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Ideological contestations of Salafism and moderatism in Indonesia's hijra movement: Critical discourse analysis

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Abstract

The new pattern of learning for Indonesian Muslims, preferring references to religious knowledge through digital media, provides opportunities for Salafi groups to propose their religious teaching and movements, such as through Islamic-based websites, to contend in religious discourse. Ultimately, Islam experiences ideological contestation, including the construction of the hijra movement through a socialized understanding of Islamic law. This article explores the discourse of the hijra movement applied Salafism using Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, which focuses on text, practice, and socio-cultural analysis. Therefore, the research data includes affiliated online publications and religious practices observed in Salafism religious forums in Bogor, Depok, and Jakarta. The results demonstrated that the hijra movement through digital media has become a strategic arena for the Salafi group in disseminating the Puritan narrative among middle-class Muslims, while Moderatism prioritizes tolerance and pluralism. Salafi group succeeded in captivating these Muslims who preferred to acquire Islamic understanding through online media rather than traditional religious forums to profess Salafism even though of internal conflict within Salafism. This study highlights the need for strengthening digital literacy to investigate ideological interactions across diverse Islamic groups in digital spaces.

Keywords: Ideological contestation, hijra movement, Salafism, Moderatism.

Introduction

The phenomenon of *hijra* as a significant religious trend lately, especially among the middle-class Muslim community in Indonesia, is in line with the transformation of traditional religious forums into digital media. This transformation constructs an arena for contestation challenging established religious ideologies. Media platforms effectively provide and shape religious ideologies to create customized content that significantly increases their followers among urban middle-class Muslims, further contributing to the contestation of religious beliefs. This digital transformation for Salafi groups can expand their influence through online sermons (Whyte, 2022). On the other hand, mainstream organizations, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, Persatuan Islam (Persis), and the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), issue legal fatwas institutionally because they are often disturbed by the religious views of the Salafi group (Azra, 2019; Hosen, 2016). In this context, the hijra movement symbolizes the ideological transformation of religious and Muslim identity, often associated with the ideological contesta-

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tion between Salafism and moderation in Indonesia's social diversity and as a challenge in balancing these opposing ideologies (Bruinessen, 2013). In a country with such high social and religious diversity, Indonesia faces a critical challenge to maintain harmony amidst the increasing claims of absolutist truth, so it is crucial to analyze how digital media functions as a space for ideological contestation and its impact on the diversity of Islamic interpretations and practices.

Previous studies have explored the phenomena of Salafism, Moderatism, and the hijra movement in Indonesia using various approaches. Bruinessen (2013) highlighted the impact of the 1998 reforms in fostering new Islamic movements, including Salafism, but did not specifically discuss hijra as a phenomenon of ideological contestation. Heryanto (2014) examined digital-era screen culture's influence on Salafi preaching strategies through popular media but provided only a general overview without an in-depth analysis of religious identity transformation. Akmaliah (2020) investigated the phenomenon of Ustadz Hanan Attaki and the role of social media in developing hijra youth subcultures, yet did not explore the ideological aspects of *da'wah* (preaching) contestation in digital spaces. Rijal (2024) focused on the hijra practices of urban youth as a process of religious transformation but concentrated on individual behaviors, neglecting the broader dynamics of ideological contestation in digital media. These studies, therefore, have yet to specifically examine how social media serves as a platform for ideological contestation between Salafism and moderatism within the hijra movement.

Previous research has indeed emphasized the role of social media as a powerful tool for religious transformation and identity construction but has largely neglected the broader ideological interactions between Salafism and moderation in the digital context. This study positions itself by employing Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (2003) to illustrate how Salafi and moderate ideologies compete to shape the narratives of the hijra movement through social media. It contributes to the literature by analyzing how digital content functions as a medium of *da'wah* and a tool for ideological contestation. This research focuses on the involvement of Indonesian middle-class Muslims to promote the religious understanding of Salafism behind the hijra movement in the digital era.

This study discusses the hijra movement of the Salafi group that has created a new arena for ideological-religious competition by effectively utilizing media strategies to influence the mindset and behavior of Muslims, especially among the middle class. This movement campaigns to create an Islamization public space that is encouraged through social media and popular culture in Indonesia. The Salafi group formulated the hijra by emphasizing the thinking aspect of distinguishing right from wrong in Salafi's views. Furthermore, with Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, this study also describes the relationship between texts, social practices, and cultural contexts that shape the hijra movement. Thus, this study seeks a more profound understanding of the dynamics of this ideological contestation and its implications for socio-religious harmony in Indonesia.

Literature Review

Salafism ideologically emphasizes purifying Islamic teachings, often referencing the trilogy of monotheism (*uluhiyah, rububiyah, asma wa sifat*), textual interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith, and rejection of innovation (*bid'ah*) (Sheikh, 2021). Ibn Taymiyyah's theological contributions, such as opposing metaphors (*majaz*) and reinterpretation (*ta'wil*) of religious texts, have been extensively utilized to construct Salafism beliefs (Taymiyyah, 2004). These principles influence the group's religious practices, including prohibiting visiting graves (*ziarah kubr*) and accusations of the *tarekat*'s deviation from mainstream Sunni tradition (El-Sharif, 2020). In modern times, Salafism has expanded through financial support from Wahhabi-aligned institutions such as Saudi Arabia's Ihya' al-Turath al-Islami Foundation in Kuwait (Khamdan, 2015). Despite its focus on returning to early Islamic teachings, Salafism has developed into diverse branches, including apolitical, political activities (*haraki*), and armed struggle or militant (*jihadi*) movements (Ismail, 2021). This ideology developed following the understanding of *al-wala' wa al-bara'*, loyalty to the Islamic government system, and detachment from non-Islamic government systems (Al-Syaikh, 2015). This ideology influences the development of violent ideologies to rebel against non-Islamic governments or Islamic governments that collaborate with non-Islamicists. This ideology led to the emergence of a Salafi Takfiri identity, such as the paganism of the Ottoman Empire in the Wahhabi expansion into the Najed region (Al-Najdi, 2004). The Wahhabism ideologue who was the grandson of the founder of the movement, Abdurrahman ibn Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahab (1779-1868), explained that anyone who has laws other than Allah's laws has already ruled according to *taghut* and is therefore an infidel (Ibn As-Syaikh, 2002). Another Wahhabism ideologue named Sulaiman ibn Sahman al-Dusiri an-Najdi (1850-1913) classified *taghut* into three: legal *taghut*, worship *taghut*, and obedience *taghut* (Al-Farraj, 2007).

