

Contestations of Women's Body Autonomy on TikTok

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A Study of Ideology, Qur'anic
Interpretation, and Gender
Identity among Indonesian Islamic Organizations

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Abstract

This study analyses contestations over women's body autonomy on social media among four Indonesian Islamic organisations: Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), and Salafi groups. Using Michel Foucault's theory of power, data from interviews and documentary studies reveal three key findings. First, conceptions of women's body autonomy vary considerably—from traditionalist to neo-modernist within NU, classical revivalist to reformist in Muhammadiyah, monolithic among Salafi groups, and contextual in MUI. Second, interpretations of QS. An-Nur: 31 regarding *awrat* constitute the primary point of divergence. Third, a notable shift in gender identity emerges, particularly among Neo-Modernist NU and Reformist Muhammadiyah, who actively challenge traditional stigmas. This study illuminates how religious ideology mediates global media influences on local gender politics in Indonesia.

Keywords: Women's Body Autonomy; Islamic Mass Organizations; Social Media; Qur'anic Interpretation; Gender Identity



Introduction

The rapid advancement of communication technology in the early 20th century ushered humanity into what McLuhan termed the “global village”—a condition where the world is figuratively held in the palm of human hands (McLuhan 1994). Internet innovation served as the primary catalyst for this transformation, spawning diverse new communication models that exponentially accelerated the flow of information (Kietzmann et al. 2011). The media convergence phenomenon of the 1990s subsequently produced what is now known as new media—an integration of text, numbers, images, video, and sound within a single communication network, commonly referred to as social media (Flew 2004).

Social media has not only transformed the speed of information dissemination but has also reshaped human interaction behaviour, forging new perspectives and experiences, and even creating new forms of dependency within society (West & Turner 2007; Griffin 2003). Within McLuhan’s perspective of technological determinism, changes in communication technology engender new patterns in social culture. Technology is not merely a tool but an agent that shapes human worldviews, paradigms, and behaviours.

This phenomenon finds its most recent articulation in the explosive popularity of TikTok. Since 2020, this short-video application has been downloaded by more than 700 million users worldwide. In Indonesia, TikTok has emerged as a new space for expression, representing individual freedom in the public sphere (Koloay 2016). However, what has captured significant attention is the dominance of content featuring young women performing dances in tight clothing with erotic body movements—a phenomenon popularly termed by netizens as “bohay” (a colloquial acronym for *bongkok hayu*, referring to curvaceous bodies) and “aduhay” (exaggeratedly attractive).

This phenomenon has provoked diverse reactions across Indonesian society. Some access and redistribute such content to other platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook, transforming it into a commodity of sexual consumption. Capitalist actors have historically capitalised on such tendencies, positioning women as attractive consumption objects to advance their capitalist agendas (Piliang 2004). In this context, Michel Foucault’s work becomes particularly relevant. Foucault argues that sexuality constitutes a positive product of power—not merely repressed, but produced, managed, and regulated. The female body, in this framework, becomes deeply entangled with economic-political discourse, particularly as a commodity.

Foucault’s theoretical lens allows us to identify at least three interconnected dimensions of this problem. First, the political economy of the female body manifests in various economic activities constructed upon specific ideological foundations. Second, the political economy of the sign demonstrates how women are produced as a sign system within capitalism, shaping particular images, meanings, and identities. Third, the political economy of desire reveals how women’s own desires become commodified for entertainment purposes (Piliang 2004). These three dimensions suggest that women’s bodies are not merely

biological entities but are thoroughly enmeshed within complex networks of power, ideology, and capital.

Building upon this Foucauldian framework, the TikTok phenomenon in Indonesia represents a contemporary site of power contestation over women's bodies. When women display their bodies through dance videos, they simultaneously exercise agency and become enmeshed within broader structures of power that commodify and regulate female embodiment. The platform's algorithm rewards such content with visibility and engagement, while male viewers consume and redistribute it, creating a feedback loop that intensifies the commodification process. Meanwhile, the platform's owners—global technology corporations—accrue substantial profits from this traffic. As Susilo and Kodir (2016) observe, within the capitalization of women's bodies, efforts to strengthen power domination are clearly reflected.

What makes the Indonesian context particularly compelling is the active role of Islamic mass organizations (*ormas Islam*) in responding to this phenomenon. Indonesia, as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, hosts numerous influential Islamic organizations with divergent ideological orientations. Among the most prominent are Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), and various Salafi groups. Each of these organizations has articulated distinctive positions regarding women's bodily autonomy on social media, particularly concerning TikTok dances.

The Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), as the state-sanctioned fatwa institution, issued Fatwa No. 24 of 2017 concerning Laws and Guidelines for Muamalah on Social Media. This fatwa explicitly declares that all content displaying *aurat* (parts of the body that must be concealed according to Islamic law), including dancing on TikTok, is haram (forbidden) as it contravenes Islamic law (Marsidi 2021). Public figures such as Imas Karyamah have echoed this sentiment, expressing concern that such trends undermine women's honour, arguing that Islam's purpose is to elevate women's dignity, not to facilitate their objectification.

Conversely, Nahdlatul Ulama offers a more permissive perspective. NU figures maintain that it is permissible (*mubah*) for women to present themselves on social media platforms—including Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok—provided they are confident that such appearances will not cause *madharat* (harm) to themselves or others (Nasrullah 2021). This divergence of opinion reflects deeper ideological contestations within Indonesian Islam regarding women's bodies, agency, and public presence.

A review of existing literature reveals extensive scholarship on women's bodies across various contexts. Jannah (2010) examined the meaning of the body among veiled women in Ponorogo. Izzati (2019) explored women's bodily autonomy in relation to capitalism. Benedicta (2011) analysed the dynamics of women's bodies through the lens of patriarchal inequality. Santi (2018) investigated whether women in advertisements represent autonomy or exploited commodities. Hidayati (2019) studied the autonomy of female salt workers through social representation theory. Lahdji (2015) analysed the objectification of women's bodies in dangdut song lyrics. Saptandari (2013) connected women's bodies with

sexuality and health. Susilo and Kodir (2016) examined women's body politics in relation to earth, power, and resistance through an ecofeminist perspective. Handoyo (2023) studied the representation of women in mass media as objects of capitalism.

Despite this rich body of scholarship, a significant lacuna remains. No existing study has comprehensively examined women's bodily autonomy on social media through the intersecting lenses of ideological contestation, Qur'anic interpretation, and gender identity as articulated by Indonesia's major Islamic mass organizations. This gap is particularly striking given the profound influence these organizations wield over their millions of followers and their active engagement with contemporary media issues.

