

Islamic Education in the Timeline: Transformation of Islamic Religious Education Material through Social Media

Anisa Misrida^{1*}, Warul Walidin², Salami³, and Fatmawati⁴

^{1,2,3} Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, Indonesia

⁴ University of Exeter, United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

The development of social media has significantly transformed the delivery of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials. Social media operates as an interactive and algorithm-driven digital environment that enables rapid distribution, reinterpretation, and user-generated reproduction of religious content through short-form and participatory formats. This study aims to analyze how PAI materials are transformed within social media timelines. It employs a qualitative approach using a systematic literature review of 45 scholarly sources drawn from Google Scholar, Scopus, and Garuda. The selected studies include qualitative, conceptual, and empirical research focusing on Islamic education in digital contexts, particularly in Indonesia, published between 2018 and 2024. The findings show that PAI materials have become more concise, visual, and context-oriented, adapting to digital consumption patterns. Social media also shifts production patterns from institution-centered to decentralized and participatory models involving educators, content creators, and online communities. However, this transformation introduces challenges, as fragmentation emerges through segmented short-form content, potentially leading to oversimplification of complex teachings. This study contributes by providing a conceptual analysis of how digital platforms reshape the structure, authority, and educational value of PAI materials. Strengthening digital and religious literacy is therefore essential to maintain pedagogical integrity in the digital era.

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CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

Anisa Misrida Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Email: anisamisrida@gmail.com

Introduction

The rapid development of social media has significantly influenced the delivery of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). While social media expands access to religious knowledge and enables flexible learning, it also raises concerns regarding the fragmentation and simplification of Islamic teachings. Existing studies have largely focused on the opportunities of digital learning, but limited attention has been given to how PAI materials are transformed in social media contexts. This gap highlights the need to critically examine the changing form, structure, and pedagogical implications of PAI content in digital environments.

Social media can be conceptualized as an alternative pedagogical space in which learning processes occur beyond formal institutional settings. In this context, the delivery of materials is

no longer confined to structured classroom environments, but takes place through informal, participatory, and user-driven interactions. The characteristics of social media such as brevity, visuality, and interactivity reshape how religious knowledge is presented, accessed, and interpreted by audiences.

From an epistemic perspective, this shift also reconfigures the production and authority of knowledge. Traditionally, Islamic knowledge has been transmitted through recognized scholars and formal institutions. However, in digital environments, a wide range of actors including content creators and influencers participate in producing and disseminating PAI materials. This raises critical questions regarding the authority, authenticity, and validity of religious knowledge circulated in social media spaces. Therefore, understanding social media as both a pedagogical and epistemic space is essential for analyzing the transformation of Islamic Religious Education in the digital era.

From an epistemic perspective, this shift also reconfigures the production and authority of knowledge. Traditionally, Islamic knowledge has been transmitted through recognized scholars and formal institutions. However, in digital environments, a wide range of actors including content creators and influencers participate in producing and disseminating PAI materials. This raises critical questions regarding the authority, authenticity, and validity of religious knowledge circulated in social media spaces (Berger & Golan, 2024). Therefore, understanding social media as both a pedagogical and epistemic space is essential for analyzing the transformation of Islamic Religious Education in the digital era. This change indicates a shift in the way religious material is taught, learned, and understood in the digital communication landscape (Nasrullah, 2021).

The fast-paced, interactive, visual, and participatory nature of social media has led to the emergence of a different pattern of material delivery from conventional learning. PAI material, which was previously delivered through classrooms or formal institutions, is now available on digital timelines that can be accessed anytime and by anyone (Bungin, 2020). This condition not only expands the reach of religious learning but also changes the relationship between the material deliverer and the students (Heryanto, 2021).

