

Digitalizing Islamic Community Education: Historical Continuity and Women's Religious Agency in Indonesian Majelis Taklim

Fauziah Nasution¹; Abdulroman Mahir²; Hasan Asari³;
Farhani Azkia⁴; Putri Rahmah Nur Hakim⁵

¹Universitas Islam Negeri Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary Padangsidempuan, Indonesia

²Jamiah Islam Syekh Daud Al-Fathani, Yala, Thailand

³Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

⁴Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia

⁵Universitas Serambi Mekkah, Banda Aceh, Indonesia

¹Correspondence Email: fauziahnst@uinsyahada.ac.id

Article Info

Received: February 16, 2026
Accepted: September 21, 2026
Published: September 30, 2026
Online First: September 30, 2026

Keywords

Digital Majelis Taklim;
History of Islamic Education;
Layered Pedagogical Continuity;
Islamic Digital Pedagogy;
Women's Educational Agency.

Abstract

The digitalization of Islamic education raises questions about how historically rooted religious institutions adapt to technological change while maintaining their pedagogical identity. This study examines the transformation of Indonesian majelis taklim by focusing on historical pedagogical continuity and women's educational agency. Using a qualitative historical approach, the study integrates Islamic educational historiography, gender studies, and digital religion. Data were drawn from historical sources and 36 digital archives across YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and publicly accessible WhatsApp communities observed from January to April 2025 and analyzed through historical source criticism and thematic coding. The findings reveal that digitalization reconfigures learning media and interaction while preserving core pedagogical functions and mechanisms of knowledge validation. It also expands women's roles from religious learners to educators, facilitators, organizers, and knowledge curators. Based on these findings, the study proposes layered pedagogical continuity to explain how preservation and transformation operate simultaneously across historical, institutional, interpersonal, and digital dimensions. The study contributes a historically grounded perspective to international debates on digital religion, women's educational agency, and the adaptation of community-based religious education.

A. Introduction

Islamic education has endured centuries of technological change not by abandoning its pedagogical traditions, but by continuously reconfiguring how religious knowledge is transmitted (Abidin, 2019; Latief & Madjid, 2022; Tabrani ZA et al., 2023). From *halaqah*, *talaqqī*, and *majālis al-'ilm* to manuscripts, print, radio, television, and digital platforms, the media of learning have changed while core intellectual, moral, and religious functions have persisted (Sholeh et al., 2023; Syukur et al., 2024). This continuity challenges the assumption that technological change necessarily disrupts traditional religious education; instead, it demonstrates its capacity to adapt inherited pedagogical practices to new communication environments. Such adaptation has also widened access to religious learning, particularly for Muslim women, while creating new spaces for participation within Islamic educational communities (Zebua & Khatibah, 2024; Sari et al., 2025).

Digitalization represents the latest stage of this long pedagogical adaptation, creating new environments for religious learning without necessarily displacing established practices (Susanti et al., 2024; Suwendi et al., 2025). *Majelis taklim* has consequently expanded beyond physical gatherings through social media, mobile applications, livestreamed *halaqah*, and online study groups that connect participants across geographical and generational boundaries (Gierhart, 2023; Mrisho & Dominic, 2023; Prestridge et al., 2024; Farida & Abidin, 2024). These digital environments have also become spaces where piety, religious legitimacy, and communal learning are renegotiated (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020; Arweck, 2025; Kasdi et al., 2026; Maulana et al., 2026), while expanding opportunities for Muslim women to participate as educators, knowledge producers, facilitators, and community leaders (Fadillah, 2023; Helim et al., 2024; Zebua & Khatibah, 2024; Sari et al., 2025).

Despite growing scholarship on digital Islam, women's religious authority, and online *da'wah*, limited attention has been given to how established Islamic educational institutions maintain pedagogical continuity during digital transformation (Saputra et al., 2022). Existing studies tend to examine digital pedagogy, women's religious leadership, and online religious authority separately, leaving their historical and institutional interconnections insufficiently explained (Glassner, 2022; Lee, 2025; Pappa et al., 2017; Suwendi et al., 2025; Tantowi et al., 2025). This gap is particularly evident in *majelis taklim*, where communal learning, oral transmission, technological change, and women's agency increasingly intersect (Li et al., 2025; Luguetti et al., 2019; Sari et al., 2025; Zebua &

Khatibah, 2024). Consequently, it remains unclear how pedagogical continuity, digital transformation, and women's religious agency interact within the transition from face-to-face to digitally mediated Islamic education.

This study addresses this gap through the historiographical perspective of continuity and change, which views institutional continuity as the capacity to accommodate transformation without abandoning established pedagogical identities (Saputra et al., 2022; Zaluchu, 2023; Sholeh et al., 2023; Syukur et al., 2024). From this perspective, the digitalization of *majelis taklim* represents not a rupture but an extension of Islamic educational transmission, through which practices associated with *halaqah* and *talaqqī* are reconfigured within digitally mediated learning environments (Susanti et al., 2024; Jamil et al., 2025). This perspective, therefore, enables the study to trace what persists, what changes, and how inherited pedagogical practices are reconfigured through digitalization.

This process also creates new conditions for women's educational agencies. Drawing on Kabeer's (1999) concept of agency, the study examines women's capacity to participate in, influence, and reshape educational practices within changing social and institutional contexts. Women's agencies are therefore not treated simply as an outcome of digital technology, but as emerging within the continuing pedagogical structure of *majelis taklim*. In digitally mediated religious networks, women may expand their roles from participants and learners to educators, knowledge curators, moderators, and community leaders (Askar et al., 2025; Sari et al., 2025; Zebua & Khatibah, 2024). This perspective situates women's agencies at the intersection of institutional continuity, technological transformation, and changing forms of educational participation and religious authority.