This study seeks to address this gap by investigating three interrelated questions. First, how do NU, Muhammadiyah, MUI, and Salafi groups conceptualize women's bodily autonomy on social media? Second, how do these organizations interpret QS. An-Nur: 31—the Qur'anic verse most frequently invoked in discussions of women's dress and public appearance—in relation to contemporary social media practices? Third, what constructions of gender identity emerge from these organizations' discourses on women's bodily autonomy, and how are these identities shifting in response to new media environments?

By addressing these questions, this study aims to make several contributions. Theoretically, it extends Foucault's analysis of power and the body to the specific context of Indonesian Islamic discourse on social media, revealing how religious ideology mediates the impact of global media technologies on local gender politics. Empirically, it provides systematic comparative data on the positions of Indonesia's most influential Islamic organizations regarding a pressing contemporary issue. Practically, it illuminates the diverse resources within Islamic tradition that can be mobilized either to constrain or to expand women's autonomy in digital spaces.

The significance of this study extends beyond the Indonesian context. As social media platforms increasingly transcend national boundaries, the negotiation between religious values, gender norms, and digital practices becomes a global concern. Understanding how one major Muslim-majority society navigates these tensions offers insights that may inform comparative studies across other cultural and religious contexts.

This research employs a qualitative field research design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with key representatives from NU, Muhammadiyah, MUI, and Salafi groups, supplemented by analysis of organizational documents, fatwas, and public statements. The data were analysed using Michel Foucault's theoretical framework on power, discourse, and the body, with particular attention to how different ideological positions produce distinct regimes of truth regarding women's bodies and their proper place in digital spaces.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows. The next section provides an overview of the four Islamic mass organizations under study, outlining their historical development and ideological orientations. The third section presents the findings regarding each organization's conceptualization of women's bodily autonomy on social media. The fourth section examines their interpretations of QS. An-Nur: 31 and its implications for social

media practice. The fifth section analyses the constructions of gender identity that emerge from these discourses, identifying both continuity and change. The final section concludes by discussing the theoretical and practical implications of the findings.

Organizational Ideology in Indonesia: A Comparative Overview

Indonesia's Islamic landscape is characterised by significant ideological diversity, reflected in its numerous mass organizations (*ormas Islam*). Among the most influential are Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, Salafi groups, and the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI). Each possesses distinct ideological orientations that shape their approaches to contemporary issues, including women's bodily autonomy on social media. This section provides a concise overview of these organizations' ideological foundations, focusing on aspects relevant to their conceptions of women's bodies, gender roles, and engagement with modernity.

Nahdlatul Ulama: Between Tradition and Modernity

Nahdlatul Ulama, established in 1926, represents the largest traditionalist Islamic organization in Indonesia. Its ideological foundation rests upon Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah (the Sunni tradition), particularly as articulated by the theologian Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari. NU's religious methodology emphasizes adherence to one of the four canonical schools of Islamic law (*madzhab al-arba'ah*), respect for local traditions, and the principle of preserving benefit for society (*maslahah 'ammah*) (Abbas 2003).

For the purposes of this study, it is crucial to distinguish between two streams within contemporary NU. The first, which we term Traditionalist NU, tends toward more conservative interpretations of women's roles, emphasizing domesticity and the potential dangers of female public visibility. The second, which Barton (1997) identifies as Neo-Modernist NU, emerged through engagement with modernist Islamic thought and Indonesian nationalism. This stream adopts more contextual approaches to scriptural interpretation and demonstrates greater openness to women's public participation and leadership. This internal diversity within NU produces significantly different perspectives on women's bodily autonomy on social media, as will be elaborated in subsequent sections.

Muhammadiyah: Reformism and Its Variants

Muhammadiyah, founded in 1912 by Ahmad Dahlan, represents Indonesia's foremost modernist Islamic organization. Its establishment was motivated by three interconnected factors: colonial political domination that had impoverished Indonesian society; widespread ignorance and poverty among the population; and the perceived failure of Muslims to understand and practise Islam authentically (Ali 2000). Muhammadiyah's reformist agenda encompasses four primary objectives: (1) purifying Islam from non-Islamic influences and practices; (2) reformulating Islamic doctrine in dialogue with modern thought;

(3) reforming Islamic education; and (4) defending Islam from external influences and attacks.

Within Muhammadiyah, two distinct orientations can be identified regarding women's issues. Classical Revivalist Muhammadiyah tends toward more literal readings of scriptural texts and emphasizes women's domestic roles, often characterizing women as potential sources of *fitnah* (social disorder or temptation). In contrast, Reformist Muhammadiyah adopts more contextual hermeneutical approaches, emphasizing the ethical objectives (*maqashid al-syari'ah*) of Islamic law and supporting women's full participation in public life. This internal differentiation, mirroring that within NU, produces divergent perspectives on women's bodily autonomy in digital spaces.

Salafi Movements: Purism, Haraki, and Jihadi Currents

The Salafi movement in Indonesia traces its intellectual lineage to the 18th-century renewal movement of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab in the Arabian Peninsula, as well as the writings of medieval scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya. Salafism aspires to emulate the practices of the pious predecessors (*al-salaf al-salih*)—the earliest generations of Muslims—in as literal a manner as possible.

Salafi *da'wah* gained significant traction in Indonesia during the 1980s, initially through study circles (*halaqah*) at universities in Yogyakarta, led by figures such as Abu Nida. The movement expanded through the establishment of Salafi boarding schools and social institutions (Sirozi 2005). Following the fall of the New Order in 1998, Salafi visibility increased dramatically, including the formation of Laskar Jihad in 2000 to participate in communal conflicts in Maluku.

A critical turning point occurred in 2002, when a fatwa from the prominent Saudi Salafi scholar Rabi' ibn Hadi al-Madkhali led to the dissolution of Laskar Jihad. This fatwa, issued at the request of Indonesian Salafi scholars who considered Laskar Jihad's militant activities deviations from authentic Salafi methodology, precipitated a fragmentation of the movement into three distinct networks (Hasan 2006). These are: (1) the network associated with Luqman Baabduh, former deputy commander of Laskar Jihad; (2) the network of Dzulqarnain, former head of Laskar Jihad's fatwa division; and (3) the network of Abu Turob al-Jawi, a former Laskar Jihad member. These networks have evolved into what scholars identify as three Salafi orientations: Purist Salafi, which emphasises quietism and focuses on education and *da'wah* while avoiding political engagement; Haraki Salafi, which engages in political activism within permitted channels; and Jihadi Salafi, which advocates armed struggle to establish Islamic governance. Despite their tactical and political differences, these three streams share remarkably consistent views on women's bodies, gender roles, and the regulation of female public presence—a uniformity that distinguishes them from the internal diversity within NU and Muhammadiyah.

The Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) was established on 26 July 1975, at the initiative of the Indonesian government, which sought effective communication channels with Muslim communities amid tense relations in the early 1970s. Unlike NU and Muhammadiyah, which emerged from grassroots social movements, MUI was created as a deliberative forum to unite Islamic scholars (ulama), leaders (zuama), and intellectuals, and to serve as a representative body for Muslims in consultations with the government. MUI's functions are fourfold: (1) serving as a deliberative forum for ulama and Muslim intellectuals to promote Islamic life and protect the community; (2) functioning as a gathering place to develop and practise Islamic teachings and foster Islamic brotherhood (ukhuwah Islamiyah); (3) representing Muslims in inter-religious relations; and (4) issuing fatwas to Muslims and the government, whether requested or unsolicited.

Although MUI formally designates itself a non-governmental organization, its close historical ties to the state and its role in issuing authoritative religious rulings position it as what might be termed a quasi-governmental fatwa institution, analogous to official mufti offices in many Muslim-majority countries. MUI articulates its identity as simultaneously servant of the community (khâdimul ummah) and partner of the government (shadîqul hukûmah or syarîkul hukûmah). This dual positioning requires MUI to navigate between societal expectations and state interests, a balancing act that shapes its responses to emerging issues, including women's presence on social media. For this study, we characterize MUI's approach as Contextual MUI, recognizing its efforts to address contemporary problems through fatwas that respond to specific social conditions while maintaining continuity with Islamic legal traditions.

Women's Body Autonomy from the Perspective of Community Organizations in Indonesia

The body fundamentally belongs to the individual—a private domain rather than a public or collective possession. Its owner possesses the inherent right to regulate, maintain, and make decisions concerning their own body. In reality, however, significant anxieties surround bodily autonomy, particularly for women. Female bodies have historically been subjected to various forms of external control: they are disciplined, subdued, restrained, and deprived of the freedom to exercise full authority over themselves. This subjugation intensifies within political-economic structures, where owners of capital and state power exploit women's bodies as opportunities for accumulation. What makes this phenomenon particularly insidious is its normalization—few recognize the extent to which bodies have been colonized by external forces.

Autonomy, in the context of women's bodily ownership, refers to women's capacity to act and make decisions based on their own will, free from external direction or coercion. It represents the fundamental right of every woman to determine what happens to her body,

how it is presented, and under what conditions it enters the public sphere. In the specific context of social media, the question of women’s bodily autonomy becomes particularly complex. Media institutions, state authorities, and cultural elites frequently construct and control the discourse surrounding women’s bodies. These actors become consumers of content—photographs, videos, advertisements—that transforms women’s bodies into commodity objects. This commodification persists even as women assert their right to control their bodies without external interference, revealing the gap between formal rights and lived realities.

Foucault, Power, and the Discourse of Women’s Bodies

To analyse the diverse positions articulated by Indonesian Islamic organizations, Michel Foucault’s theoretical framework on power proves invaluable. Foucault conceives of power not merely as repressive—something that says “no”—but as productive, generating knowledge, discourse, and subjectivity. Power produces reality; it creates fields of knowledge and regimes of truth that shape how individuals understand themselves and their possibilities for action.

Applying Foucault’s lens to women’s bodily autonomy on social media reveals that each mass organization’s discourse constitutes a form of knowledge production about the female body. These discourses do not simply describe reality; they actively construct it, establishing what can be said, thought, and practised regarding women’s bodies in digital spaces. They function as what Foucault would call apparatuses (dispositifs) of power/knowledge—configurations that simultaneously generate understanding and enable control. When an organization declares that “a woman’s body belongs to her husband” or that “women have the right to be themselves on social media,” it is not merely expressing an opinion. It is participating in a discursive struggle to establish a particular regime of truth about women’s bodies—a regime that will shape the conduct of millions of followers, influence policy debates, and structure the possibilities for women’s agency.

Mapping Discourses on Women’s Body Autonomy

Table 1: Concepts of Women’s Body Autonomy on Social Media

Community Organization	The Concept of Women’s Body Autonomy in Social Media
NU	
NU Traditionalists	Women’s bodies belong to themselves, but women can be a source of lust. Therefore, women must protect themselves from things that may arouse men’s desires. On social media, women must be more concerned with what they post (Nasri 2022).

Community Organization	The Concept of Women’s Body Autonomy in Social Media
NU Neo-Modernist	Women’s bodies belong to themselves. Women should continuously develop themselves and their potential so that they are not merely biological creatures but also intellectual and spiritual beings. It is time for women to use social media for positive purposes (Mushohihah 2022).
Muhammadiyah	
Classical Revivalist MD	Women’s bodies belong to themselves, but women can be a source of slander (<i>fitnah</i>). Therefore, their bodies must be protected and maintained properly to avoid causing harm to themselves and their families. One should not create content without considering its potential harm (<i>madharat</i>) (Mulyono 2022).
MD Reformer	Women’s bodies belong to themselves, both in real media and social media. Women’s bodily autonomy in any media is inappropriate if influenced by others. Women have the right to be themselves (Mulyono 2022).
Salafi	
Salafi Puris	Women’s body autonomy is attached to her father (before marriage) and her husband (after marriage) (Athiyah 2022).
Salafi Haraki	(Same as above)
Salafi Jihadists	(Same as above)
MUI	
Contextual MUI	Women’s bodies’ autonomy is each individual’s right, but there are limitations. All content that shows <i>aurat</i> , including dancing on TikTok, is haram because it violates Islamic law. Content is permissible if intended for good purposes and does not display <i>aurat</i> or cause <i>madharat</i> (Rozikin 2022).

The table above reveals not merely a range of opinions but a structured field of power relations, with each position embodying a distinct configuration of knowledge, authority, and control over women’s bodies.