Salafism identifies its group as a model of a teaching movement that purifies Islam. They consider their group the most authentic successors of Islamic teachings by acknowledging that Salafism follows the tradition of *al-salaf al-shalih*, pious predecessors (Ahmad et al., 2021). Identifying the terms "salafi" and "salaf" as referring to this tradition provoked long discussions in ideological and historical discourse due to their differentiation. *Salaf al-shalih* is the first three generations in the Islamic period: the generation of the Prophet's Companions, the Tabi'in, and the Tabi'it Tabi'in (As-Suyuti, 1998)—Al-Buty (1996) classified three parameters, which further gave rise to the Salafi identity, in formulating the concept of *salaf al-salih*: *zamani* based on the period of the last 300 years (889 AD) since the prophethood, *sanadi* based on the sequence of teachers and students, and *manhaji* based on the concept of *ahl sunnah wal jama'ah*. This generation is considered the most authentic in Islamic history, representing the best generation of Islam. The 3451-3650 hadith narrated by al-Bukhari (2002) and 3964 by Hanbal (1995) underline this period as a primary reference in Islamic teachings (Meijer, 2014). Meanwhile, Salafism is a teaching that is the legal basis for Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia (Iliev et al., 2022; Zahrah, 2009). This Wahabi Salafism accuses other Muslims

who have different views as infidels and fights them (Dahlan, 1978). The Wahhabi group condemned the followers of the Sunni Madhhabi version of As'ariyah-Maturidiyah (Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah theology) as heretical; it declared them as *kufrun mukharrijin 'an al-Islam*, which means infidels, and had left Islam (Al-Fawzan, 1421). The Wahhabi movement first emerged in 1730 AD in the Arabian Peninsula by committing murder and plunder to control the region under the pretext of *ghanimah* (Dahlan, 2011), as well as attacks on the people of Mecca, Medina, Jeddah, Iraq, and Syria (Basha, n.d.).

Genealogically, Salafism refers to the Hanbali madhhab founded by Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855). Historically, this term emerged during the debate during the Abbasid Dynasty; Hanbali opposed the use of *kalam* (rational logic approach) by offering authentic Islam from the texts of the Qur'an and hadith (Iliev et al., 2022). This view was later ideologically adopted by Sheikh Taqiyuddin Ahmad ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328) and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1703). Therefore, Salafism develops a view of obedience to follow all the activities of the Prophet Muhammad, both in worship practices and appearance. The movement encourages its male Muslim followers to have beards (*lihyah*), loose Middle Eastern clothes (*jalabiyyah*), turbans (*imamah*), and shortening their trousers to above the ankles (*isbal*), which tends to be done by young people (Hasan, 2006). Female followers often wear wide dark-colored clothing and face coverings or veils, which is considered a tradition of the *al-salaf al-shalih* (Ahmad et al., 2021). Salafi groups believe that all human life has been regulated in Islam so that there are no more extended laws or other provisions that are better (Furaihan, 2002).

Salafism globally tends toward a textualist interpretation of Islam that idealizes the practices of the *al-salaf al-shalih*. In Indonesia, Salafism, influenced by Wahhabism, manifests in puritanical forms, emphasizing visible identity markers like beards, ankle-length trousers, and niqabs for women (Hasan, 2006). These groups advocate for strict adherence to the Qur'an and Hadith while opposing *taqlid* (blind adherence to traditional scholars' opinions) (Wictorowicz, 2006). However, this rigidity often contrasts with the more flexible approaches of moderate Muslim groups, who distinguish between divine law (*sharia*) and human interpretations (*fiqh*). For moderate groups, Islamic law (*fiqh*) can be applied adaptively to the contemporary context. However, Salafism is against all forms of heresy (Al Hajjaj, 2003). This difference poses a challenge for Salafism in responding to modern issues that require aligning tradition with the needs of a society that continues to develop and change. Salafism, which emphasizes purity in belief and ritual and rejects innovation (*bid'ah*), has significantly influenced Indonesia's hijra movement.

The outward expression of Muslim piety marks the emergence of the hijra movement phenomenon in Indonesia; many Muslims adopt visible symbols of Islam, such as the niqab for women and flood pants for men. This religious practice emphasizes the outward expression of piety. Here, hijra is seen as a change in religious attitudes and experiences, shifting from a loose attitude to a strict attitude, with piety manifested in outward forms (Hamudy & Hamudy, 2020). This movement has encouraged many women to adopt the hijab, symbolizing a commitment to Islamic values. Furthermore, Salafism

campaigns for the hijra movement as a return to authentic Islamic practice through popular preachers and social media. This movement packages a religious identity that attracts support from urban middle-class Muslims and celebrities. As such, this movement focuses on visual expressions of piety, often combined with rigid interpretations of right and wrong. Although it attracts many followers seeking clarity in faith, this *da'wah* movement has drawn criticism for viewing socio-religious issues as less comprehensive (Aidulsyah, 2023; Akmaliah, 2020).

Religious-ideological contestation in Indonesia arises from the interaction between Salafism and Moderatism, driven by technological advancements and the democratization of information. With its mere textual interpretation of Islamic law, Salafism often challenges mainstream organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, which advocate for more rational and contextually relevant approaches to integrating modernity. This ideological tension highlights a clash of authority, as individual Salafi interpretations compete with institutional fatwas, creating a polarized perception of Islam that sometimes associates Salafism with radicalism due to its rejection of modern social and legal frameworks (Bruinessen, 2013; Nisa, 2018; Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021).

Social media platforms such as Islami.co and Ibtimes.id have become key battlegrounds for these contesting ideologies, with Salafism leveraging digital tools to broaden its influence, while Moderatism emphasizes tolerance, pluralism, and balancing religious adherence with modern societal norms (Whyte, 2022; Makruf & Asrori, 2022). Moderatism counters extremism by promoting dialogue, mutual respect, and contextual interpretations of Islamic law that align with contemporary realities (El-Sharif, 2020; Ismail, 2021). Unlike Salafi-oriented hijra movements, which can polarize Islamic identity, moderate groups emphasize spiritual self-improvement while discouraging rigidity, often collaborating with mainstream institutions and utilizing social media to highlight inclusive Islamic values (Nurhayati et al., 2023; Taufik, 2020).

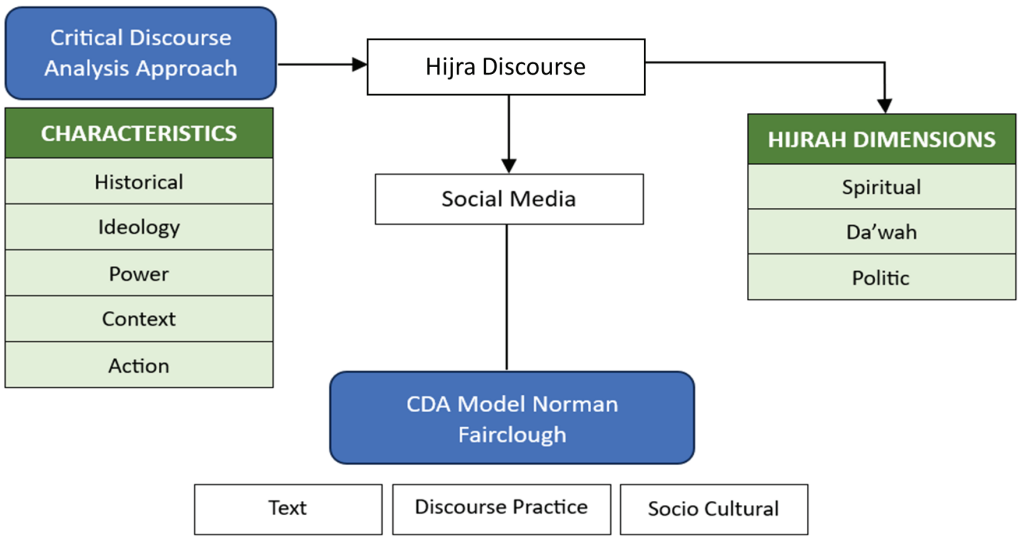
Method

The hijra movement is a significant trend in understanding how the operation of religious ideology and modern religious practices, particularly among middle-class urban Muslims, is evolving in response to socio-political and cultural changes in Indonesia. The movement is rapidly proliferating because it utilizes digital platforms. The movement, which urban Muslims widely follow, is rapidly proliferating with the strategy of utilizing digital platforms to construct new religious authorities. In this arena, the authority that involves Salafism's ideology competes with moderate ideology's established traditional religious authority. The promotion and modification of religious identity constructed and communicated in Indonesia through digital media is a significant focus of the study because it represents the ideological contestation of Salafism and moderation.