To explain this intersection, the study introduces "layered pedagogical continuity," referring to the simultaneous preservation and reconfiguration of Islamic educational practices across historical, institutional, interpersonal, and digital layers. Rather than replacing earlier forms of learning, digitalization allows inherited pedagogical practices to coexist with new media, interaction patterns, knowledge-validation processes, and forms of women's participation (Kosim et al., 2023; Susanti et al., 2024; Syukur et al., 2024). The concept differs from digital religious authority, which centers on the construction and redistribution of religious legitimacy (Coulange et al., 2021; Pedró & Torres, 2022; Kasdi et al., 2026), and from pedagogical adaptation, which emphasizes changes in teaching strategies and technologies (Abdullah, 2023; Suwendi et al., 2025; Muslikun et al., 2026). It also extends beyond institutional resilience, which primarily concerns institutional survival and responses to disruption (Umiralkhanov et al., 2024; Tantowi et al., 2025).

While these perspectives illuminate particular dimensions of educational change, layered pedagogical continuity focuses more specifically on how educational traditions, relationships, transmission practices, and forms of participation persist while being reconfigured across changing media environments. The concept, therefore, provides a more specific application of the broader continuity-and-change framework by identifying the layers through which persistence and transformation occur together. These layers encompass inherited religious and pedagogical practices, communal learning structures, teacher-learner relationships, digital circulation of knowledge, and women's educational participation (Ismail et al., 2023; Susanti et al., 2024; Jamil et al., 2025). This perspective is particularly relevant to *majelis taklim*, where established forms of religious learning can be extended through livestreaming, recorded lectures, messaging applications, and social media without necessarily losing their historical pedagogical functions (Farida & Abidin, 2024; Kasdi et al., 2026).

Recent studies of digital Islamic education similarly indicate that contemporary platforms can extend established patterns of religious transmission, participation, and community formation (Alam, 2023; Larsson & Willander, 2025; Wahid, 2024; Susanti et al., 2024; Suwendi et al., 2025; Muslikun et al., 2026). However, these developments still require an integrative explanation of how historical pedagogical continuity, technological transformation, and women's educational agency operate within the same institutional process. Accordingly, this study positions the digitalization of *majelis taklim* within the longer history of Islamic education rather than treating it as an isolated technological development. It integrates the history of Islamic education, gender studies, and digital pedagogy to examine how educational traditions are maintained while their media, interactions, and forms of participation change.

The study examines how the digitalization of *majelis taklim* reflects the historical continuity of Islamic education while reshaping pedagogical practices and Muslim women's religious agency in contemporary Indonesia. It focuses on the extension of oral pedagogical traditions into digital environments, the expansion of women's educational roles, and the negotiation of religious authority within evolving learning communities. By integrating these dimensions, the study contributes to the historiography of Islamic education and proposes layered pedagogical continuity as a conceptual framework for explaining how community-based religious education preserves its pedagogical identity while reconfiguring practices, participation, and authority across digital environments.

B. Method

This study employs a qualitative historical approach to examine the digitalization of *majelis taklim* within the historical continuity of Islamic education in Indonesia and its implications for women's religious agency (Saenong & Nisa, 2022; Askar et al., 2025). This approach explains how Islamic educational practices preserve core pedagogical functions while responding to changes in communication technologies. Rather than treating digitalization as a technological rupture, the study situates it within the development of Islamic educational transmission from oral traditions to digitally mediated religious communities. The analysis integrates Islamic educational historiography, gender studies, and digital religion to examine institutional continuity, pedagogical transformation, and women's participation.

The unit of analysis consists of publicly accessible digital *majelis taklim* communities that disseminate Islamic educational content through online platforms. Digital archival observation was conducted from January to April 2025. The corpus comprised 36 digital archives: 12 YouTube channels, 10 Instagram accounts, 8 Facebook pages, and 6 publicly accessible WhatsApp communities identified through publicly shared invitation links and educational materials. Communities were purposively selected based on four criteria: identifying themselves as *majelis taklim* or women's Islamic learning communities, regularly publishing religious educational content for at least one year, involving women as lecturers, moderators, or organizers, and maintaining publicly accessible archives. Commercial religious influencers, inactive communities, duplicate accounts, and platforms without archived educational content were excluded.

Historical data were collected from scholarly publications, institutional archives, historical records, ethnographic studies, and previous research on *majelis taklim* and community-based Islamic education in Indonesia. Contemporary data were obtained through systematic observation of recorded sermons, livestreamed *halaqah*, Qur'anic study sessions, religious discussions, educational posters, and online mentoring activities (Campbell & Tsuria, 2022). Each archive was documented using an observation sheet recording publication date, platform, educational theme, pedagogical format, women's participation, interaction patterns, and indicators of religious authority. Historical and contemporary materials were treated as complementary sources for comparing pedagogical continuity and digital transformation.

Data analysis integrated historical source criticism with qualitative thematic coding (Feener, 2019). Historical documents and digital archives were first catalogued according to period, platform, educational activity, and institutional characteristics, and then examined for authenticity, credibility, consistency, and contextual relevance. The materials subsequently underwent open, axial, and selective coding. Open coding identified recurring pedagogical activities, knowledge transmission, communication patterns, women's educational roles, religious authority, and knowledge-validation practices. Axial coding organized related codes into broader categories, while selective coding generated three analytical themes: historical pedagogical continuity, transformation of women's religious agencies, and reconfiguration of religious authority and knowledge-validation mechanisms. These themes were interpreted through layered pedagogical continuity to identify how preservation and transformation operate across historical, institutional, interpersonal, and digital dimensions.

The study used publicly accessible historical and digital materials and involved no direct interaction or intervention with human participants. Responsible digital research principles were nevertheless applied by avoiding unnecessary disclosure of personal identities, using public materials solely for academic purposes, and anonymizing identifying information where necessary. Contextual interpretation was also employed to minimize misrepresentation of religious actors, *majelis taklim* communities, and their educational practices.