The Salafi position—shared uniformly across its purist, haraki, and jihadi streams—represents the most literal and explicit articulation of patriarchal power. In this discourse, a woman’s body never truly belongs to her. It is temporarily entrusted to her father, then transferred to her husband upon marriage. This is not merely a metaphor but a substan-

tive claim about authority: fathers and husbands possess the right to regulate women's dress, mobility, and public presence, including their appearance on social media. From a Foucauldian perspective, this discourse operates as a disciplinary technology that produces compliant female subjects. By constructing the body as property transferred between male guardians, it renders women's own desires and choices irrelevant to questions of bodily autonomy. The knowledge produced—that women require male protection and control—simultaneously legitimizes patriarchal authority and constitutes women as dependent beings incapable of self-governance. This is power at its most productive: it creates the very subjects it claims to describe.

The positions articulated by NU Traditionalists and Classical Revivalist Muhammadiyah share certain affinities with Salafi discourse while diverging in significant respects. Both characterize women's bodies as potential sources of danger—lust (*syahwat*) for NU Traditionalists, slander (*fitnah*) for Classical Revivalist Muhammadiyah. This framing places the burden of moral responsibility on women: because their bodies might provoke male desire or social disorder, women must exercise vigilance in how they present themselves, including on social media. This discourse operates through what Foucault terms pastoral power—a form of power concerned with guiding individuals toward their salvation. The emphasis is not on explicit male control (as in Salafi discourse) but on women's internalization of self-disciplinary practices. Women are not told directly that their bodies belong to men; rather, they are encouraged to protect themselves, to be concerned with what they post, to consider potential harm. The effect, however, may be similar: women's bodies become objects of constant surveillance and regulation, with women themselves serving as the primary agents of their own discipline.

Neo-Modernist NU and Reformist Muhammadiyah articulate a fundamentally different discourse. Here, women's bodies belong to women themselves—period. The emphasis shifts from protection and danger to development and actualization. Women are encouraged to use social media for positive purposes, to develop their intellectual and spiritual potential, to be themselves without external influence. This discourse represents what Foucault might identify as a form of resistance—an attempt to construct counter-knowledge that challenges established regimes of truth about women's bodies. It refuses the characterization of women as either property or danger, instead positioning them as autonomous subjects capable of self-determination. The power effects are correspondingly different: rather than disciplining women into compliance, this discourse seeks to empower them as agents who can navigate digital spaces on their own terms. Notably, this resistance operates within Islamic discursive traditions rather than against them. Neo-Modernist NU and Reformist Muhammadiyah do not reject religious authority; they reinterpret it, mobilizing alternative readings of scripture and tradition to support women's autonomy. This internal critique may prove more effective than external opposition, as it works within the frameworks that structure most Indonesian Muslims' understanding of legitimate authority.

MUI's position occupies an intermediate space, attempting to mediate between competing pressures. On one hand, MUI affirms that women's bodily autonomy is each in-

dividual's right—a significant recognition that aligns with modern discourses of individual rights. On the other hand, MUI insists on substantial limitations: content displaying *aurat* is haram, permissible only when intended for good purposes and avoiding harm. This discourse can be understood as a form of power negotiation. MUI must balance its self-positioning as servant of the community (*khâdimul ummah*) and partner of the government (*shadîqul hukûmah*). It must respond to conservative pressures from groups like Salafis while maintaining credibility with more moderate constituencies. It must issue fatwas that are recognizably Islamic while addressing unprecedented questions raised by digital technologies. The result is a discourse that simultaneously acknowledges and constrains women's autonomy. Women have rights, but those rights are bounded by religious obligations. They may use social media, but not for purposes that display *aurat*. They may express themselves, but not in ways that cause *madharat*. This is power as accommodation and containment—incorporating elements of alternative discourses while maintaining fundamental control.

The Stakes of Discursive Contestation

What is at stake in these competing discourses is not merely abstract theorizing but the concrete conditions of millions of Indonesian women's lives. When Salafi discourses dominate, women's access to social media may be restricted by fathers and husbands. When Traditionalist discourses prevail, women may internalize anxiety about their bodies as potential sources of social disorder. When Neo-Modernist and Reformist discourses gain traction, women may find support for using digital spaces to develop their potential and participate in public life.

The Foucauldian framework reveals that these are not simply different “opinions” about women's bodies. They are competing regimes of truth, each with its own productive effects—producing particular kinds of female subjects, particular forms of self-understanding, particular possibilities for action. The contestation over women's bodily autonomy on social media is thus a contestation over what kind of subjects Indonesian Muslim women will become: dependent wards requiring male protection, self-disciplining guardians of social morality, autonomous agents pursuing self-actualization, or rights-bearing individuals bounded by religious obligations.

This analysis also reveals an important asymmetry. While Salafi discourse explicitly locates control over women's bodies in male guardians, and Traditionalist discourse implicitly encourages women's self-discipline, Neo-Modernist and Reformist discourses seek to place control in women's own hands. The latter thus represents not merely a different opinion but a potential shift in the locus of power—from external authorities and internalized discipline to autonomous choice. Whether this shift will translate into transformed lived realities remains an open question, contingent on the relative influence of these competing discourses in shaping Indonesian Muslim women's understandings of themselves and their bodies.

Qur'anic Interpretation of Women's Body Autonomy in Social Media from Indonesian Community Organization's Perspectives

The female body occupies a central position in Islamic ethical discourse, with scripture providing normative frameworks that guide Muslims' understanding of how bodies should be presented, perceived, and regulated. The Qur'anic verse most frequently invoked in discussions of women's dress and public appearance is QS. An-Nur [24]: 31:

Say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts; and that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what ordinarily appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, what their right hands possess, male attendants free of sexual desires, or children who have no knowledge of women's nakedness; and that they should not stamp their feet so as to draw attention to their hidden beauty. And turn to God in repentance, all of you, O believers, so that you might succeed. (QS. An-Nur [24]: 31)

This verse establishes principles governing women's conduct regarding their bodies: restraining the gaze, guarding private parts, concealing beauty and ornaments, drawing veils over the bosom, and specifying those before whom beauty may be revealed. Yet the apparent clarity of these injunctions dissolves upon closer examination. What precisely constitutes "beauty and ornaments"? What does "what ordinarily appears thereof" include? How do these prescriptions apply to unprecedented contexts such as social media? The answers to these questions depend crucially on interpretive methodology—the hermeneutical approaches through which the verse is understood and applied.

Methodological Frameworks: Text, Reason, and Context

The divergence in interpretive outcomes across Indonesia's Islamic mass organizations can be traced to fundamental differences in how they approach the text. Classical Islamic hermeneutics distinguishes several methodological orientations, each with distinct implications for how scripture is understood and applied to new situations. Textualist Approaches (Tafsir bi al-Ma'sur) prioritize transmitted interpretations—understandings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, his companions, and the earliest generations of Muslims (al-salaf al-salih). This methodology treats the interpretive tradition as authoritative, limiting the scope for rational inquiry or contextual adaptation. Meaning is sought primarily through what has been received from the past rather than through engagement with present circumstances.

