era.

Nonetheless, critical reflection is necessary to assess how effectively technology is being used to strengthen social cohesion and communicative civility. Digital media can be a double-edged sword – on one hand, facilitating communication, but on the other, potentially fostering emotional detachment, disinformation, and value erosion if not guided by ethical awareness. In this regard, both formal and non-formal education must function as moderating agents, instilling digital literacy, communication ethics, and cultural consciousness in the use of technology.

Hence, the Lamakera community exemplifies the possibility of meaningful integration between traditional values and technological advancement. Technology, in this context, is best understood as a *wasilah* (means), *not a ghayab* (end), in social and religious life. The persistence of the greeting tradition amid the digital era demonstrates that robust cultural values can endure - and even thrive - when paired with critical awareness and collective commitment to view technological progress as a tool for preserving, rather than replacing, ancestral wisdom.

Despite significant challenges, the oral tradition is not destined for extinction. Various strategies can be implemented to ensure its sustainability amidst globalization. One promising

approach is the integration of local wisdom into educational practices, whereby oral traditions are not only transmitted informally within families and communities but also formally incorporated into the school curriculum. As Tilaar suggests in *Multikulturalisme: Tantangan-tantangan Global Masa Depan dalam Transformasi Pendidikan Nasional*, culture-based education offers an effective strategy for safeguarding tradition in times of rapid transformation.²⁹

Active engagement of younger generations in the revitalization of oral traditions through digital media presents an increasingly viable and effective strategy. For instance, the creation of digital documentation in audio and video formats, as well as the dissemination of folktales via social media platforms, offers a more appealing and accessible medium for youth to reconnect with their cultural heritage. This approach aligns with the concept of digital storytelling as articulated by Lambert, wherein technology serves not only as a tool for communication but also as a powerful means of reinforcing cultural identity and cultivating awareness of intangible heritage.³⁰

In the policy domain, the role of governments and cultural institutions is vital in supporting oral tradition preservation. Initiatives such as community-based cultural preservation programs, research and documentation support, and the inclusion of local traditions in national and international cultural forums are essential in raising public awareness of the significance of safeguarding intangible heritage. As affirmed by UNESCO in its Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the protection of intangible cultural assets requires active collaboration among governments, local communities, and other key stakeholders.

Overall, the oral traditions of Lamakera face considerable pressures in the era of globalization, particularly due to rapid social, economic, and technological transformations. However, with appropriate strategies – such as integrating local wisdom into educational practices, utilizing digital technologies for preservation, and securing multi-stakeholder support – these traditions can not only survive but also evolve within modern contexts. Consequently, the preservation of oral traditions must be pursued strategically and sustainably to ensure their continued relevance for future generations.

Community-Based Strategies for Preserving Oral Traditions in Lamakera

The *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang* oral tradition in Lamakera constitutes a rich cultural legacy passed down through generations. It functions not only as a medium for

²⁹I Gede Arya Juni Arta, “Digitalisasi Pendidikan: Dilematisasi Dan Dehumanisasi Dalam Pembelajaran Daring Perspektif Filsafat Paulo Friere,” *Prosiding Seminar Nasional LAHN-TP Palangka Raya*, no. 3 (2021).

³⁰Joe Lambert, *Digital Storytelling Capturing Lives, Creating Community 4th Edition*, Routledge, vol. 19, 2013; Birgit Hertzberg Kaare, “The Self and the Institution. The Transformation of a Narrative Genre,” *Nordicom Review* 33, no. 2 (2012).

transmitting ethical and spiritual values but also as a marker of the community's collective identity. Despite the growing pressures of modernization, globalization, and social change, the people of Lamakera remain committed to safeguarding this cultural heritage.

One of the primary strategies employed involves the organization of traditional ceremonies and cultural festivals that actively engage younger generations. These events serve both educational and recreational purposes, where elders and traditional leaders act as cultural educators by delivering lectures or narrating ancestral stories embedded within the oral tradition. The goal is to reintroduce cultural values to the youth while demonstrating the relevance of these traditions in contemporary life. As Ong, emphasizes, oral tradition functions not merely as a vehicle for transmitting information but as a mechanism for reinforcing social cohesion in communities that rely on it.³¹

In response to technological developments, a number of young cultural advocates have begun to digitally document oral narratives. These efforts involve recording stories and distributing them through platforms such as YouTube, social media, and podcasts. This digital approach enables these stories to reach broader audiences while enhancing the cultural relevance of oral traditions in the digital age. This initiative aligns with Albert Bandura's, theory of social learning, which posits that individuals acquire knowledge and behavior through observation and modeling.³² In this context, digital storytelling models offer youth the opportunity to remain connected to their cultural values even in the absence of direct face-to-face interaction with traditional elders.