C. Results and Discussion

This section presents the empirical findings and subsequent discussion of the digital transformation of *majelis taklim* within the framework of historical continuity and women's religious agency. The findings are derived from historical sources and digital archival observations across YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and publicly accessible WhatsApp communities. The Results section presents the empirical patterns identified through historical and thematic analysis, while the Discussion interprets these findings in relation to continuity and change, women's agency, digital religion, and layered pedagogical continuity.

1. Results

The analysis of historical sources and digital archives identified three interconnected patterns in the transformation of *majelis taklim*: the continuity of Islamic pedagogical practices across changing media, the reconfiguration of learning interaction

and religious authority in digital environments, and the expansion of women's educational roles. These findings are presented in three sections corresponding to the analytical themes generated through historical source analysis and thematic coding.

a. Historical Continuity of Islamic Education: From Oral Tradition to Digital *Majelis Taklim*

The historical and digital archival analysis identified continuity in the educational functions of *majelis taklim* despite changes in the media through which religious learning was delivered. Across the periods examined, changes occurred primarily in educational media, accessibility, and modes of participation, while teacher-guided instruction, structured religious learning, repetition, collective participation, and recognized sources of religious knowledge remained observable. Contemporary digital archives showed these practices through recorded lectures, livestreamed *pengajian*, WhatsApp learning groups, and social media content. The historical patterns of continuity identified across different communication periods are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Historical Continuity of Islamic Educational Transmission

Historical Period	Dominant Educational Media	Core Pedagogical Characteristics	Evidence of Continuity
Oral Tradition	<i>Halaqah, talaqqī</i>	Face-to-face transmission, memorization, repetition	Teacher-centered learning
Manuscript Tradition	Handwritten religious texts	Guided reading and annotation	Preservation of textual authority
Print Era	Religious books, pamphlets	Wider dissemination of structured learning	Expansion without pedagogical change
Broadcast Era	Radio and television sermons	Scheduled public religious instruction	Extension of community learning
Digital Era	WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, livestream <i>halaqah</i>	Interactive online learning, asynchronous participation	Preservation of <i>tadarus</i> , <i>tadarruj</i> , <i>mudāwamah</i>

Source: Compiled by the authors from historical document analysis and digital archival observation (2025)

Table 1 shows a gradual expansion of educational media from oral transmission to digitally mediated learning. In the digital archives, structured religious instruction remained visible in lectures that commonly began with greetings, Qur'anic recitation, or readings from religious texts before proceeding to the main lesson. Recorded lectures enabled repeated access to learning materials, while livestream sessions extended synchronous instruction beyond physical gatherings. WhatsApp groups supported these activities by

circulating lecture schedules, religious reminders, recorded lessons, and information about subsequent learning sessions. Thus, the observable transformation concerned primarily the medium, reach, and temporal organization of religious learning rather than the disappearance of established pedagogical practices.

The digital archives also showed continuity in teacher-learner interaction and knowledge transmission. Participants used comment sections, live chats, and WhatsApp groups to ask questions, respond to explanations, and obtain information from administrators and religious teachers. Religious content was generally associated with identifiable *ustadz*, *ustadzah*, or official *majelis taklim* accounts and was frequently accompanied by Qur’anic verses, hadith, or recognized religious texts. At the same time, women were visibly involved as participants, teachers, organizers, and administrators. These observations indicate that digital platforms extended established learning activities while introducing broader access, asynchronous participation, and new forms of interaction.

b. Layered Pedagogical Continuity: Reconfiguring Learning Media, Religious Authority, and Women’s Agency

Comparison of historical sources and digital archives identified four dimensions in which continuity and change occurred simultaneously: pedagogical function, learning interaction, women’s educational agency, and knowledge validation. These dimensions did not change uniformly. Instead, established educational functions remained observable while their modes of delivery, interaction, participation, and validation were reorganized through digital platforms. Table 2 summarizes the historical foundations and corresponding digital practices identified in the analyzed materials.

Table 2. Dimensions of Layered Pedagogical Continuity in Digital Majelis Taklim

Dimension	Historical Foundation	Digital Reconfiguration
Pedagogical Function	Qur’anic learning, <i>halaqah</i> , <i>tadarruj</i> , <i>tadarus</i>	Livestream lectures, recorded lessons, online study circles
Learning Interaction	Face-to-face teacher-student instruction	WhatsApp discussions, live chat, virtual mentoring
Women’s Educational Agency	Participation as learners and local organizers	Educators, moderators, content creators, learning coordinators
Knowledge Validation	Reference to recognized scholars and classical texts	Digital verification through institutional references, recommended readings, official fatwas

Source: Authors’ analysis based on historical documents and digital archival observation (2025)

The first dimension concerned pedagogical function. The digital archives contained livestream lectures, recorded lessons, and online study circles that continued practices associated with Qur'anic learning, explanation of religious texts, gradual instruction (*tadarruj*), and repeated engagement with religious materials. Recorded lectures allowed participants to revisit previous lessons, whereas livestream sessions enabled simultaneous participation from different locations. These patterns show that digitalization altered the medium, accessibility, and temporal organization of instruction while structured forms of religious learning remained observable.

The second dimension involved learning interaction and knowledge validation. Teacher-learner interaction extended into WhatsApp discussions, live chats, comment sections, and virtual mentoring, where participants asked questions, requested clarification, and responded to religious explanations. Knowledge validation remained associated with identifiable religious sources, including recognized *ustadz* and *ustadzah*, religious institutions, Qur'anic verses, hadith, classical texts, recommended readings, and official religious guidance or fatwas. Administrators also circulated links to institutional materials and official accounts, showing that digital circulation did not eliminate reference to identifiable sources of religious knowledge.