Rationalist Approaches (Tafsir bi al-Ra'yi) grant greater scope to human reasoning in understanding scripture. While varying significantly in how much rational discretion they permit, these approaches acknowledge that understanding divine revelation requires intellectual effort that cannot be reduced to mere transmission of past interpretations. Contextualist Approaches represent a further development, explicitly attending to the historical

circumstances of revelation (asbab al-nuzul) and the need to distinguish between universal principles and time-bound applications. Contextualist hermeneutics seeks to identify the ethical objectives (maqashid al-syari'ah) underlying specific injunctions, enabling their realization in changed historical circumstances.

The interpretive positions articulated by Indonesia's Islamic organizations reflect these different methodological commitments, with profound implications for how women's bodily autonomy on social media is understood. As the following analysis demonstrates, each organization's approach to QS. An-Nur: 31—whether textualist, rationalist, or contextualist—produces distinctive interpretations that carry significant consequences for how women's bodies should be presented, perceived, and regulated in digital spaces.

Salafi Interpretation: Textualist Literalism as Disciplinary Technology

Salafi groups approach QS. An-Nur: 31 through a consistently textualist methodology. Interpretation is governed by adherence to understandings attributed to the pious predecessors, with minimal scope for contextual adaptation. This methodological commitment produces specific interpretive outcomes. According to Salafi informants, the verse obligates women to wear shar'i clothing that is dark in colour and covers the entire body except the eyes. Even the palms should ideally be covered with gloves, and the feet with socks. Women should not leave the house without a male guardian (mahram). The veil functions to protect women from the lustful gaze of unrelated men. Dark, concealing clothing and limited mobility outside the home constitute the optimal Muslim women's attire, safeguarding them from worldly slander and the heat of hellfire (Athiyah 2022).

From a Foucauldian perspective, this interpretive approach operates as a disciplinary technology that produces particular kinds of female subjects. By fixing meaning through appeal to past authority, textualist methodology forecloses alternative possibilities for understanding women's bodies and their relation to the public sphere. The emphasis on physical concealment and restricted mobility constructs women's bodies as inherently dangerous—sources of temptation that must be controlled through external regulation.

The power effects are twofold. First, this discourse legitimizes external control: fathers and husbands are authorized to enforce proper dress and limit women's public presence. Second, it produces self-disciplining subjects: women internalize the imperative to conceal themselves, monitoring their own appearance and conduct. The body becomes a site of continuous surveillance, with women themselves serving as primary agents of their own regulation. This is power at its most productive—not merely repressing but actively shaping subjectivity, desire, and self-understanding.

NU Interpretation: Contextual Adaptation and Ethical Guidance

NU's approach to QS. An-Nur: 31 reflects a more contextualist methodology, attending to the ethical purposes underlying scriptural injunctions and their application to contemporary circumstances. This methodological orientation produces interpretive outcomes

that, while still emphasizing modesty, create greater space for women's agency and public participation.

NU informants articulate the verse's implications through four primary dimensions (Nasri 2022). First, guarding private parts entails wearing clothing that does not reveal the body's curves—a principle applicable to both physical and digital presence. Second, the presence of a male guardian during travel functions to minimize temptation by guarding the gaze, but this is understood as a protective measure rather than absolute restriction. Third, guarding the tongue prohibits harmful speech, whether verbal or through social media. Fourth, regarding content creation, the default legal status is permissibility (*ibahah*). Creating content on social media becomes commendable (*sunnah*) when it produces knowledge, recommends Qur'anic reading, promotes hospitality, or similar virtuous purposes. It becomes obligatory (*wajib*) when addressing essential matters such as prayer or debt.

This interpretive approach shifts the focus from physical concealment to ethical conduct. The emphasis is not on what women wear but on how they behave—guarding against harmful speech, producing beneficial content, conducting themselves with integrity. The body itself is not inherently dangerous; rather, its meaning depends on how it is used and for what purposes.

From a Foucauldian perspective, this discourse represents a different configuration of power/knowledge. Rather than producing subjects who understand their bodies as threats requiring concealment, it produces subjects who understand themselves as ethical agents capable of using their bodies for virtuous purposes. The locus of control shifts from external authorities and internalized discipline focused on concealment to conscious ethical deliberation about how to deploy one's embodied presence in the world. This is power that produces not docile bodies but responsible agents.

Muhammadiyah Interpretation: Balancing Text and Context

Muhammadiyah's approach to QS. An-Nur: 31 occupies an intermediate methodological space, combining attention to textual specificity with concern for contemporary application. The interpretive outcomes reflect this balanced orientation. According to Muhammadiyah informants, the verse establishes several principles (Mulyono 2022). First, women must observe certain limitations, covering their entire bodies except the palms and face. Second, the verse commands guarding one's speech, particularly ensuring that content created does not harm others. Third, it recommends maintaining proper gazes—men toward women and women toward men. Fourth, in using social media, one should avoid excess and refrain from prohibited activities such as dancing. Fifth, social media should be utilized as a medium for learning or *da'wah*, producing positive content with one's body that becomes an enduring charity (*jariah*). This interpretation shares with NU an emphasis on ethical purpose and productive use of digital spaces, while maintaining somewhat more specific requirements regarding bodily coverage.

The methodological orientation—neither purely textualist nor radically contextual-

ist—produces a discourse that simultaneously regulates and empowers. From a Foucauldian perspective, this represents power that operates through ethical formation rather than disciplinary surveillance. The emphasis on social media as a site for learning and da'wah constructs women as potential agents of Islamic propagation, using their bodies and voices for religious purposes. The body becomes not merely something to conceal but something to deploy strategically in the service of higher objectives.

MUI Interpretation: Maintaining Human Nature

MUI's interpretation of QS. An-Nur: 31 reflects its institutional position as a fatwa-issuing body mediating between diverse constituencies. The interpretive approach emphasizes the verse's function as a divine sign regarding efforts to maintain human nature (*fitrah*). According to MUI informants, while the verse addresses women, its implications extend to men as a warning not to gaze upon women with slanderous intent or lust. The preventive action prescribed in the Qur'an involves both limiting *aurat* and protecting one's gaze (Khasanah 2022). This dual emphasis—on both the one who displays and the one who looks—distributes responsibility more evenly than interpretations focusing exclusively on women's conduct. This interpretive approach attempts to navigate between competing pressures: acknowledging the verse's clear directives while recognizing that its purpose is broader than merely restricting women. The emphasis on human nature suggests that the verse's objective is not to constrain women but to enable human flourishing within divinely ordained boundaries.