The increasing use of platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube by young people to access religious content reflects a significant shift in how Islamic knowledge is consumed. This trend is not merely a matter of digital communication, but has important implications for PAI. Unlike general information, PAI involves structured, systematic, and value-based learning processes that require depth and guidance. The migration of religious learning to short-form, algorithm-driven content raises concerns regarding the simplification of complex teachings, the reduction of contextual understanding, and the weakening of traditional pedagogical authority. Therefore, it is crucial to examine how this shift influences the form, transmission, and interpretation of PAI materials in digital environments. The presentation of PAI material in the form of short videos, infographics, or visual quotes is considered easier to understand and more in line with digital information consumption habits than long textual teaching materials (Siregar et al., 2024). This phenomenon confirms the changing preferences in religious learning in the digital age.

This phenomenon is not only occurring at the practical level, but is also reflected in the development of global academic studies. The digital transformation in Islamic education shows a

significant upward trend after the pandemic, especially in the study of madrasah digitization and online learning. Bibliometric studies over the past five years show a focus on pedagogical shifts and the digital readiness gap between urban and rural areas (Seprianti, Rahman, et al., 2024). This shift can be understood as an increasingly important aspect of contemporary Islamic education, rather than a structural necessity, as it continues to evolve alongside technological and social changes.

The change in medium has implications for the delivery of Islamic Education material, which has become more dialogical and participatory. Students no longer simply receive material, but also respond, ask questions, share, and reproduce material through comment and online discussion features (Wahyuni & Siti, 2024). Thus, social media creates a more open and interactive learning space.

On the other hand, social media has also changed the form of PAI material. Various studies show that digital material tends to be concise, contextual, and visual, such as discussions of faith, worship, morals, and Islamic history in multimedia formats. This change in the form of material is not limited to technical aspects but also has an impact on the structure of knowledge received by students.

From an Islamic education perspective, these changes touch on epistemological aspects. PAI material, which in formal education is systematically and hierarchically structured, now often appears fragmented in the digital timeline (Azra, 2020). This fragmentation has the potential to affect the depth of students' understanding, although at the same time it opens up opportunities for delivering material that is more contextual and relevant to social reality (Mulyadi, 2025).

Social media has also brought new dynamics to the production of PAI materials. Whereas previously the development of materials was dominated by teachers, academics, and formal institutions, now independent educators, educational content creators, and online communities also play a role in their dissemination (Nisa, 2020). The production of religious learning materials has thus become more open and decentralized (Rahman, 2021).

The expansion of production actors is closely related to changes in pedagogical authority. The authority to deliver PAI material is no longer solely determined by formal positions within educational institutions, but also by the ability to present material in a communicative and relevant manner in the digital space (Heryanto, 2021). In the context of Indonesia's religious and pluralistic society, this change broadens access to religious education while also potentially simplifying the substance of the teachings (Rijal, 2022).

The shift in preaching authority has had two consequences. On the one hand, social media has encouraged the democratization of preaching and expanded public access to religious messages. On the other hand, this situation has increased the potential for message distortion, simplification of teachings, and discourse conflicts due to differences in interpretation that are not always supported by a strong methodological foundation.

Previous studies have discussed the role of social media in religious preaching and education, as well as the effectiveness of digital learning among the younger generation. However, studies that specifically examine the transformation of Islamic Education (PAI) materials as a pedagogical process influenced by the characteristics of digital timelines are still limited, especially regarding algorithm-based distribution and the dynamics of legitimacy of material delivery (Nugroho, 2020).

Based on these dynamics, this study focuses on three main questions: (1) how does the transformation of Islamic Religious Education material occur in social media timelines; (2) how do the characteristics of digital platforms influence the form, format, and production of Islamic Religious Education material; and (3) what are the implications of this transformation for pedagogical authority and Islamic Religious Education learning practices in Indonesia. Existing studies have examined the use of social media in Islamic education, primarily focusing on its potential to expand access and engagement. However, limited attention has been given to how PAI materials are transformed within algorithm-driven social media timelines, particularly in terms of content structure, pedagogical coherence, and the legitimacy of knowledge production. Furthermore, the role of digital actors in shaping and mediating religious content remains underexplored. This gap highlights the need for a more critical analysis of how algorithmic distribution and participatory content creation influence the form, authority, and educational value of PAI materials in digital environments.