The third dimension concerned women's educational participation. Across the observed platforms, women participated not only as learners but also as educators, moderators, content creators, and coordinators of online learning. Female religious educators delivered lectures, shared educational materials, moderated discussions, and coordinated information about online *pengajian* and study activities. Female participants engaged through questions, comments, reposting educational content, and participation in online discussion groups. These patterns demonstrate observable changes in the forms and scope of women's participation while maintaining their involvement within the educational activities of *majelis taklim*.

c. Digital Women's Agency in Sustaining the Historical Continuity of Islamic Education

The digital archives identified an expansion in the educational roles performed by women within *majelis taklim*. Their activities extended beyond participation as religious learners to include facilitation, teaching, organization, coordination, and the circulation of religious knowledge. Five recurring roles were identified: religious learner, learning facilitator, religious educator, community organizer, and knowledge curator and validator.

Table 3 presents these roles by comparing their historical functions with the corresponding practices observed in digital learning environments.

Table 3. Women's Educational Agency in the Digital Continuity of Majelis Taklim

Women's Educational Role	Historical Function	Digital Educational Practice
Religious Learner	Participating in face-to-face <i>halaqah</i> and Qur'anic study	Participating in livestream lectures, online study circles, and WhatsApp learning groups
Learning Facilitator	Organizing local religious gatherings	Moderating online discussions, coordinating virtual learning sessions
Religious Educator	Assisting local teaching activities under senior scholars	Delivering lectures, producing educational videos, leading thematic discussions
Community Organizer	Managing community religious activities	Scheduling online programs, disseminating educational materials, coordinating digital events
Knowledge Curator and Validator	Referring to recognized scholars and classical texts	Sharing verified references, official fatwas, and authenticated learning resources

Source: Authors' analysis based on historical documents and digital archival observation (2025)

Women participated in livestream lectures, online study circles, and WhatsApp learning groups while also moderating discussions, circulating information about religious programs, and coordinating virtual learning activities. Female educators delivered online lectures, participated in thematic religious discussions, and distributed educational materials through digital platforms. Women also appeared as administrators responsible for sharing lecture schedules, links to learning sessions, and religious content. Participant interactions included asking questions, responding to religious explanations, sharing educational materials, and encouraging participation in subsequent study activities. These observations demonstrate that women's involvement encompassed both participation in and practical responsibility for digitally mediated religious learning.

A further pattern concerned women's involvement in the circulation and validation of religious knowledge. Women shared references to recognized scholars, religious texts, official fatwas, and identified learning resources when distributing religious materials. Administrators and facilitators also directed participants toward specific lectures, institutional accounts, and recommended educational sources. Across the analyzed archives, women's activities therefore encompassed learning, facilitation, teaching, coordination, and knowledge circulation. The evidence establishes variation in women's educational roles across digitally mediated environments.

2. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the digitalization of *majelis taklim* is not adequately explained as a transition from traditional to technologically modern education. What changes most visibly are the media, temporal arrangements, and modes of interaction, whereas teacher-guided instruction, communal learning, religious references, and structured knowledge transmission remain recognizable. This pattern is consistent with historical accounts showing that Islamic education in Indonesia has repeatedly accommodated institutional and social change without necessarily abandoning its established educational orientations (Saputra et al., 2022). In the specific context of *majelis taklim*, Latief and Madjid (2022) likewise demonstrate its enduring significance as a site of religious learning and women's Islamization. The present study extends this historical argument into digital environments by showing that continuity operates through the reconfiguration of pedagogical practices rather than their unchanged preservation.

This finding also qualifies interpretations that position technology as the primary force transforming religious education. Scholarship on digital religion has established that digital media reshape religious communication, community formation, participation, and authority (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020; Campbell & Tsuria, 2021; Zaluchu, 2023). Research on Indonesian digital Islam similarly demonstrates how online environments facilitate new religious movements and forms of digitally mediated *da'wah* (Nisa, 2018; Sikumbang et al., 2024; Albantani et al., 2026). The present findings do not contradict these transformations; rather, they show that technological change operates through pre-existing pedagogical structures. Digital media expand the reach and flexibility of *majelis taklim*, but their educational significance remains connected to established practices of religious instruction, communal learning, and recognized sources of knowledge. Digitalization is therefore historically embedded rather than institutionally detached.

The relationship between continuity and transformation becomes clearer when viewed through Cannadine's (2019) historiographical perspective of continuity and change. The findings suggest that continuity does not require educational practices to remain formally identical across periods. Instead, pedagogical purposes may persist while the media and interactions through which they are enacted change. Comparable research on pedagogical continuity has also distinguished continuity of educational purpose from the preservation of particular delivery mechanisms (Coulange et al., 2021; Motala & Menon, 2022; Pedró & Torres, 2022). These studies concern different educational settings and therefore do not directly explain *majelis taklim*; nevertheless, they provide a useful

comparative perspective. In the present case, continuity is historically situated within Islamic educational practices and is sustained through selective reconfiguration of instruction, participation, and knowledge transmission.

The second major finding concerns women's educational agency. The expansion of women's roles from learners and local organizers to educators, moderators, coordinators, and knowledge curators indicates that digitalization has widened the range of educational practices in which women participate. This development builds upon, rather than replaces, women's historical involvement in *majelis taklim*. Latief and Madjid (2022) locate *majelis taklim* within longer processes of women's Islamic learning in Indonesia, while Fadillah (2023) documents its importance in women's gradual movement toward greater participation and gender equality. Research on digital *da'wah* further demonstrates the growing visibility of Muslim women as religious communicators (Effendy et al., 2024; Zebua & Khatibah, 2024; Sari et al., 2025). The present study connects these developments by showing how digital participation grows from an already established institutional history of women's religious learning.

Kabeer's (1999) concept of agency provides an important qualification to this finding. Agency concerns the capacity to define and act upon meaningful choices and therefore cannot be inferred merely from digital visibility or platform access. The observed expansion of women's educational roles provides evidence of broader participation, but it does not by itself establish equal authority, autonomy, or decision-making power. This distinction is important because digital religious environments can simultaneously create opportunities and reproduce established structures of authority. Hefner's (2022) study of Indonesian Muslim schoolgirls, for example, demonstrates the complex relationship among morality, religious authority, and digital participation. Nisa and Saenong (2022) likewise show that women's religious authority involves processes of legitimation rather than visibility alone. Accordingly, the present findings indicate expanded educational agency while avoiding the stronger claim that digitalization automatically produces women's empowerment.