From a Foucauldian perspective, MUI's discourse represents power as negotiation and containment. It incorporates elements of more restrictive interpretations (the requirement to limit *aurat*) while also recognizing men's responsibility to control their gazes. This balanced discourse may prove more effective in shaping conduct than more extreme positions, as it acknowledges multiple perspectives while maintaining clear boundaries.

Interpretive Methodology as Site of Discursive Struggle

The analysis above reveals that differences in interpretive outcomes are not arbitrary but systematic, rooted in divergent methodological commitments. Salafi textualism produces interpretations emphasizing physical concealment and restricted mobility. NU's contextualism produces interpretations emphasizing ethical conduct and productive digital presence. Muhammadiyah's balanced approach produces intermediate positions combining coverage requirements with positive empowerment. MUI's mediating position produces interpretations that distribute responsibility while maintaining clear prohibitions.

These methodological differences are not merely academic; they are sites of discursive struggle over legitimate religious authority and its implications for women's lives. When Salafi groups claim that their interpretations alone represent authentic Islam, they are making a power claim—asserting exclusive access to true meaning and delegitimizing alternative understandings. When NU and Muhammadiyah advance contextual interpretations,

they are contesting that claim, asserting that proper understanding requires attention to changed circumstances and ethical purposes.

This struggle matters because interpretive authority translates into practical power over women's bodies. The Salafi interpretation, if accepted as authoritative, legitimizes restrictions on women's dress, mobility, and social media use. Fathers and husbands gain religious warrant to enforce these restrictions. Women who internalize this discourse discipline themselves accordingly. The Neo-Modernist and Reformist interpretations, if they gain traction, authorize women's digital participation and self-development. They shift the locus of moral responsibility from external compliance to internal ethical deliberation.

The Qur'anic text itself does not determine which interpretation prevails. That depends on the relative power of competing interpretive communities—their institutional resources, their access to media, their ability to shape public discourse, their connections to state authority. The contestation over QS. An-Nur: 31 is thus a contestation over who gets to speak for Islam, whose interpretations will shape Muslim practice, and what kinds of female subjects Indonesian Islam will produce.

What emerges from this analysis is not a single Islamic position on women's bodies but a field of interpretive possibilities, each with distinctive implications for women's autonomy on social media. The Salafi interpretation, rooted in textualist methodology, produces a regime of discipline and concealment. NU's contextualist interpretation produces a regime of ethical agency and productive engagement. Muhammadiyah's balanced approach produces intermediate possibilities. MUI's mediating position produces negotiated outcomes.

None of these interpretations is simply "correct" or "incorrect" in any straightforward sense. Each represents a plausible reading of scripture within particular methodological frameworks. The question is not which interpretation accurately captures the verse's "true meaning" but which interpretive community succeeds in establishing its reading as authoritative—and with what consequences for Indonesian Muslim women's lives.

This perspective reveals that the Qur'anic text, far from being a static source of fixed meanings, functions as what Foucault might call a "discursive field"—a space of possibility within which competing claims are articulated, contested, and temporarily stabilized. The verse itself provides raw material, but its meaning is produced through interpretive practices that are always embedded in relations of power. To interpret is to exercise power—to shape what can be said, thought, and done with respect to women's bodies.

The struggle over QS. An-Nur: 31 thus continues, its outcome uncertain. What is certain is that this struggle matters profoundly for the millions of Indonesian women navigating the possibilities and perils of social media, seeking to honour their religious commitments while exercising autonomy over their bodies, and negotiating between competing visions of what it means to be a Muslim woman in the digital age.

Gender Identity in Women's Body Autonomy on Social Media: Shifting Paradigms and Persistent Contradictions

The question of women's bodily autonomy on social media cannot be separated from broader constructions of gender identity—the socially and culturally mediated understandings of what it means to be a woman or a man in a particular society. Gender identity shapes expectations about proper conduct, appropriate spheres of activity, and the very possibilities for selfhood that individuals can imagine and inhabit. When Indonesian Islamic organizations articulate positions on women's TikTok dances, they are simultaneously constructing and contesting gender identities, producing competing visions of what Muslim women should be.

This section traces the shifting constructions of gender identity evident across Indonesia's Islamic mass organizations, from traditional formulations positioning women as sources of social disorder to emerging discourses emphasizing women's autonomy and public participation. It then examines the persistent gap between elite discourse and grassroots practice, revealing the contradictions that complicate straightforward narratives of progressive change. Finally, it analyses how traditionalist discourses, whether explicitly or implicitly, perpetuate what Indonesian feminists have theorized as the ideology of *ibuisme* (motherism)—a gender ideology that defines women primarily through their domestic roles.

Traditional Gender Identity: Women as Fitnah and the Domestic Imperative

A recurrent theme in classical Islamic discourse, and in the positions of Traditionalist NU, Classical Revivalist Muhammadiyah, and Salafi groups, is the characterization of women as potential sources of *fitnah*—a complex term encompassing social disorder, temptation, chaos, and trial. This characterization has profound implications for gender identity, positioning women's bodies and very presence as threats to social and moral order.

The logic operates as follows: women possess an inherent capacity to arouse male desire. This desire, if uncontrolled, leads to social disorder, illicit relationships, the breakdown of families, and the erosion of moral boundaries. Therefore, women must be controlled—their bodies concealed, their mobility restricted, their public presence minimized. The burden of maintaining social order falls disproportionately on women, whose conduct determines whether *fitnah* emerges or is contained. This construction produces a specific gender identity for women. They are defined primarily through their relationship to male desire and social order rather than through their own aspirations, capacities, or projects. Their value lies in their ability to control themselves, to remain unseen, to avoid becoming occasions for male temptation. Piety, in this framework, is measured by invisibility and restraint.

As one medieval text quoted by Asghar Ali Engineer (1994) from “The Perfume Garden” illustrates:

An ideal woman rarely talks and laughs for no reason. She never leaves the house even to meet neighbours. She has no female friends, confides in no one, and only relies on her husband. She does not receive anything from anyone except her father and husband. She does not interfere in their affairs if she meets his close relatives. She is not treacherous and has no faults to hide. She is not trying to charm other people. If her husband expresses a desire for sexual intercourse, she will be pleased to satisfy his lust. She always helps her husband in various matters, doesn't complain much, and doesn't shed tears. She doesn't laugh or rejoice when she sees her husband gloomy and troubled. She will help to solve the problem until the husband is relieved. She does not reveal herself to anyone except her husband, even though the husband is not around. A woman like that is what everyone wants (Nefzawi 1964).