This qualitative research design focuses on contesting religious ideology between Salafism and moderation through the Indonesian hijra movement in digital media as

a new arena for religious authority and identity. Therefore, this study utilizes Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) to explore religious texts, related social practices, and socio-cultural contexts (Durmaz & Yogun, 2022), with an added cultural history approach emphasizing library research to enrich the analysis. Fairclough's analysis is appropriate for this study because it helps reveal the power-relation dynamics underlying the ideological contestation embedded in the discourse of the religious practice hijra movement. By focusing on such discourses, the analysis enables studies on how Salafist and moderate groups construct, challenge, and reinforce their religious ideologies through digital media platforms. This method is relevant to understanding the complexity of religious discourse and the identity of the hijra movement through the media in disseminating Islamic teachings in Indonesia.

Figure 1. ***Norman Fairclough's CDA Analysis Model Framework*** **(Durmaz & Yogun, 2022)**



The source of the research data conducted in April 2023-October 2023 consists of online media publication texts produced as affiliates of Salafism religious organizations in Indonesia, such as Islami.co and Ibtimes.id to be supported by valid data, the researchers also observed and participated in religious forums of Salafism groups in several cities such as Jakarta, Bogor, and Depok—precisely at the religious forum at the Al-Mubarak Krukut Mosque, which presented Abdul Hakim ibn Amir Abdat, incidentally during April-August 2023; religious forum at Ahmad ibn Hambal mosque, north Bogor; and Wednesday night routine religious forum at Nurul Iman Mosque Blok M Square, South Jakarta, which presents Khalid Basalamah during April-August 2023. Secondary sources are articles and books related to ideological contestation and the hijra movement relevant to the research topic. The research data classified online media texts into themes reflecting ideological contestation. The data analyzes interactions and comments for socio-cultural implications and compares these findings with the Salafism and Moderatism framework. The analysis followed Fairclough's critical discourse analysis model (2003) to understand how religious texts interact with social contexts and identify patterns of

ideological communication in the hijra movement. This study analyzes communication patterns, models, and the meaning of codes, symbols, and contents. The stages of the research method include the process of data analysis, the process of comparison, the process of grouping and sorting, and the process of connecting one data with another to find conclusions on research questions.

Result and Discussion

Dimensional Aspects within the Hijra Movement: Contestation of Religious Ideologies of Salafism and Moderation in Indonesia

The ideological contestation between Salafism and moderation in the hijra movement as a concept and movement can be understood in terms of dimensions, reflecting their different approaches to the teachings of Islam and their application in contemporary society. First, the spiritual dimension in the form of teachings multiplies good worship and instead abandons all evil actions. This dimension emphasizes the change of human self from the worldly aspect, in the form of the essence of the origin of creation, to the element of the hereafter or the side of Allah. Second, this preaching dimension (*da'wah*) becomes a movement of Muslims as a 'journey' to increase knowledge, improve life with decent work, and a mission to spread Islam. Third, the political dimension aims at the transformation from *dar al-harb* to *dar al-Islam* in a particular area or a strategy to integrate Islamic values into the state.

These dimensions of hijra are instruments for analyzing the hijra movement in Indonesia. This hijra trend shows a change in a person's religious practice in the spiritual dimension, known as religious conversion. On social media, the hijra movement is represented as a conservative and Islamist group—for example, on Islami.co, which contains an article entitled *Konservatisme dan Islamisme dalam Gerakan Hijrah Kontemporer di Indonesia* (Hanifuddin, 2021), and Ibtimes.id published an article entitled *Hijrah, Kelas Menengah, & Selebriti: Kesalehan atau Komoditas?* (Ibtimes.id, 2020). Publications in the Islamic portal illustrate the ideological conflict behind the hijra movement. Conservative refers to various schools of thought that reject all modern interpretations, such as liberal or progressive, of Islamic teachings. Conservatism is also known as a religious perspective that rejects the idea of gender equality and is intolerant of differences. It shows the relevance of the theological paradigm of the Salafi group that seeks religious purification in appearance to the first three generations of Islam. Urban youth or people who are accustomed to pop culture and experience religious alienation will often choose an instant religious model. This topic drives the hijra movement's *da'wah* model with enthusiasm for distinction (truth and evil) and the certainty of dichotomy in religion.

Furthermore, the hijra movement in Indonesia also constructs a community identity as represented by Salafi figures (*ustadj*) with a style and strategy of *da'wah* models according to the character of the millennial generation, such as the use of language, popular icons, and certain symbols or clothing in *da'wah* movement dissemination

activities. Publications in Islami.co and Ibtimes.id illustrate that the hijra movement in Indonesia agrees with the concept of nationality and rejects acts of terrorism and extremism. It tends to the Hijaz Salafis in Saudi Arabia to divide the realms of religion and state. Like the Salafi characteristics developed by Ja'far Umar Thalib, this paradigm adheres to his teacher, Muqbil ibn Hadi al-Wadi'i (Yemen). The process of searching for the identity of middle-class Muslims, such as celebrities, makes it easier for Salafist figures to accompany them (Makruf & Asrori, 2022). Celebrities follow the trend of religious discourse on social media, making them interested in and immediately inviting or wanting to meet directly with Salafist figures. This perspective shows the active process of celebrities in indoctrination rather than passive stigma in indoctrination. It shows that this preaching helps to determine the choice of religious symbols and behavior. These celebrities include Mediana Utomo, Teuku Wisnu, Dina Lorenza, Primus Yustisio, Eva Arnaz, Yulia Rahman, Bjah, Gessy Selvia, and Kiko.

The trend of hijra discourse in digital media for moderate groups in disseminating narratives of tolerance, openness, and inclusivity (Whyte, 2022) is contrary to the puritanical tendencies of religious teachings propagated by Salafism. Moderate groups interpret Islamic teachings and sources by referring to multidisciplinary religious texts and diverse perspectives, such as madhhabs and scholars of tafsir, hadith, and theology. They pretend to be nonjudgmental about faith, static Islamic law, and superficial religious practices. In addition, religious symbols also identify this ideological competition. The Salafi group emphasizes the identity of piety in religious commitment, such as in dress and appearance. Moderation prioritizes spiritual substance and religious ethics over appearance, advocating harmony and ethical behavior as an expression of piety (Hasan, 2006; Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021; Aidulsyah, 2023). It represents a contestation of opposing ideological teaching positions in highlighting digital media.