To answer these questions, this study uses a qualitative approach through library research by examining literature on Islamic education, social media, digital transformation, and the dynamics of religious authority in the digital public sphere. Primary data consists of books and scientific works related to Islamic education theory and digital communication, while secondary data comes from national and international journal articles, research reports, and relevant academic publications.

Methods

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach using a systematic literature review with a thematic synthesis design. This approach enables an in-depth examination of concepts, arguments, and findings from previous studies related to the transformation of PAI materials in social media contexts (Creswell, 2018). It also allows for systematic conceptual analysis without direct field data collection (Suryabrata, 2013).

Data Source and Search Strategy

Data were collected from three academic databases: Google Scholar, Scopus, and Garuda. The literature search was conducted in January 2026 using predefined search strings such as: ("Islamic Religious Education" OR "PAI") AND ("social media" OR "digital platform" OR "TikTok" OR "Instagram" OR "YouTube") AND ("learning" OR "education" OR "religious content"). Boolean operators (AND, OR) were applied to refine search results. The search was limited to publications in English and Indonesian and focused on peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and scholarly publications. Non-academic sources such as blogs, opinion articles, and unpublished manuscripts were excluded.

Study Selection Process

The review process followed four stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion.

- Identification: Initial search yielded 85 records from selected databases.

- Screening: Duplicate records were removed, and titles and abstracts were reviewed to exclude irrelevant studies not related to Islamic education or social media contexts.
- Eligibility: Full-text articles were assessed based on relevance, methodological clarity, and alignment with the research focus.
- Inclusion: A total of 45 studies were selected for final analysis after meeting all criteria. Irrelevant studies were identified based on lack of focus on PAI, absence of discussion on digital or social media contexts, or insufficient academic rigor.

Inclusion and Quality Criteria

The inclusion criteria were defined as follows:

- 1) peer-reviewed journal articles or scholarly publications,
- 2) studies focusing on Islamic education, PAI, or religious learning in digital contexts,
- 3) full-text accessibility, and
- 4) publication between 2018–2024 to ensure recency.

To ensure quality, selected sources were evaluated based on relevance to research objectives, credibility of publication (indexed journals or reputable publishers), clarity of methodology, and consistency of findings across studies. Foundational sources published before 2018 were included selectively to support theoretical frameworks (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using a thematic analysis approach combined with a descriptive-analytical framework. The analysis involved identifying patterns related to the transformation of PAI materials, including changes in content format, presentation style, and the dynamics of production and legitimization within social media environments.

Thematic coding was applied to categorize findings into major themes: (1) transformation of content form and format, (2) changes in production and distribution patterns, and (3) dynamics of pedagogical authority and knowledge legitimacy (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Source triangulation was used to enhance credibility by comparing findings across multiple studies (Patton, 2015).

Results and Discussion

Based on a systematic review, this study found that social media has developed into a strategic space in the transformation of PAI materials. This transformation encompasses not only technological aspects but also pedagogical, epistemological, and social dimensions. Several studies provide concrete evidence of this shift. For instance, demonstrate that social media expands learning environments by enabling participatory and user-centered interactions. Similarly, finds that social media platforms significantly increase student engagement and foster interactive learning experiences beyond formal classroom settings (Van Den Beemt et al., 2020).

In the context of Islamic education, show that PAI materials are increasingly adapted to digital platforms, becoming more accessible and responsive to user needs (Nurrahma et al., 2024). Furthermore, highlight that PAI content is often presented in short-form and visual formats, such as videos and infographics, which align with digital consumption patterns and improve comprehension (Alalwan, 2022).

The findings also reveal that algorithms and platform dynamics play a crucial role in shaping content production and visibility. Notes that content creators adjust material formats to increase engagement (Sutrisno, 2022). Overall, these findings indicate that the transformation of PAI materials on social media can be categorized into four main aspects: changes in delivery media, transformation of content format, shifts in production patterns, and the reconfiguration of pedagogical authority.