While contemporary Traditionalist NU and Classical Revivalist Muhammadiyah figures would not articulate their positions in precisely these terms, the underlying logic persists. Women's bodies require protection because they might provoke desire. Women must be cautious on social media because their appearances might cause *madharat*. The gender identity produced is one of perpetual vigilance, constant self-monitoring, and primary identification with domestic roles.

Ibuisme: The Ideology of Domestic Motherhood

The traditional gender identity articulated by conservative religious discourses intersects powerfully with what Indonesian feminists have theorized as *ibuisme* (motherism). This ideology, which emerged and consolidated during the New Order period but drew on longer cultural traditions, defines women primarily through their roles as mothers and wives. Women's activities, aspirations, and identities are understood as extensions of their domestic functions. Under *ibuisme*, women's participation in any sphere beyond the household is legitimated only insofar as it serves domestic purposes—earning supplementary income to support children, engaging in social activities that enhance their capacity as mothers, pursuing education that makes them better wives. The domestic sphere remains the true locus of female identity; public engagement is always secondary, always conditional, always subject to recall when domestic duties require attention.

This ideology has proven remarkably resilient, shaping not only popular understanding but also state policy, educational curricula, and religious discourse. Its power lies in its naturalization—the presentation of culturally specific gender arrangements as timeless, divinely ordained, or biologically determined. When religious authorities declare that women's primary responsibility is to their families, that their public presence requires husband's permission, or that their bodies must be concealed to protect social order, they are mobilizing and reinforcing *ibuisme*. Traditionalist NU and Classical Revivalist Muhammadiyah discourses, while not using this terminology, align closely with *ibuisme*. Their emphasis on women's potential to cause *fitnah* positions the domestic sphere as the safe, proper location for women. Their warnings about social media's dangers reinforce the message that public visibility carries risks that women must manage through self-restraint. The gender identity produced is one in which women's aspirations are subordinate to social stability, their bodies are sites of potential danger, and their proper place is the private sphere.

The Shift: Emerging Gender Identities in Neo-Modernist and Reformist Discourse

Against this background, the positions articulated by Neo-Modernist NU and Reformist Muhammadiyah represent a significant shift in gender identity. These discourses construct women not primarily as objects of male desire or threats to social order but as autonomous subjects capable of self-determination and worthy of self-development.

A Neo-Modernist NU figure articulates this alternative vision:

A woman with her body has her own rights and cannot be monopolized by anyone. Women should always develop themselves and their best potential so that they are not only biological creatures but also intellectual and spiritual beings—aspects that are often neglected. It is time for women to use social media for positive purposes (Mushohihah 2022).

This statement performs several significant moves. First, it asserts women's bodily autonomy as a right that cannot be "monopolized"—a direct challenge to patriarchal claims that fathers or husbands control women's bodies. Second, it expands the horizon of female identity beyond the biological, insisting that women are also intellectual and spiritual beings whose development matters. Third, it positively values women's social media use, framing digital spaces as opportunities for self-actualization rather than threats requiring control.

A reformist Muhammadiyah figure similarly emphasizes autonomy:

Women's bodily autonomy in any media is inappropriate if influenced by others. Women have the right to be themselves (Mulyono 2022).

The emphasis on being "themselves" rather than conforming to external expectations represents a fundamental shift in gender identity. The traditional question—"What must women do to avoid causing fitnah?"—gives way to a new question: "What might women become if they are free to develop their potential?" The locus of moral concern shifts from social order to individual flourishing, from external compliance to internal authenticity. This shift has profound implications for how women understand themselves and their possibilities. Rather than internalizing the imperative to conceal themselves and restrict their movements, women are encouraged to explore, create, and contribute. Rather than measuring their piety by their invisibility, they are invited to measure it by their positive impact. The gender identity produced is one of agency, creativity, and public engagement rather than restraint, concealment, and domesticity.

The Persistence of Patriarchy: Elite Discourse and Grassroots Reality

However, the emergence of progressive discourses at the elite level of mass organizations does not automatically translate into transformed realities at the grassroots. As Abdullah (2000) observes, in Indonesia's dominant patriarchal culture, changes in organizational rhetoric have not been directly proportional to improvements in women's actual position in society. Many Muslim women continue to lack adequate contextual understanding of religion and remain subject to traditional gender expectations.

This gap between elite discourse and popular practice reveals the complexity of discursive change. When Neo-Modernist NU figures articulate visions of women's autonomy, they are participating in what Foucault would call the production of counter-knowledge—alternative regimes of truth that challenge established power relations. But this counter-knowledge must compete with deeply entrenched discourses reproduced through families, schools, media, and local religious authorities. The patriarchal habitus—the embodied dispositions and taken-for-granted assumptions about gender—does not dissolve simply because organizational leaders issue progressive statements.

Several factors explain this persistence. First, institutional mediation: The distance between national organizational leadership and local branches means that progressive discourses may be diluted, resisted, or simply not transmitted as they move through organizational hierarchies. Local religious leaders, often more conservative than their national counterparts, continue to shape popular understanding.

Second, cultural embeddedness: Patriarchal norms are not merely imposed from above but reproduced through everyday practices, family structures, and community expectations. Women who encounter progressive discourses at organizational events may return to homes where husbands, parents, and in-laws enforce traditional expectations. The power of counter-knowledge is limited when it confronts the material realities of gendered power relations.

Third, economic structures: Women's continued economic dependence on male family members in many contexts limits their ability to act on alternative understandings of gender identity. Even if a woman accepts that she has the right to use social media autonomously, she may lack the practical freedom to exercise that right if her husband controls household resources and decision-making.

Fourth, interpretive competition: Progressive discourses must compete with conservative alternatives that often claim greater authenticity by virtue of their textual literalism. For women seeking religious guidance, the message that "Islam requires women to cover completely and avoid public visibility" may appear more certain, more faithful to scripture, than contextual interpretations that acknowledge ambiguity and change.