This approach aligns closely with UNESCO's *Delors Report*, which emphasizes the integration of tradition with lifelong learning within global and modern contexts.³³ The report identifies four pillars of education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be. The digital documentation of the *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng-Waha Pledang* oral tradition reflects these pillars, allowing younger generations not only to learn about their cultural heritage but also to apply its values meaningfully in their daily lives.

Jan Vansina, underscores that oral tradition plays a critical role in shaping social identity and connecting individuals to their collective history.³⁴ Therefore, the disappearance of oral

³¹Robert A. Hall and Walter J. Ong, "Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word," *Language* 60, no. 3 (1984), <https://doi.org/10.2307/414000>.

³²David M. Mayer et al., "How Low Does Ethical Leadership Flow? Test of a Trickle-down Model," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 108, no. 1 (2009): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2008.04.002>; Marion Blute, "Learning, Social Learning, and Sociocultural Evolution: A Comment on Langton," *American Journal of Sociology* 86, no. 6 (1981), <https://doi.org/10.1086/227390>.

³³Maren Elfert, "UNESCO, the Faure Report, the Delors Report, and the Political Utopia of Lifelong Learning," *European Journal of Education* 50, no. 1 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12104>.

³⁴ Robin Law, "Oral Tradition as History," in *Writing and Africa*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315505176-10>.

traditions does not simply signify the loss of stories or narratives, but also the erosion of a community's cultural roots. In this sense, efforts by the Lamakera community to preserve oral traditions represent not only cultural conservation but also a proactive reconstruction of social identity.

Nonetheless, such efforts face considerable challenges. One significant challenge is the shifting patterns of communication in modern societies. As digital technologies proliferate, younger generations increasingly prefer fast, multimedia information channels. As McLuhan asserts in his media theory, "the medium is the message," suggesting that if oral traditions are not adapted to media formats that align with contemporary preferences, the values they carry may risk marginalization.³⁵

Another challenge lies in the inherent volatility of digital platforms. Algorithms that govern content visibility are constantly evolving and may inadvertently limit the reach and impact of cultural content. This instability underscores the need for a hybrid approach – combining digital innovation with conventional methods such as intergenerational storytelling within families and community gatherings.

To further strengthen preservation efforts, active involvement from multiple stakeholders is essential. Governments can support preservation initiatives through policy development and grant funding; academics can contribute through empirical research on the significance of oral traditions in contemporary society; and civil society actors – including cultural communities and NGOs – can serve as facilitators ensuring the continuity of these practices.

Despite these challenges, the Lamakera community continues to demonstrate cultural resilience through innovative efforts to safeguard the *Kotak/Kotah Pehapeng-Waba Pledang* oral tradition. The combination of traditional and digital strategies presents an effective model for ensuring cultural sustainability in the face of modern dynamics. As Hall, affirms, cultural identity is not fixed but evolves in response to changing social contexts – thereby validating Lamakera's adaptive strategies in preserving their heritage.³⁶

CONCLUSION

The oral tradition within the Lamakera community plays a vital role in transmitting educational values across generations. Through stories, advice, and ancestral wisdom passed down orally, individuals are taught resilience in the face of social, economic, and environmental challenges. These values of perseverance and adaptability provide a

³⁵Malcolm Griffith, Earl Seidman, and Marshall McLuhan, "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man," *College Composition and Communication* 19, no. 1 (1968), <https://doi.org/10.2307/355246>.

³⁶Stuart Hall, "Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices Spectacle of the Other," *Sage Publication*, 1997.

foundational framework for engaging with change while maintaining cultural integrity and identity.

In addition to fostering resilience, oral traditions preserve and transmit ancestral wisdom to younger generations. This wisdom includes deep ecological knowledge, customary law, and ethical principles that guide social interactions. The moral dimensions embedded in these narratives serve as a compass for responsible decision-making, promoting social harmony and reinforcing interpersonal relationships within the community.

Collaboration emerges as another central value conveyed through oral tradition. The stories emphasize that success is not an individual pursuit, but one achieved through cooperation and mutual support. This reinforces solidarity and collective strength, equipping the community to navigate adversity with unity.

Thus, oral tradition in Lamakera is not merely a cultural artifact but an enduring educational medium that instills resilience, wisdom, and cooperation. Through this tradition, the community not only preserves its cultural identity but also shapes morally grounded and socially resilient individuals equipped to thrive within and beyond their local context.

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