The Shift in the Media for Delivering Islamic Education Material on Timelines

The delivery of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) materials in Indonesia has shifted significantly from conventional spaces to social media timelines. Prior to the digital era, IRE materials were delivered mainly through formal institutions such as Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, Islamic universities, majelis taklim (religious gatherings), and recitation forums. This model relied on face-to-face interaction, tiered learning, and direct teacher–student relationships, with classical texts and formal teaching materials as primary sources. Knowledge transmission emphasized systematic and methodological learning, where legitimacy depended on the authority of teachers or institutions (Azra, 2020).

Literature indicates that the medium of Islamic Education delivery is moving from institutional spaces toward social media timelines. Digital education research shows that social media supports learning beyond classrooms through community interaction and digital networks (Van Den Beemt et al., 2020). In Indonesia, platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok have become key channels for disseminating religious material to younger audiences (Nurrahma et al., 2024). This development produces a hybrid learning model in which formal institutions retain legitimacy while social media facilitates distribution and interaction. Engagement studies further show that flexible access increases learner involvement (Alalwan, 2022).

Advances in information technology and widespread social media use strengthen this shift. Social media has evolved from a communication tool into a major channel for religious dissemination accessible across time and space (Nugroho, 2020). The digital timeline therefore functions as a flexible environment for independent religious learning (Ridho, 2022).

This shift does not replace traditional media but forms a hybrid PAI learning ecosystem. Islamic boarding schools, majelis taklim (Islamic study groups), and formal institutions continue to serve as sources of knowledge and legitimacy, while social media broadens distribution to more diverse audiences and supports new forms of interaction beyond conventional settings.

Accessibility plays a central role in this transformation. Users search for religious materials based on practical needs worship, morality, creed, and Islamic history and select formats ranging from short texts and visuals to videos. The timeline becomes not only a reception space but also a participatory environment where users respond to, share, and reproduce content (Nasrullah, 2021).

Changes in delivery media also affect the form and format of PAI materials. Literature shows that timeline content tends to be concise, visual, and contextual, reflecting the fast and interactive nature of social media. Explanations of faith principles or worship practices are often presented through short videos, infographics, Instagram carousels, or text quotes that are easy to consume and share, increasing understanding and engagement, especially among younger audiences (Siregar et al., 2024).

Shifts in delivery media also influence pedagogical authority. Previously, credibility depended largely on institutional position; now legitimacy is also shaped by communicative presentation, content appeal, and platform relevance. This creates opportunities for new actors independent educators, content creators, online communities, and non-formal religious figures to participate in disseminating PAI materials. As a result, religious learning authority becomes less hierarchical and more influenced by digital interaction, content quality, and audience reach (Nisa, 2020).

Overall, social media timelines have become a dominant alternative medium for delivering Islamic Education materials in Indonesia. This transformation involves changes in presentation patterns, formats, interaction mechanisms, and pedagogical legitimacy. It reflects not merely technical change but a broader shift toward participatory, open, and contextual Islamic learning, while maintaining attention to material accuracy in the digital era.

Transformation of the Form and Format of Islamic Religious Education Content

The development of social media has brought significant changes to the form and format of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials consumed by Muslims in Indonesia. Previously, PAI materials were generally delivered in the form of long texts, books, or oral lectures through formal institutions such as Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, Islamic universities, majelis taklim, and recitation forums. The materials were systematically and hierarchically structured, so that the legitimacy of their delivery was highly dependent on the formal authority of teachers or educational institutions.

The advent of social media timelines has changed this pattern by enabling PAI material to be presented in multimedia formats, such as short videos, lecture excerpts, visualizations of verses from the Qur'an or hadith, infographics, carousels, and interactive religious illustrations. This format adapts to the pattern of digital information consumption, which is fast, concise, and repetitive, while also facilitating audience understanding.

A review of the literature shows that social media has developed into a strategic space in the transformation of Islamic Education material that is not only technological, but also pedagogical, epistemological, and social (Ansari & Khan, 2019). Digital learning studies confirm that social media platforms expand the space for interaction, enabling flexible, participatory, and user-centered learning. In the context of Islamic Education, this transformation changes the way religious material is produced, presented, and accessed in the digital communication ecosystem (Seprianti, Rahman, et al., 2024).