The contestation extends to Muslim youth engagement strategies and views on pluralism. Salafism attracts young people and celebrities with its *halal-haram* judgments in Islamic law and obedience-disobedience (*shirk, kufr*, *bid'ah*) in faith, offering certainty in navigating modern complexities (Heryanto, 2014). Meanwhile, moderate groups such as NU and Muhammadiyah emphasize critical thinking and inclusivity, appealing to educated youth seeking a balanced perspective (Aidulsyah, 2023). The pluralistic paradigm intensifies such contestation: Salafism rejects it as a threat to religious purification, while Moderatism champions tolerance and coexistence as modes of national unity and religious moderation (Hasan, 2006; Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021). These competing ideologies reveal the basis of religious identity and practice evolving in Indonesia through the interaction of tradition, modernity, and pluralism in the digital era.

Table 4. ***Forms of Ideological Contestation between Salafism and Moderatism***

Category	Identity (Group)	Description
Social-Media	Salafism: Digital preachers (e.g., Khalid Basalamah)	Salafism actively utilizes platforms like YouTube and social media to disseminate puritanical teachings and engage youth. Moderatism counters by promoting tolerance and inclusivity through similar platforms.
	Moderatism: Mainstream organizations (e.g., NU, Muhammadiyah)	Moderatism emphasizes openness and harmony, critiquing the rigid interpretations propagated by Salafism.
Religious Symbols	Salafism: Visible markers of piety; Puritanical Groups (e.g., Laskar Jihad, Wahhabi-inspired factions)	Salafism emphasizes external markers of piety, such as beards, ankle-length trousers, and veils, as essential indicators of religiosity.
	Moderatism: Ethical behavior and inclusivity; Inclusive Movements	Moderatism downplays external appearances, prioritizing ethical behavior, spiritual depth, and communal harmony as the essence of piety.
Interpretation of Islamic Law	Salafism: Textualist Scholars; Literalists, anti-innovation (*bid'ah*)	Salafism adheres strictly to the Qur'an and Hadith, rejecting innovations (*bid'ah*), and applies rigid interpretations.
	Moderatism: Contextual Thinkers	Moderatism adapts Islamic law to contemporary contexts, integrating modern values to address evolving societal challenges.
Youth Engagement	Salafism: Celebrity converts, youth groups; Clear-cut Preachers	Salafism appeals to youth by providing clear, unambiguous halal-haram frameworks, offering certainty in navigating modern complexities.
	Moderatism: Educated Youth Leaders; Mainstream educators, students	Moderatism emphasizes critical thinking and inclusivity, engaging youth through intellectual and balanced discourse.
Perspective on Pluralism	Salafism: sectarian; exclusivist groups	Salafism views pluralism as a threat to religious purity, advocating for separation from non-Islamic influences.
	Moderatism: inclusive, pluralistic; pluralist advocates	Moderatism promotes tolerance, coexistence, and harmony, aligning with Indonesia's multicultural fabric and emphasizing these as central to national unity.

Salafism as Influential Religious Movement in Indonesia: Dynamics, Strategy, and its Internal Conflict

The use of the internet indeed does not find a doctrinal basis in the Qur'an and Hadith, so the Salafis group builds its construction of justification so as not to be called heresy. The justification is to state that Allah created everything for our benefit rather than debating whether the argument permits internet use. The view of some Salafi groups then uses the logic that as long as there is no argument for prohibition, the use of digital media is permitted. In this position, internal contestation within the Salafi group within

the hijra movement developed. Social media content produced by Salafi groups as a form of internal contestation is related to the doctrines of tauhid, sunnah, *bid'ah*, and *al-wala` wa al-bara'*.

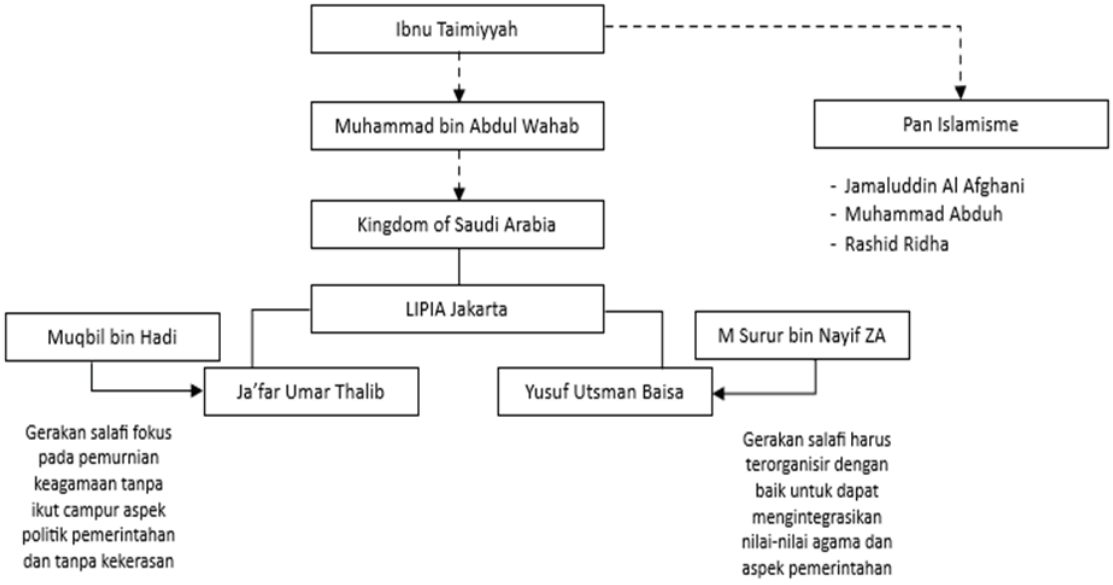
There are two paths in the phenomenon of celebrities following the hijra movement. First, film artists choose the hijra movement with the guidance of a Salafist figure (*ustadj*). The visualization of *da'wah* and the attractive, fashionable aspect of the movement influence it. Salafis *da'wah* among celebrities strengthens the certainty of *halal-haram* or right-wrong based on religious texts, such as the prohibitions and laws of making music or playing musical instruments. Second, musician artists follow the hijra movement with figures' Jamaah Tabligh guidance. The religious awareness of these musicians influences the process of searching for and selecting their religious community based on religious tendencies in constructing their identity. The cases of Derry Sulaiman and Sakti Ario are the best examples to explain this phenomenon. The flexibility of Jamaah Tabligh's culture, which emphasizes moral aspects more than Sharia aspects, is attractive to some musicians (Qomaruzzaman & Busro, 2021). Sulaiman and Sakti Ario, for example, admitted in several forums that they still accept invitations to play music.

Salafis group and Jamaah Tabligh have very significant differences. First, Salafis focus more on purifying the creed or strengthening the foundation of Muslim monotheism. The Salafi group's *da'wah* intends to strengthen monotheism by worshiping Allah and not associating partners with Him, following the daily deeds of the Prophet, and practicing obligatory and *sunnah* worship by the Prophet's guidance. The big vision of the Salafi group is to form ideal Muslims who practice the teachings of the Prophet and can distinguish between right and wrong, sunnah and *bid'ah*. Therefore, discussions about monotheism, *bid'ah*, and *syirk* become the main themes. It differs from the Jamaah Tabligh, which focuses on enlivening daily sunnah practices without debating differences in faith or right and wrong in judging (*fadhailul amal*). Second, Salafis criticize the Sufi or Sufism movement because they are considered part of heresy and heresy. Meanwhile, the Jamaah Tabligh appreciates Sufism because the founders of the Jamaah Tabligh were followers of the *tarekat* (Nurhayati et al., 2023). Third, Jamaah Tabligh does not explicitly refer to ideological tendencies or religious affiliations in its preaching like the Salafi group, so the group is more dynamic regarding religious views from other madhhabs. Their ethics rules emphasize that the Jamaah Tabligh should not debate on *khilafiyah* issues or the legal provisions of Islami law (*fiqh*) and faith (*aqidah*). In contrast, the Salafi *da'wah* refers to the religious views of their ideological figures, including the works of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, Ibn Taymiyyah, and other scholars of the Salaf Manhaj (Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021).