The findings on knowledge validation further complicate assumptions that digitalization necessarily weakens established religious authority. Although digital platforms diversify access to religious information, the observed *majelis taklim* continued to reference identifiable *ustadz*, *ustadzah*, religious institutions, Qur'anic and hadith sources, classical texts, and official religious guidance. This pattern corresponds with Berger and Golan's (2024) argument that online religious learning produces new configurations of

epistemic authority rather than simply eliminating established authority. Askar et al. (2025) similarly demonstrate that online Islamic knowledge remains closely connected to questions of source credibility and religious authority among Indonesian Muslim learners. The implication is that digital religious authority should be understood as a process of negotiation between inherited sources of legitimacy and new mechanisms of circulation, visibility, and access (Kasdi et al., 2026).

Taken together, these findings provide the empirical basis for the study's principal conceptual contribution: layered pedagogical continuity. The concept explains why preservation and transformation can occur simultaneously across different dimensions of an educational institution. Historical pedagogical functions may persist while interaction becomes digitally mediated; women's participation may expand while religious legitimacy remains connected to recognized sources; and knowledge may circulate through new platforms while retaining established mechanisms of validation. Layered pedagogical continuity therefore differs from approaches that focus primarily on digital religious authority, pedagogical adaptation, or institutional resilience. Rather than replacing these perspectives, it connects dimensions that they tend to examine separately. Its analytical value lies in identifying where continuity occurs, where reconfiguration occurs, and how these processes remain interconnected within the same educational institution.

This conceptualization also clarifies the interdisciplinary contribution of the study. Historiography explains the temporal relationship between persistence and change; gender analysis illuminates how women's participation develops within existing institutional structures; and digital religion explains how media environments reshape communication and authority. None of these perspectives alone fully captures the observed transformation of *majelis taklim*. Scholarship on digital religion emphasizes the relationship between religion and changing media environments (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020; Campbell & Tsuria, 2021), while studies of Muslim social media document increasingly diverse forms of online religious participation (Larsson & Willander, 2025). By bringing these conversations into dialogue with the historical development of Indonesian Islamic education (Saputra et al., 2022; R. W. Hefner, 2022), layered pedagogical continuity provides a bridge between institutional history, technological mediation, and gendered participation.

The findings also have practical implications. For community-based Islamic education, successful digital transformation cannot be reduced to adopting platforms, producing online content, or expanding technological infrastructure. The persistence of

teacher-learner relationships and recognizable mechanisms of knowledge validation suggests that digital development must remain connected to pedagogical credibility and institutional responsibility. This issue is particularly important because online religious learning increases access while simultaneously multiplying the sources from which religious knowledge can be obtained (Berger & Golan, 2024; Askar et al., 2025). Syukur et al., (2024) similarly highlight the institutional challenges accompanying technological integration in Islamic educational settings. For *majelis taklim*, digital expansion therefore requires attention not only to accessibility but also to educator capacity, credible references, responsible content circulation, and mechanisms through which participants can distinguish institutionally grounded learning from unverified religious information.

The broader significance of these findings extends beyond Indonesia because the underlying problem is not uniquely Indonesian: how can historically rooted, community-based religious education enter digital environments without losing the pedagogical relationships and sources of legitimacy through which it sustains itself? International digital-religion scholarship shows that technological mediation is reshaping religious practice and authority across contexts rather than within a single religious community (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020; Campbell & Tsuria, 2021). Larsson and Willander's (2025) review similarly demonstrate the international expansion and diversity of Muslim engagement with social media. Meanwhile, research on online religious learning identifies epistemic authority as a broader problem of digitally mediated religious communities (Berger & Golan, 2024). The Indonesian *majelis taklim* case therefore provides a historically grounded contribution to an international problem: understanding how religious educational institutions negotiate continuity, authority, participation, and technological change simultaneously.

The international relevance is further strengthened by the fact that pedagogical continuity is not confined to Islamic education. Research in other educational contexts has examined how institutions preserve educational purposes while reorganizing teaching across changing technological conditions (Coulange et al., 2021; Motala & Menon, 2022; Pedró & Torres, 2022). The present study contributes to a distinct case because *majelis taklim* combines community-based education, religious authority, gendered participation, and digital learning within a historically embedded institution. This makes layered pedagogical continuity potentially useful as a comparative analytical proposition, rather than a universally established model, for examining faith-based and community

educational institutions elsewhere. Comparative studies could test whether similar layering occurs across Muslim communities in Southeast Asia and other religious traditions, thereby establishing the concept's transferability beyond the Indonesian case.

Women's educational agency provides another pathway to international significance. Digital environments are often associated with expanded participation, but the findings caution against equating participation with empowerment. Kabeer's (1999) distinction between resources, agency, and achievements provides a framework for understanding why increased access must be examined alongside the capacity to influence educational practices. The Indonesian evidence shows expansion in women's observable educational roles, while studies of Indonesian Muslim women demonstrate that religious authority and gendered participation remain institutionally negotiated (Fadillah, 2023; Nisa & Saenong, 2022; C. M. Hefner, 2022). This distinction is relevant to international debates on inclusive lifelong learning and women's participation in culturally embedded educational institutions. The contribution lies not in claiming universal gender transformation, but in showing how digitalization can reorganize opportunities for agency within historically structured religious environments.