The transformation of media has had a direct impact on the format of materials, which are becoming increasingly visual, concise, and multimedia-based. Educational research shows that short videos, infographics, and interactive content improve understanding and retention of material. A study of digital Islamic education in Indonesia also shows that religious material is now packaged in the form of popular content that adapts to the information consumption patterns of the digital generation (Nurrahma et al., 2024).

In addition to pedagogical factors, the platform's algorithm mechanism also influences the format of the material. Content producers adjust the duration, communication style, and visualization to increase audience interaction and reach. Thus, the use of visual and audiovisual elements is not only aesthetic but also related to the effectiveness of material delivery.

Visualization of PAI material makes it easier for audiences to understand moral values, worship, and principles of faith in a short time. This approach is more communicative than long texts because it combines information and illustrations simultaneously (Nasrullah, 2021). Timelines become interactive learning spaces where users can respond, share content, and reproduce material according to their context.

The transformation of material form is also influenced by the logic of digital platforms that highlight content with high levels of interaction, such as the number of views, comments, and reposts. This condition encourages PAI content producers to adjust the format and style of delivery to be more attractive and potentially reach a wider audience. Therefore, the transformation of PAI content is not only related to religious substance but also to the dynamics of technology and digital audience behavior.

However, this transformation has not been uniform across all platforms. Long text-based material is still found, especially in digital spaces that allow for in-depth discussion, such as blogs or long YouTube channels. However, long texts are generally combined with visual or multimedia elements to improve readability and attract the attention of young audiences. This shows that the delivery of digital PAI material is adaptive to platform characteristics and user preferences.

Overall, social media timelines encourage PAI material to be more concise, visual, interactive, and communicative, while also changing the way Muslim communities access and understand religious material. This transformation is not only technical in nature, but also influences learning patterns, religious experiences, and the creativity of content producers in presenting content that is relevant to the social reality of digital audiences. Thus, timelines have become a strategic space for modern Islamic education learning that requires integration between scientific substance, social context, and digital consumption characteristics.

Changes in the Production Patterns of Islamic Religious Education Materials on Timelines

Social media has evolved beyond a distribution space for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials into a production environment that shapes how materials are created, packaged, and disseminated. Before the digital era, PAI production was largely conducted by actors with formal scholarly legitimacy ulama, kiai, academics, and Islamic educational institutions. Production occurred within institutional frameworks with clear methodological standards, structured references, and sequential delivery, making material quality and credibility strongly dependent on formal authority (Zed, 2014).

Social media development has shifted this pattern. Digital religion literature shows increasing decentralization of religious content production, allowing individuals and communities to participate in dissemination (Berger & Golan, 2024). In digital education, this reflects more open and participatory learning structures (Hashim et al., 2022). Digital PAI studies indicate that producers adapt content to current issues and audience needs, making production more responsive to social dynamics (Purba & Ramanda, 2025). Social media also shapes affective dimensions of learning, including motivation and attitudes toward digital learning (Chen & Xiao, 2022).

Literature highlights the expansion of production actors on timelines. Individuals beyond formal institutions independent educators, content creators, online communities, and general users produce and share PAI materials directly with wider audiences (Nisa, 2020). This shift

signals movement from centralized production toward decentralized, participatory models where diverse actors apply varied styles, approaches, and delivery strategies aligned with platform characteristics and audience needs.

From a digital religion perspective, new media not only deliver religious messages but also reshape authority structures and religious practice. Research in *New Media & Society* emphasizes that digital religious authority is negotiative, participatory, and less hierarchical (Campbell, 2017). This aligns with PAI transformation on social media, where pedagogical legitimacy often emerges through public interaction and audience resonance rather than formal institutional status.

Literature findings indicate that PAI production patterns on timelines are dynamic and contextual. Producers align materials with social issues, public events, and emerging digital trends. Content such as social media ethics, situational worship guidance, or responses to contemporary issues is produced rapidly following timeline rhythms and audience demand. The timeline thus functions as a responsive production arena that integrates scholarly substance with practical relevance.