Salafist groups in Indonesia today have deep historical ties to LIPIA (Institute for Islamic and Arabic Language Sciences), an extension of Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Riyad University in Jakarta. Established under Sheikh Abdul Aziz Abdullah al-Ammar's leadership, a Sheikh Abdullah ibn Baz student, LIPIA was part of Saudi Arabia's strategy to counterbalance Iranian influence following the 1979 leadership changes. Many

LIPIA alums from the 1980s emerged as key figures in Indonesia's Salafi movement. Notable examples include Yazid ibn Abdul Qadir Jawwas, active in Minhajus Sunnah in Bogor; Farid Ahmad Okbah, leader of al-Irsyad; Ainul Harits, managing the Nida'ul Islam Foundation in Surabaya; Abubakar Altway with the al-Sofwah Foundation in Jakarta; Ja'far Umar Thalib, founder of the Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah Communication Forum (FKAWJ); and Yusuf Utsman Baisa, leader of al-Irsyad Islamic Boarding School in Tengaran Salatiga (Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021).

Figure 1. ***Post-1980s Salafi Movement Conflict Map***



Note. Data processed by the author (2024)

Conflicts among Indonesian Salafi figures often stem from competition for influence, as seen in the rivalry between Ja'far Umar Thalib and Yusuf Utsman Baisa. While both were alums of the Islamic Association (Persis) in Bangil and LIPIA, their paths diverged. Yusuf, who studied further in Riyadh, was influenced by Muhammad Surur ibn Nayif Zainal Abidin, an opposition figure in Saudi Arabia, and sought to model the Salafi movement on the politically organized Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt—his faction known as Salafi Surury. In contrast, Ja'far, who studied in Pakistan and Yemen, became a student of Muqbil ibn Hadi al-Wadi'i, a Salafi ideologue critical of violence in the movement. This ideological clash between Surur and Muqbil triggered tensions between Yusuf and Ja'far, resulting in a polarization of the Salafi movement in Indonesia. Ja'far's activities (including founding Laskar Jihad) were criticized by Muqbil for their violent nature, leading to the group's dissolution in 2002. This disbandment reflected Ja'far's adherence to Salafi principles, particularly its rejection of *hizbiyyah* (sectarianism) and *al-wala wa al-barra'* (loyalty and disassociation) doctrines, aligning with a puritanical view of Islam that avoids engagement with non-Muslims (Hasan, 2006).

Table 1. ***Salafi Network FKASWJ Led by Ja'far Umar Thalib***

No	Affiliation	Location
1	Darus Salaf Foundation	Sukoharjo, Central Java
2	Ittiba'us Sunnah Foundation	Sukohardjo, Central Java
3	Pondok Pesantren Minjahus Sunnah	Magelang, Central Java
4	Pesantren al-Furqon	Kroya, Central Java
5	Al Atsariyah Foundation	Temanggung, Central Java
6	Pesantren Anwaru Sunnah	Kebumen, Central Java
7	Hidmatus Sunnah Foundation	Cilacap, Central Java
8	Ma'had al-Anshar	Sleman, Yogyakarta
9	Pondok Pesantren Difa'anis Sunnah	Bantul, Yogyakarta
10	Ma'had Ihya' as Sunnah	Yogyakarta
11	Pondok Pesantren Ta'dhimus Sunnah	Ngawi, East Java
12	Ma'had Al Bayyinah	Gresik, East Java
13	Ma'had Ittiba'us Sunnah	Magetan, East Java
14	Majelis Taklim dan Dakwah as-Sunnah	Malang, East Java
15	Ma'had Abu Bakr ash-Shidiq	Jojoran, Surabaya, East Java
16	Forum Dakwah Ahlus Sunah Wal Jamaah	Bandung, West Java
17	Pondok Pesantren an-Nur	Ciamis, West Java
18	Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Sunnah	Cirebon, West Java
19	Suni Salafi Foundation	Medan, North Sumatera
20	Anshorus Sunnah Foundation	Batam. Kepulauan Riau
21	Ta'zhim as-Sunnah Foundation	Perawang, Riau
22	Pondok Pesantren Terpadu Ibnul Qoyim	Balikpapan, East Kalimantan
23	Yayasan as-Salafi	Samarinda, East Kalimantan
24	Wahdah Islamiyah	Makassar, South Sulawesi
25	Minhaj al-Firqotun Najiyah Foundation	Bau-Bau, Southeast Sulawesi
26	Yayasan Abu Bakar Shidiq	Ambon, Maluku

Note. Data collected by the author in April 2023-October 2023

The development of Salafism can be categorized into three main models. First, the Salafi model of Ibn Taymiyyah emphasizes firm religious doctrine without advocating violence. Second, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahab's Salafi approach incorporates violence by forming strong political alliances and declaring opposing Muslims as infidels (Al-Buty, 1996). Third, the Salafi model of Jamaluddin al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rashid Ridha focuses on purifying Islam from heresy by rationalizing religious texts to align with contemporary contexts. In Indonesia, the modern development of Salafism is closely linked to LIPIA (Institute for Islamic and Arabic Sciences), an extension of Imam Muhammad ibn Saud University in Riyadh. Under leaders like Sheikh Abdul Aziz Abdullah al-Ammar, a student of Sheikh Abdullah ibn Baz, LIPIA became a hub for Salafi teachings, producing influential figures such as Yazid ibn Abdul Qadir Jawwas, Ja'far Umar Thalib, and Yusuf Uthman Baisa, who contributed significantly to the growth of Salafi groups like Minhajus Sunnah, FKAWJ, and al-Irsyad (Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021).

Table 2. ***Key Figures of Salafism in Indonesia***

Period	Key Figures	Institutions/ Da'wah Centers	Characteristics of Development
1980s	Yazid ibn Abdul Qadir Jawwas	Minhajus Sunnah (Bogor)	Dissemination of ideology through study forums and da'wah focused on purifying monotheism.
1980s	Ja'far Umar Thalib	Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah (FKASWJ)	Focused on sunnah-based da'wah and founded Laskar Jihad in response to the Maluku conflict.
1980s-1990s	Yusuf Uthman Baisa	Pondok Pesantren Al-Irsyad (Salatiga)	Adopted a more political approach influenced by Muhammad Surur's ideology.
2000s	Khalid Basalamah	Social media, YouTube	Utilized digital media for religious purification da'wah targeted at millennials.
Present	Abdul Hakim ibn Amir Abdat, Firanda Andirja	Various platforms (online and offline)	Focused on science-based religious preaching, remaining puritanical but non-political.