The study therefore contributes to international scholarship at two levels. Empirically, it brings evidence from Indonesian *majelis taklim* into broader debates on digital religion, community-based learning, religious authority, and women's educational participation. Conceptually, layered pedagogical continuity offers a proposition that can be tested comparatively to explain why technological change transforms some institutional dimensions while others persist. This contribution complements international scholarship on digital religion (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020; Larsson & Willander, 2025), online epistemic authority (Berger & Golan, 2024), and pedagogical continuity across changing educational environments (Coulange et al., 2021; Pedró & Torres, 2022). Its value is therefore not that the Indonesian experience can automatically be generalized globally, but that it provides a theoretically informed case through which broader assumptions about technology, institutional continuity, authority, and agency can be comparatively examined.

Despite its empirical and conceptual contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The reliance on historical materials and publicly accessible digital archives limits the study to observable practices and does not capture how educators and participants experience or interpret digital transformation. Regional and institutional variations may also produce different patterns of pedagogical continuity. Moreover,

layered pedagogical continuity is developed from the Indonesian *majelis taklim* context and therefore requires further empirical validation. Future research should incorporate interviews and participant observation, compare different regional and institutional settings, and examine the framework across other Muslim societies and community-based religious educational contexts.

D. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the digitalization of *majelis taklim* represents a process of historical continuity through transformation rather than a departure from established Islamic educational traditions. Across changing communication environments, core pedagogical functions remain recognizable while learning media, interaction patterns, women's participation, and mechanisms of knowledge validation are selectively reconfigured. Digitalization therefore extends rather than simply replaces established forms of religious learning. The findings also show that women's educational roles have expanded from participation as learners toward facilitation, teaching, coordination, and knowledge curation, although such expansion should not be equated automatically with equal religious authority or empowerment.

The study's principal conceptual contribution is *layered pedagogical continuity*, which explains how preservation and transformation operate simultaneously across historical, institutional, interpersonal, and digital dimensions. By integrating historiography, women's agency, and digital religion, the framework moves beyond explanations that treat technological adaptation, religious authority, and women's participation as separate processes. It proposes instead that educational institutions maintain continuity through selective reconfiguration: some pedagogical functions persist, while the media, relationships, participation structures, and mechanisms through which they operate change. For Islamic educational institutions, this implies that meaningful digital transformation requires not only technological adoption but also attention to pedagogical credibility, teacher-learner relationships, reliable knowledge validation, and inclusive educational participation.

Future research should address the methodological, contextual, and conceptual limitations identified in this study. Interviews and participant observation are needed to examine how educators and learners themselves experience digital transformation and changing forms of authority and participation. Comparative research across Indonesian regions and different Islamic educational institutions could determine how institutional and socio-cultural variations shape patterns of pedagogical continuity. Further studies

should also test *layered pedagogical continuity* across Muslim societies and other community-based religious educational settings to assess its explanatory scope, refine its dimensions, and determine the conditions under which the framework can be transferred beyond the Indonesian *majelis taklim* context. Ultimately, the experience of *majelis taklim* shows that educational continuity depends not on resisting technological change, but on preserving pedagogical purpose while adapting how knowledge is transmitted and shared. Digital transformation becomes meaningful when innovation strengthens, rather than replaces, the pedagogical foundations and values that sustain educational communities.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial or non-financial interests that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Declaration of Generative AI

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used Grammarly and QuillBot as AI-assisted language tools to improve grammatical accuracy, sentence clarity, and readability. These tools were used solely for language editing and refinement and were not employed to generate research data, conduct data analysis, develop findings, or make scholarly interpretations. All AI-assisted revisions were critically reviewed and verified by the authors, who take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

References

- Abdullah, I., Tang, M., Nurhakim, P. R., Suprianto, B., & Fernando, H. (2023). Religion of Pandemic: Delegitimization of Authority During the Covid-19 Era. *Al-Albab*, 12(2), 293–314. <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v12i2.2926>
- Abidin, Z. (2019). Majelis Ta'lim (Islamic Forum) And Harmonizing Inter Faith Communication. *INJECT (Interdisciplinary Journal of Communication)*, 4(1), 115. <https://doi.org/10.18326/inject.v4i1.115-136>
- Adli, M., Hakim, P. R. N., Abdullah, I., Lestari, A. D., & Tabrani ZA. (2025). The Theology of Divine Names and Attributes: A Comparative Examination of Salafi and Ash'Ari Doctrines. *Al-Albab*, 14(2). <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v14i2.3760>
- Alam, L., Setiawan, B., Harimurti, S. M., Miftahulhaq, & Alam, M. (2023). The Changing Piety and Spirituality: A New Trend of Islamic Urbanism in Yogyakarta and Surakarta. *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, 13(2), 227–252. <https://doi.org/10.18326/IJIMS.V13I2.227-252>

- Albantani, A. M., Sufyan, A., Rozak, A., Jaeni, M., & Ardiansyah, A. A. (2026). Harnessing Bloom's Digital Taxonomy for Modern Arabic Language Instruction in Islamic Universities. *Ascarya: Journal of Islamic Science, Culture, and Social Studies*, 6(1), 45–60. <https://doi.org/10.53754/iscs.v6i1.790>
- Arweck, E. (2025). Digital Religion: The Basics. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 40(1), 198–199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537903.2025.2501428>
- Askar, A., Nurdin, N., Pettalongi, A., Pettalongi, S. S., & Basire, J. H. I. T. (2025). Online Islamic Knowledge Sources and their Authority in Islamic Learning: A Case Study of Indonesian Muslim universities. *Cogent Education*, 12(1), 1–134. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2504236>
- Berger, A., & Golan, O. (2024). Online Religious Learning: Digital Epistemic Authority and Self-Socialization in Religious Communities. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 49(2), 274–289. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2023.2169833>
- Campbell, H. A., & Evolvi, G. (2020). Contextualizing Current Digital Religion Research on Emerging Technologies. In *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies* (pp. 201–231). <https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.149>
- Campbell, H. A., & Tsuria, R. (2021). *Digital Religion* (2dn editio). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429295683>
- Campbell, H. A., & Tsuria, R. (2022). Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in Digital Media. In *Digital Religion*.
- Cannadine, D. (2019). The Future from the Past. *New Scientist*, 244(3251), 21. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0262-4079\(19\)31913-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0262-4079(19)31913-x)
- Coulange, L., Stunell, K., & Train, G. (2021). Pedagogical Continuity: Myth or Reality? *Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching and Learning*, 14(1), 75–92. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIT-11-2020-0077>
- Effendy, E., Abdullah, A., & Rubino, R. (2024). Empowering Muslim Women through Digital Da'wah: A Case Study of Hijabers Community Medan. *MUHARRIK: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Sosial*, 7(2), 373–393. <https://doi.org/10.37680/muharrik.v7i2.6982>
- Fadillah, N. (2023). Women's Majelis Taklim And The Gradual Move Toward Gender Equality A study in Jambi Province. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 17(1), 100–123. <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2023.17.1.100-123>
- Farida, N. A., & Abidin, Z. (2024). Husein Jafar Al-Hadar's Islam Mazhab Cinta: Meaning and Media Analysis of Instagram Content @husein_hadar. *International Journal of Islamic Khazanah*, 14(2), 143–155. <https://doi.org/10.15575/ijik.v14i2.31151>
- Feener, R. M. (2019). Islam in Southeast Asia to c. 1800. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, 5(3), 222–241. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.013.40>