Thus, while the emergence of Neo-Modernist and Reformist gender identities represents a significant discursive shift, its practical effects remain partial and contested. The struggle over gender identity is not settled at the level of organizational fatwas or elite statements; it continues in homes, schools, mosques, and digital spaces across the archipelago. The material conditions that sustain *ibuisme*—economic dependence, unequal access to education and employment, legal frameworks that privilege male authority, cultural norms that equate female piety with domesticity—persist despite discursive shifts at elite levels. Transforming gender identity requires not only new ideas but transformed structures: economic arrangements that enable women's independence, educational systems that cultivate critical consciousness, legal reforms that guarantee equal rights, and cultural practices that value women's contributions beyond the household.

Gender Identity as Contested Terrain

What emerges from this analysis is an understanding of gender identity as contested terrain—a field of struggle where competing discourses vie for influence over how women understand themselves and their possibilities. Traditionalist constructions, rooted in characterizations of women as *fitnah* and reinforced by *ibuisme*, continue to shape expectations and practices. Yet they face challenges from alternative constructions articulated by Neo-Modernist and Reformist figures, who envision women as autonomous subjects capable of self-development and public engagement.

This contestation matters because gender identity shapes not only how women are treated but how they understand themselves—their aspirations, their sense of what is possible, their very subjectivity. When Salafi discourses dominate, women may internalize the imperative to conceal themselves and restrict their movements. When Traditionalist discourses prevail, women may measure their worth by their success in avoiding *fitnah*. When Neo-Modernist and Reformist discourses gain traction, women may envision themselves as agents of positive change, using digital spaces to develop their potential and contribute to society.

Nasaruddin Umar's (2000) dissertation demonstrates that Islam normatively contains numerous principles of gender equality: men and women are both servants of God; both are vicegerents (*khalifah*) on earth; both received the same primordial covenant; both Adam and Eve were actively involved in the cosmic drama; both have the potential to achieve excellence. The task, as feminist scholars have argued, is not to import alien values but to recover and develop these egalitarian possibilities within Islamic tradition. This requires what Abdullah (2000) calls a “paradigm construction of interpretation and behavior patterns oriented toward gender justice.”

The struggle over gender identity is thus a struggle over what kinds of subjects Indonesian Muslim women will become. It is a struggle with high stakes—for women's freedom, for their dignity, for their capacity to participate fully in the multiple spheres of contemporary life. And it is a struggle that remains fundamentally unfinished, its outcome dependent on the relative power of competing discourses and the material conditions that enable or constrain women's choices.

In the specific context of women's bodily autonomy on social media, this analysis suggests the need for what might be called a hermeneutics of gender justice—interpretive practices that read scripture and tradition not to restrict women but to enable their flourishing. Such hermeneutics would position men and women not as antagonists but as complementary beings, created to support each other's development. It would understand the body not as a commodity to be controlled by others but as a precious gift to be used in actualizing oneself as a biological, spiritual, and intellectual being. And it would recognize that women's autonomy on social media is not a threat to Islamic values but an opportunity to realize those values in new contexts.

Conclusion

This study investigated contestations surrounding women's bodily autonomy on social media as articulated by four Indonesian Islamic organizations—Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, Salafi groups, and the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI)—through the lens of Foucault's theory of power. The concept of women's bodily autonomy is profoundly contested both across and within these organizations. NU divides between Traditionalists emphasizing women as potential sources of lust requiring self-protection, and Neo-Modernists affirming women's right to autonomy and positive social media use. Muhammadiyah similarly splits between Classical Revivalists framing women as *fitnah* requiring caution, and Reformists asserting women's right to self-expression across all media. Salafi groups uniformly conceptualize bodily autonomy as property transferred from father to husband, while MUI mediates by affirming individual rights while prohibiting content displaying *aurat* or causing *madharat*.

Interpretation of QS. An-Nur: 31 reveals systematic differences rooted in methodological commitments. Salafi textualism emphasizes physical concealment and restricted mobility; NU's contextualism focuses on ethical conduct and productive digital presence; Muhammadiyah's balanced approach combines coverage requirements with positive empowerment; and MUI's mediating interpretation addresses both women's obligation to limit *aurat* and men's responsibility to guard their gazes. These divergent interpretations reflect deeper struggles over hermeneutical authority—who possesses the right to speak for Islam and whose readings will shape Muslim practice. Gender identity constructions have shifted accordingly: traditional discourses across Salafi, Traditionalist NU, and Classical Revivalist Muhammadiyah position women as *fitnah* requiring control, reinforcing *ibuisme* (motherism) that defines women through domestic roles. In contrast, Neo-Modernist NU and Reformist Muhammadiyah articulate alternative identities positioning women as autonomous subjects entitled to self-development, though a significant gap persists between elite discourse and grassroots practice as patriarchal structures remain deeply embedded.

This study demonstrates that religious discourse functions as power/knowledge producing particular female subjects, with interpretive methodology itself constituting a site of power contestation. The persistence of patriarchal practices despite progressive discourse confirms that power operates through multiple capillaries—families, economic arrangements, and embodied dispositions—not merely through formal religious authority. Crucially, progressive discourses within Neo-Modernist NU and Reformist Muhammadiyah demonstrate that Islamic tradition contains resources for gender justice through contextual hermeneutics, challenging any simple opposition between “Islamic” and “secular” frameworks. The contestation over women's bodily autonomy on social media is ultimately a contestation over what it means to be a Muslim woman in the twenty-first century—whether Indonesian Muslim women will understand themselves as property requiring male guardianship, as sources of social disorder requiring self-discipline, or as autonomous subjects entitled to develop their potential and contribute to society.

This study has several limitations that suggest directions for future research. First, the research focused on organizational elites—key figures within NU, Muhammadiyah, Salafi groups, and MUI who articulate official or semi-official positions—rather than examining how these discourses are received, interpreted, and negotiated by ordinary women at the grassroots level. Future research should investigate the reception and appropriation of organizational discourses by women who use social media, examining how they navigate competing religious claims and construct their own understandings of bodily autonomy. Second, the study focused on four major organizations, excluding smaller but potentially influential groups; future research might examine how other Islamic movements conceptualize women's bodily autonomy on social media, providing a more comprehensive mapping of Indonesia's Islamic landscape. Third, the research examined discourse rather than practice—analyzing what organizations say about women's bodies rather than how women actually use social media. Future research employing ethnographic methods could illuminate the gap between discourse and practice, examining how women negotiate religious expectations, family pressures, and personal desires in their actual social media use. Finally, comparative research across Muslim-majority societies could reveal whether the patterns observed in Indonesia reflect specifically Indonesian dynamics or broader tendencies in how Islamic organizations respond to social media.

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