Ideological competition among Salafi figures in Indonesia is evident in their internal conflicts and different *da'wah* strategies. For example, Ja'far Umar Thalib, and Yusuf Uthman Baisa differ significantly in their approaches. Yusuf, inspired by Muhammad Surur and the Muslim Brotherhood's (Ikhwanul Muslimin) political organization in Egypt, advocated for a politically active Salafi model (Salafi Surury). Ja'far, influenced by Muqbil ibn Hadi al-Wadi'i from Yemen, rejected political involvement and focused more on apolitical Salafism. It later escalated into broader tensions and led to the polarization of the Salafi movement in Indonesia. Furthermore, conflicts within Salafi circles intensified as Ja'far faced accusations from his students of compromising the Manhaj Salafi, and disagreements arose over the role of violence within groups like Laskar Jihad, which Ja'far ultimately disbanded in 2002 (Hasan, 2006; Hegghammer, 2009). Such conflicts, reinforced by Salafist attitudes, have led to increased mainstream Islamic organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah, highlighting Salafism in Indonesia (Whyte, 2022). This polarization illustrates how ideological differences, *da'wah* strategies, and interpretations of Islamic law have led to divisions within Indonesian Salafism (Table 3). It also highlights the challenges they face in maintaining unity while contending with criticism from other Islamic groups.

Table 3. ***Internal Conflicts Among Salafi Leaders***

Figures	Source of Conflict	Implications of Conflict
Ja'far Umar Thalib vs Yusuf Uthman Baisa	Differences in the *da'wah* approach: Ja'far rejected politics (*hizbiyah*), while Yusuf supported political strategies.	Formation of distinct Salafi factions: pure Salafism (Ja'far) vs Sururi Salafism (Yusuf).
Ja'far Umar Thalib vs His Students (Muhammad Assewed, Yazid Jawwas)	Students accused Ja'far of being too compromising towards *bid'ah* and abandoning Salafi manhaj.	Internal fragmentation within Indonesian Salafism, reducing unity in their *da'wah* efforts.
Ja'far Umar Thalib vs Laskar Jihad	Disagreement over the use of violence and involvement in sectarian conflicts in Maluku.	Dissolution of Laskar Jihad in 2002, showing Ja'far's commitment to Salafi principles against sectarianism.

Figures	Source of Conflict	Implications of Conflict
Khalid Basalamah vs Mainstream Islamic Groups (NU, Muhammadiyah)	Criticism of bid'ah and Salafi da'wah methods is perceived as over-textualist.	Created friction with mainstream Islamic organizations, reinforcing the perception of Salafism as exclusive.

Factors Influencing Contestation between Salafism and Moderatism

Socio-cultural, technological, and religious factors involve the ideological contestation between Salafism and Moderation. Technological advancements have played a significant role, with Salafism utilizing platforms like YouTube and social media to spread its puritanical teachings and engage younger audiences directly (Makruf & Asrori, 2022). Moderatism, while more cautious, also adopts these platforms to counter exclusivist narratives and promote tolerance (Whyte, 2022). Additionally, shifts in religious learning patterns have reshaped the competition, as middle-class Muslims increasingly turn to online sources for religious guidance due to their convenience and anonymity (Aidulsyah, 2023). This trend benefits Salafism's prescriptive approach, while Moderatism must work harder to attract audiences with inclusive and nuanced messaging (Whyte, 2022).

Socio-cultural diversity in Indonesia further intensifies this contestation. Salafism seeks to establish a uniform understanding of Islam, often rejecting practices influenced by local traditions (Hasan, 2006). In contrast, Moderatism embraces Indonesia's multiculturalism, promoting coexistence and harmony as key values (Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021). Generational dynamics also play a critical role, with youth drawn to Salafism's clarity and relatable content (Heryanto, 2014). Moderatism, however, appeals to more educated youth by emphasizing critical thinking and contextual applications of Islamic values, though it requires more effort to resonate broadly (Aidulsyah, 2023).

Globalization and foreign influence have shaped the frameworks of both ideologies. Salafism draws from Wahhabism and Middle Eastern funding, mainly through institutions like LIPIA (Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021). Meanwhile, Moderatism aligns with global discourses on tolerance, democracy, and human rights (Makruf & Asrori, 2022). Additionally, divergent interpretations of Islamic law fuel the competition, with Salafism adhering to a literalist approach and rejecting innovations (*bid'ah*), while Moderatism advocates contextual interpretations (Whyte, 2022). Charismatic leaders also influence these dynamics, as Salafi figures like Khalid Basalamah leverage direct media outreach, whereas Moderatist leaders from NU and Muhammadiyah focus on intellectual discourse and inclusivity (Heryanto, 2014). Together, these factors highlight the complex interplay between tradition, modernity, and technology in shaping ideological competition in Indonesia (Table 5).

Table 5. ***Factors Influencing Contestation between Salafism and Moderatism***

Category/ Indicator	Identity/Group	Description
Technological Advancements	Salafism: Early adopters	Salafism effectively uses social media platforms like YouTube and Instagram to reach broader audiences, focusing on digital *da'wah* to target youth and middle-class Muslims.
	Moderatism: Cautious adopters	Moderatism also engages online but focuses on counter-narratives to promote tolerance and harmony while critiquing exclusivist ideologies.
Religious Learning Patterns	Salafism: Online seekers, middle-class Muslims	Salafism benefits from the shift towards digital religious learning by offering concise, easy-to-understand teachings through digital platforms.
	Moderatism: Traditionalists, NU, Muhammadiyah	Moderatism faces challenges in adapting traditional methods to digital platforms, requiring efforts to maintain relevance among modern audiences.
Socio-cultural Diversity	Salafism: Uniformity proponents	Salafism rejects local traditions and pluralistic practices, aiming for a standardized understanding of Islam.
	Moderatism: Diversity advocates	Moderatism leverages Indonesia's multicultural heritage to promote coexistence, emphasizing unity in diversity as part of Islamic and national identity.
Generational Dynamics	Salafism: Youth-focused, digital influencers	Targets youth with relatable content, including celebrity endorsements, to foster commitment to Salafi ideology.
	Moderatism: Educators, young intellectuals	Encourages critical engagement and inclusivity among youth, aligning with democratic and pluralistic values.
Globalization and Foreign Influence	Salafism: Wahhabi-backed institutions	Salafism draws support from global Wahhabi movements, particularly through institutions like LIPIA, which disseminate puritanical ideologies.
	Moderatism: Progressive global discourse	Moderatism aligns with international discussions on democracy, human rights, and tolerance, incorporating these values into its narrative.
Charismatic Leadership	Salafism: Influential preachers, online figures	Salafi leaders like Khalid Basalamah and Ja'far Umar Thalib use media-savvy strategies to attract followers, blending charisma with ideology.
	Moderatism: Established scholars, NU leaders	Moderatism relies on the intellectual and spiritual credibility of scholars from NU and Muhammadiyah to appeal to both traditional and modern audiences.