- Gierhart, A. R. (2023). Digital Pedagogy in Dialogue: Student Teaching During COVID-19. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 7(1), 243–259. <https://doi.org/10.33902/JPR.202319642>
- Glassner, A. (2022). Autoethnography of Meaningful Childhood Learning Memories to Clarify and Enhance Auto-pedagogical Identity. *Studying Teacher Education*, 18(2), 158–174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17425964.2021.2014806>
- Hakim, P. R. N., Abdullah, I., Musfiroh, M. R., Sintang, S., & Razick, A. S. (2025). Contesting Sharia and Human Rights in the Digital Sphere: Media Representations of the Caning Controversy under the Qanun Jinayat in Aceh. *Journal of Islamic Law*, 2(1), 178–200. <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v6i2.3600>
- Hakim, P. R. N., Asyifa, N., Saputra, H., Adli, M., Al Fajri, M., & Maulina, W. (2024). Mediatization of Clothing Consumption among Muslim Teenagers. *IAS Journal of Localities*, 2(1), 52–68. <https://doi.org/10.62033/iasjol.v2i1.41>
- Hefner, C. M. (2022). Morality, Religious Authority, and the Digital EDGE: Indonesian Muslim Schoolgirls Online. *American Ethnologist*, 49(3), 359–373. <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.13088>
- Hefner, R. W. (2022). How Indonesia Became a World Leader in Islamic Education A Historical Sociology of a Great Transformation. *Muslim Education Review*, 3(18), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.56529/mer.v1i1.25>
- Helim, A., Patrajaya, R., Hosen, N., Warman, A. B., & Benevolent, W. S. V. (2024). Fiqh Reference Patterns of the Majelis Taklim in Central Kalimantan. *El-Mashlahah*, 14(1), 169–188. <https://doi.org/10.23971/el-mashlahah.v14i1.7872>
- Ismail, I., Hendri, N., & Nurhakim, P. R. (2023). Minangkabau's Doro Tradition: Coexistence of Customary Law and Islamic Law in Caning Punishment. *Samarah*, 7(1), 579–601. <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v7i1.15904>
- Jamil, Z. A., Nurhuda, N., Alfian, A., Ulfah, S. M., Rasidin, R., & Youssef, A. (2025). Program Evaluation Study on Islamic Religious Education in Pesantren: Addressing Educational Degradation in the Digital Era. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 22(1), 122–139. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v22i1.11358>
- Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment. *Development and Change*, 30(3), 435–464. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7660.00125>
- Kabeer, N. (2019). Women's Empowerment and the Question of Choice: An Interview with Naila Kabeer. *Journal of International Affairs*, 72(2), 209–214. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/e26760825>
- Kasdi, A., Farida, U., Huda, M., Rahman, A. F. A., & Dakhoir, A. (2026). Fatwa and Religious Authority: Islamic Law, Social Media Ethics and Digital Age. *Al-Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah dan Hukum*, 11(1), 56–66. <https://doi.org/10.22515/alahkam.v11i1.10755>

- Kosim, M., Muqoddam, F., Mubarak, F., & Laila, N. Q. (2023). The Dynamics of Islamic Education Policies in Indonesia. *Cogent Education*, 10(1), 123–241. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2172930>
- Larsson, G., & Willander, E. (2025). Muslims and Social Media: A Scoping Review. *Information Communication and Society*, 28(11), 1908–1922. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2024.2379835>
- Latief, H., & Madjid, A. (2022). Majelis Taklim and the Path of Women's Islamization in Indonesia. *The Muslim World*, 112(4), 457–472. <https://doi.org/10.1111/muwo.12449>
- Lee, D. H. L. (2025). Identity Grafting: Pedagogical Identities Underpinning Teaching Practices Across Five Chinese Cities. *Professional Development in Education*, 51(4), 603–624. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2022.2155986>
- Li, P. A., Liou, C. H., Tai, W. H., Yu, I. C., Tsai, G. T., & Chen, Y. S. (2025). Constructing Pedagogical Identity through Experiential Curriculum: A Grounded Theory Study of Facilitators in Outdoor Education. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 1(1), 134. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2025.102857>
- Luguetti, C., Aranda, R., Nuñez Enriquez, O., & Oliver, K. L. (2019). Developing Teachers' Pedagogical Identities through a Community of Practice: Learning to Sustain the use of a Student-Centered Inquiry as Curriculum Approach. *Sport, Education and Society*, 24(8), 855–866. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2018.1476336>
- Maulana, A. M. R., Farhah, F., Rachmawati, F., & Mulya, A. S. (2026). From Digital Religion to Digital Islam: Finding God in the Society 5.0 through *Maqāsīd Shari'ah*. *Al-Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah dan Hukum*, 11(1), 3–26. <https://doi.org/10.22515/alahkam.v11i1.11066>
- Motala, S., & Menon, K. (2022). Pedagogical Continuities in Teaching and Learning During COVID-19: Holding up the Bridge. *SOTL in the South*, 6(1), 7–32. <https://doi.org/10.36615/SOTLS.V6i1.249>
- Mrisho, D. H., & Dominic, N. A. (2023). Media Literacy: Concept, Theoretical Explanation, and its Importance in the Digital Age. *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 6(1), 78–85. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.6.1.1087>
- Muslikun, M., Trisanti, T., Anggoro, R. W., Giri, E. F., & Umar, A. (2026). Digital Governance-Informed Instructional Design Framework for Madrasah Education: A Systematic Literature Review. *Online Learning in Educational Research*, 6(1), 211–226. <https://doi.org/10.58524/oler.v6i1.1027>
- Nisa, E. F. (2018). Social Media and the Birth of an Islamic Social Movement: ODOJ (One Day One Juz) in contemporary Indonesia. *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 46(134), 24–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2017.1416758>

- Nisa, E. F., & Saenong, F. F. (2022). Relegitimizing Religious Authority: Indonesian Gender-Just 'Ulamā' Amid COVID-19. *Religions*, 13(6), 485. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13060485>
- Pappa, S., Moate, J., Ruohotie-Lyhty, M., & Eteläpelto, A. (2017). Teachers' Pedagogical and Relational Identity Negotiation in the Finnish CLIL Context. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 65(1), 61–70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.03.008>
- Pedró, F., & Torres, D. R. (2022). Closing Now to Reopen Better Tomorrow? Pedagogical Continuity in Latin American Universities During the Pandemic. *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research*, 11(2), 295–306. <https://doi.org/10.7821/naer.2022.7.1003>
- Prestridge, S., Tan, S. C., Jacobsen, M., Hoppe, H. U., Angeli, C., Milrad, M., Pangeni, S. K., Kovatcheva, E., Kafyulilo, A., Flanagan, B., & Khaddage, F. (2024). Disconnected Connections of Learning Beyond Formal Schooling Through Human–Computer–Human Interactions. *Technology, Knowledge and Learning*, 29(4), 1791–1807. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10758-024-09779-6>
- Saputra, K. D., Mughni, F. A. Z., Zohkarnain, N. A., & Dena Sadewa, M. S. (2022). Historical Continuity and Changes: Understanding the Dynamics of Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia. *Jurnal Tarbiyatuna*, 13(2), 107–118. <https://doi.org/10.31603/tarbiyatuna.v13i2.7345>
- Sari, F. M., Sikumbang, A. T., & Rubino. (2025). Teungku Inong and Digital Da'wah in Aceh: Balancing Social Media, Career, and Family through an Islamic Communication Perspective. *El-Usrah*, 8(1), 618–642. <https://doi.org/10.22373/gn56dh46>
- Sholeh, M. I., Rohman, H., Suwandi, E. A., Akhyak, Efendi, N., & Muhajir, A. (2023). Transformation of Islamic Education: A Study of Changes in the Transformation of the Education Curriculum. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 20(1), 33–50. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v20i1.6770>
- Sikumbang, A. T., Dalimunthe, M. A., Kholil, S., & Nasution, N. F. (2024). Digital Da'wah Indonesia Ulema in the Discourse of Theology. *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 105(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.1051>
- Susanti, S. S., Nursafitri, L., Hamzah, I., Zunarti, R., Darmanto, D., Fitriyah, F., Asy'arie, B. F., & As'ad, M. S. (2024). Innovative Digital Media in Islamic Religious Education Learning. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 21(1), 40–59. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i1.7553>
- Suwendi, S., Mesraini, M., Gama, C. B., Rahman, H., Luhuringbudi, T., & Sangsawang, T. (2025). Lecturers' Digital Readiness in the Context of Digital Scholarchy. *Munaddhomah*, 6(2), 208–222. <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i2.1674>

- Syukur, F., Maghfurin, A., Marhamah, U., & Jehwae, P. (2024). Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Higher Education: Comparative Responses between Indonesia and Thailand. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 7(3), 531–553. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i3.13>
- Tabrani ZA., Idris, S., Yusoff, M. N., Siswanto, R., & Murziqin, R. (2023). Strategy on Boarding School Development: Between Trend and Performance Analysis. *Multidisciplinary Reviews*, 6(2), 2023013. <https://doi.org/10.31893/multirev.2023013>
- Tantowi, A., Gunawan, M. A., & Ibrahim, A. (2025). Optimizing Islamic Boarding School Management in the Digital Era: Analysis of Technology Effectiveness in Administration and Operations. *Munaddhomah*, 6(2), 295–309. <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i2.1738>
- Umiralkhanov, A., Abylkassymova, A., Tuyakov, Y., Zhadrayeva, L., & Ardabayeva, A. (2024). Continuity in Teaching the Course Algebra and the Beginning of Analysis: Adaptation of Students to New Conditions. *Qubahan Academic Journal*, 4(3), 796–808. <https://doi.org/10.48161/qaj.v4n3a1050>
- Wahid, S. H. (2024). Exploring the Intersection of Islam and Digital Technology: A Bibliometric Analysis. *Social Sciences and Humanities Open*, 10(2), 121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2024.101085>
- Zaluchu, S. E. (2023). Theological Insight of Digital Religion. *Bogoslovni Vestnik*, 83((3)), 597–610. <https://doi.org/10.34291/BV2023/03/Zaluchu>
- Zebua, D. R., & Khatibah, K. (2024). Islamic Feminism and Online Communities: Exploring Women's Empowerment in Indonesia. *Ascarya: Journal of Islamic Science, Culture, and Social Studies*, 4(2), 99–107. <https://doi.org/10.53754/iscs.v4i2.708>