Implications of the Contestation between Salafism and Moderatism

The contestation of Salafism and Moderatism in Indonesia has influenced the polarization of the Muslim community. Salafism's puritanical emphasis on the rejection of heresy encourages exclusivity, often isolating its adherents and opposing traditional and pluralistic Islamic groups. Moderatism, on the other hand, promotes tolerance and harmony but sometimes challenges Salafism's strict doctrines. This polarization undermines efforts to foster unity within the Islamic community, especially in areas where

diverse religious practices coexist, leading to tensions and fragmentation. Social media further amplifies this contestation, shaping how individuals—particularly the youth—construct their religious identities. Salafism effectively leverages digital platforms to disseminate clear-cut teachings that resonate with young people seeking certainty in a rapidly changing world. Moderatism counters these narratives with inclusive and contextual interpretations of Islam but struggles to maintain balance in a digital landscape often dominated by sensationalism. This dynamic challenges Moderatist efforts to sustain relevance and influence in the increasingly competitive online religious space.

The differing views on pluralism and approaches to authority also have significant implications for social harmony, education, and governance. Salafism's rejection of pluralism contrasts sharply with Moderatism's alignment with Pancasila principles, creating ideological friction that can hinder interfaith dialogue. Additionally, Salafi leaders' use of modern media challenges traditional religious institutions, reshaping authority structures and complicating the dissemination of Islamic knowledge. These tensions extend to policy-making, where the government's efforts to promote moderation face resistance from Salafi influences. Addressing these challenges requires fostering dialogue, strengthening religious moderation, and ensuring that both ideological perspectives contribute positively to Indonesia's pluralistic society.

Table 6. ***Implications of Contestation between Salafism and Moderatism***

Indicator	Identity/Group	Description
Polarization of Religious Communities	Salafism: Puritanical and exclusive.	Salafism's rejection of bid'ah and emphasis on textual interpretations create exclusivity, polarizing Muslim communities.
	Moderatism: Inclusive and pluralistic.	Moderatism promotes unity through tolerance and pluralism, often opposing Salafist strict doctrines.
Impact on Religious Identity and Social-Media Dynamics	Salafism: Effective use of digital media for youth engagement.	Salafism appeals to youth with clear and prescriptive teachings on social media.
	Moderatism: Countering through inclusivity.	Moderatism promotes contextualized understanding but struggles to compete in a digital landscape favoring sensational narratives.
Challenges to Pluralism and Social Harmony	Salafism: Rejects pluralism as a threat to religious purity.	Salafism's singular interpretation of Islam challenges Moderate values of coexistence and interfaith harmony.
	Moderatism: Emphasizes coexistence and mutual respect.	Moderatism aligns with Pancasila principles to support Indonesia's multiculturalism.
Influence on Religious Education and Authority	Salafism: Digital-first and independent leaders.	Salafi leaders leverage social media to challenge traditional ulema authority.
	Moderatism: Institution-based intellectuals.	Moderate figures from NU and Muhammadiyah rely on institutional frameworks for intellectual engagement.

Indicator	Identity/Group	Description
Policy and Governance Implications	Salafism: Challenges to government efforts for moderation.	Government policies promoting moderation align with Moderate values but face resistance from Salafi groups.
	Moderatism: Aligns with national religious harmony policies.	Salafism's appeal grows due to its clarity and grassroots reach, presenting challenges to governance.

Hijra, as a concept and a movement, can be understood through several dimensions. The spiritual dimension involves efforts to leave behind bad habits and embrace good rituals, symbolizing a transformation from worldly attachment to devotion to Allah. The *da'wah* dimension entails Muslims' efforts to improve their knowledge, livelihoods, and missionary work to spread Islam (Fansuri, 2023). Additionally, the political dimension reflects strategies for transforming regions from *dar al-harb* (land of conflict) to *dar al-Islam* (land of Islam) or integrating Islamic values into state governance. These dimensions serve as analytical tools to understand the growing hijra movement in Indonesia, which is often associated with changes in religious behavior and spiritual conversion. On platforms like Islami.co, Ibtimes.id, and Hidayatullah.com, the hijra movement is frequently portrayed as conservative and Islamist, with articles highlighting its connections to middle-class identity and celebrity involvement.

The ideological undertones of the hijra movement reveal a close association with Salafi theology, which emphasizes a return to the practices of the first three generations of Islam. This theology resonates particularly with urban youth and those experiencing religious alienation, offering clear distinctions between good and evil. Community *da'wah* within the hijra movement is tailored to millennial characteristics, incorporating modern symbols, language, and fashion while maintaining Salafi principles. Publications like Islami.co and Ibtimes.id describe the movement as generally aligned with national values and opposed to terrorism and extremism. Many hijra communities reflect the influence of Salafi teachings from Saudi Arabia, particularly through figures like Ja'far Umar Thalib, who studied under Yemeni Salafi scholar Muqbil ibn Hadi al-Wadi'i.

Celebrity involvement has amplified the hijra movement's visibility, facilitated by social media platforms that serve as vehicles for virtual *da'wah*. Celebrities such as Teuku Wisnu, Dina Lorenza, and Derry Sulaiman actively participate in the movement, shaping public perception of religious transformation. The hijra phenomenon among celebrities reveals two distinct pathways. Film artists often impressed by Salafi scholars due to the emphasis on visual appeal and the simplicity of *halal-haram* boundaries. Conversely, musicians are more inclined towards Jamaah Tabligh, whose focus on moral aspects and flexibility in religious practices accommodates their backgrounds. For instance, musicians like Derry Sulaiman and Sakti Ario maintain connections to their musical roots while embracing the spiritual ethos of Jamaah Tabligh (Qomaruzzaman & Busro, 2021).

Despite their shared emphasis on spiritual transformation, Salafis and Jamaah Tabligh differ significantly in ideology and practice. Salafis focus on purifying monotheism

(*tawhid*), strictly adhering to the Prophet's guidance while emphasizing the rejection of *bid'ah* and *shirk*. In contrast, Jamaah Tabligh prioritizes the moral revitalization of daily sunnah practices, avoiding debates over theological differences (*fadhailul amal*). Additionally, while Salafis critiques Sufism as heretical, Jamaah Tabligh embraces Sufi practices due to its founders' association with *tarekat* (Nurhayati et al., 2023). Jamaah Tabligh's lack of rigid theological references further contrasts with the Salafi reliance on scholars like Ibn Taymiyya and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. These ideological distinctions highlight individuals' varying psychological and spiritual stages when engaging with the hijra movement, from pre-hijra unconsciousness to post-hijra adherence to Salafi principles (Hoesterey, 2015; Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021).

Ideological Contestation in Indonesia's Hijra Movement: Salafism, Moderatism, and Socio-Religious Transformation in the Digital Era

The hijra movement in Indonesia represents a significant ideological contestation between Salafism and moderatism, with digital media serving as a critical platform for this engagement. Salafi groups strategically utilize social media to promote their ideology, emphasizing religious purification through symbolic expressions such as dress codes and ritual practices. These efforts resonate particularly with urban middle-class Muslims who seek simplicity and certainty in navigating their faith amidst modern challenges. By contrast, moderate Islamic organizations struggle to maintain their influence due to a lack of robust digital engagement, leaving a gap exploited by Salafi narratives. This ideological tension reflects broader struggles over religious authority and identity in a digital age. Salafism's textualist and conservative approaches, which idealize the early Islamic generations, sharply contrast with moderatism's more inclusive and contextualized interpretations of Islam. The hijra movement exemplifies how Salafi teachings adapt to the digital era, creating accessible and appealing content that attracts a younger demographic. Moderate groups face challenges in countering these narratives, as Salafi influencers effectively use technology to present a compelling vision of piety (Husein & Slama, 2018). This shift not only reshapes individual religiosity but also contributes to redefining the broader Islamic discourse in Indonesia, highlighting the need for moderates to strengthen their presence online (Aidulsyah, 2023; Heryanto, 2014).

The hijra movement's rise reflects the changing dynamics of religious learning in the digital era, where online platforms play a pivotal role. Salafi ideologies thrive in this environment, leveraging the accessibility and immediacy of social media to engage with urban Muslims seeking straightforward solutions to spiritual and existential concerns. The certainty and simplicity of Salafism provide a sense of clarity and direction for individuals grappling with identity and alienation in an increasingly modernized society. This appeal is amplified by the effective use of charismatic preachers and curated content that addresses contemporary issues while emphasizing strict adherence to religious principles. Moderate Islamic organizations, on the other hand, face challenges in this digital space. Their slower adaptation to online engagement and lack of cohesive strategies hinder

their ability to counterbalance the Salafi narrative. This disparity results in a significant digital divide, allowing Salafism to dominate the discourse and attract followers who value its clarity and accessibility. The movement's ability to merge religious ideology with modern communication strategies highlights the importance of digital literacy and innovation in contemporary religious outreach. Without addressing these gaps, moderate groups risk losing influence over younger generations, increasingly drawn to Salafi teachings (Bruinessen, 2013; Akmaliah, 2020).

The ideological contestation within the hijra movement significantly impacts Indonesia's socio-religious field. By promoting strict adherence to Salafist principles, the movement challenges the inclusivity and tolerance traditionally upheld by moderate Islamic perspectives. This shift risks deepening polarization within the Muslim community, as Salafism fosters a more exclusive identity that emphasizes symbolic differentiation. Furthermore, the hijra movement reshapes religious authority, transferring it from established institutions to charismatic preachers with large digital followings. These preachers, who often work independently, utilize social media platforms to engage audiences, particularly younger generations, resonating with their accessible and personalized approaches. This trend threatens the influence of mainstream Islamic organizations, which struggle to compete with the dynamic and compelling narratives presented by Salafi figures. Additionally, the movement's focus on certainty and simplicity appeals to individuals navigating modern complexities, further amplifying its growth. These developments underscore the urgent need for moderate groups to enhance digital engagement and adapt their outreach strategies to remain relevant. Beyond intra-religious dynamics, this contestation poses broader societal challenges, potentially undermining efforts to promote pluralism and interfaith harmony. Addressing these issues requires innovative approaches that foster dialogue, understanding, and collaboration within Indonesia's diverse religious landscape (Whyte, 2022; Taufik, 2020).

This study aligns with existing research on the hijra movement, such as Akmaliah's (2020) analysis of its emergence as a non-mainstream subculture and Makruf's exploration of Salafi influence in Indonesia, while advancing the discussion by emphasizing the pivotal role of social media as a battleground for ideological contestation. Unlike Bruinessen's historical focus (2013) on conservatism, this research highlights how digital platforms actively shape contemporary religious dynamics, transforming ideological contestation into an interactive process where symbols, narratives, and individual agency are central. Salafi groups effectively utilize these platforms to redefine religious authority and identity, positioning themselves as accessible and appealing alternatives to traditional institutions. The hijra movement demonstrates how digital engagement constructs a compelling vision of religiosity that resonates with modern audiences, bridging gaps in previous studies by focusing on the socio-cultural implications of digitalization. This nuanced perspective underscores the importance of adapting religious outreach strategies to align with contemporary realities, providing a foundation for moderate Islamic organizations to innovate and strengthen their digital presence. While this study aligns with findings from the Middle East, where Salafism similarly uses digital media

for ideological dissemination (Whyte, 2022), Indonesia's multiculturalism and entrenched moderate Islamic traditions present unique challenges, highlighting the necessity of digital literacy programs to promote balanced and inclusive religious narratives.

Addressing the challenges of ideological contestation requires proactive measures by moderate Islamic organizations to enhance their digital engagement. It includes creating professionally managed online platforms capable of competing with the sophisticated strategies of Salafi groups. High-quality, relatable content that resonates with younger audiences is essential, as is training charismatic preachers who can effectively communicate traditional Islamic values in a modern context. Conceptually, moderate groups need to formulate narratives that harmonize tradition and modernity, providing an alternative to Salafism's rigid textualism. This approach can appeal to those seeking a more inclusive and adaptable interpretation of Islam. From a policy perspective, fostering dialogue and collaboration between Salafi and moderate groups is vital to reducing polarization and promoting religious harmony. Interfaith and intra-faith initiatives that encourage mutual understanding can help bridge ideological divides and strengthen community cohesion. Additionally, government and civil society organizations should support programs that enhance digital literacy among moderate groups, enabling them to better utilize technology for religious outreach (Sebastian & Arifianto, 2017). By addressing these gaps and promoting inclusive narratives, moderate Islamic organizations can reclaim their influence and contribute to a pluralistic and harmonious Indonesian society. These efforts are essential to countering the challenges of the hijra movement's growing influence (Febriansyah & El-Alami, 2021; Nurhayati et al., 2023).

Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal significant insights into the ideological contestation between Salafism and Moderatism within Indonesia's hijra movement. One of the key findings is that Salafist groups have effectively utilized digital media to spread their teachings, focusing on clear and accessible representations of Islam, such as visual markers of piety. This approach resonates particularly with urban middle-class Muslims and celebrities, who are drawn to the simplicity and certainty offered by Salafi interpretations of Islam. The study also highlights how the digital space serves as an arena for ideological contestation, with Salafism challenging the authority of mainstream religious institutions while moderatism advocates for more contextualized interpretations of Islamic teachings. This contestation is not only limited to religious practices but extends to the broader ideological shaping of Islamic identity, especially among the youth.

Conceptually, this research contributes to understanding how digital platforms have transformed religious ideologies, particularly in Indonesia's diverse religious landscape. The study provides a renewed perspective on how digital media can reshape religious narratives and construct new forms of religious authority by employing critical discourse analysis. The findings also demonstrate how the hijra movement, though rooted

in religious transformation, also contributes to reconfiguring social and cultural identities in the digital age. Furthermore, the study adds to the broader literature on religious-ideological contestation, shedding light on the dynamics between Salafism and Moderatism in the Indonesian context, where religious diversity and media influence are increasingly interconnected.

However, the study's limitations must be acknowledged. One key weakness is its reliance on secondary data and social media sources, which may not fully capture the personal experiences and motivations of the hijra movement's followers. Future research could benefit from adopting more direct engagement methods, such as interviews or ethnographic studies, to gain deeper insights into the personal transformations within these communities. Additionally, while the study provides valuable insights into the ideological contestation between Salafism and Moderatism, it does not fully address the broader socio-political consequences of this contestation, particularly its impact on interfaith relations and social harmony. Future research should explore these dimensions and consider longitudinal studies to track the evolution of these ideological conflicts and their long-term effects on Indonesia's religious and social fabric.

Author Contribution Statement

Author contributions to this article: Muh Khamdan contributed as initiator and main researcher; Wiharyani and Nadiah Abidin contributed as data validator and critically revised the article. All authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of this work.

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