Platform technology also shapes production patterns. Algorithms, recommendation systems, and interaction metrics views, comments, likes, and shares influence visibility and guide production strategies. Producers adjust format, duration, and delivery style to expand reach and increase viral potential. Digital PAI production therefore reflects not only pedagogical considerations but also platform logic and audience consumption behavior.

Shifts in production patterns affect pedagogical authority. Credibility is no longer determined solely by institutional position but also by communicative delivery, content appeal, and relevance for digital audiences. This expands participation and creates more inclusive learning environments. However, openness also requires careful quality control, as high participation may generate fragmented understanding and oversimplified content if not managed effectively (Bungin, 2020).

Overall, social media establishes a more open, participatory, and adaptive production space for PAI materials characterized by diverse actors, varied formats, and responsive delivery strategies shaped by social issues and platform algorithms. This transformation extends beyond technical change, reshaping Islamic Religious Education through expanded access, increased producer creativity, and the ongoing need to maintain content quality and relevance in the digital era.

The Meaning of the Shift in Islamic Religious Education Material in the Digital Space

The transformation of PAI materials on social media reflects a fundamental shift in the nature of Islamic religious learning from a structured, institution-based model toward a more flexible, participatory, and digitally mediated experience. Social media functions not only as a channel of dissemination but also as a space where religious knowledge is produced, negotiated, and consumed in everyday digital interactions. This shift expands access to religious learning while simultaneously reshaping how knowledge is interpreted and internalized by users across diverse social contexts.

The shift of PAI materials to social media timelines marks a fundamental change in how religion is presented, learned, and interpreted in Indonesian Muslim communities. Social media

is no longer merely a supporting tool but a social space shaping the production, distribution, and consumption of PAI materials (Aziz, 2020). Consequently, PAI learning extends beyond structured formal settings into an open, flexible digital landscape with minimal institutional control (Hakim, 2021).

This change positions social media as a space of negotiation between systematic Islamic educational traditions and modern societal needs that demand rapid access, concise content, and practical relevance. Timeline-based PAI materials emphasize not only theory but also practical needs such as worship guidance, moral education, and accessible explanations of creed for younger generations. From a communication perspective, social media transforms interaction from hierarchical one-way communication into dialogical and participatory forms. Audiences interpret, respond to, and reproduce materials within personal contexts and digital communities, making timelines collaborative learning spaces (Wahyuni & Siti, 2024).

The shift in meaning also affects perceptions of pedagogical authority. Credibility is no longer determined solely by academic background or institutional position but also by communicative, engaging, and platform-relevant delivery (Fahrudin, 2021). Sociologically, this reflects changes in religious structures as PAI materials reach across generations, social classes, and geographical regions, forming a more inclusive yet increasingly plural religious public sphere.

While opening broad participation, the literature highlights epistemological consequences. Timeline-based PAI materials are often detached from strict methodological frameworks, potentially leading to oversimplification and partial understanding (Mulyadi, 2025). Nevertheless, digital spaces also enable revitalization through the dissemination of more progressive and contextual Islamic ideas previously less accessible through traditional media.

The reorientation of PAI learning is visible in changing perceptions of religious learning itself. Learning is no longer tied to lengthy formal processes but increasingly integrated into everyday digital activities. Social media produces learning experiences that are both personal and public, as content is consumed individually yet negotiated through comments, sharing, and discussion, generating dynamic and collaborative learning (Siregar et al., 2024).

This condition requires new approaches in contemporary Islamic Education studies. Social media should be understood not only as a delivery medium but also as a social and cultural structure shaping the production, distribution, and interpretation of PAI materials. Thus, the shift is paradigmatic: social media has become an integral part of the religious ecosystem of Indonesian Muslim society and requires critical analysis beyond the dichotomy of tradition and modernity.

Overall, this transformation shows that timeline-based PAI materials not only present content quickly and visually but also shape interaction patterns, pedagogical strategies, and learning experiences that are more inclusive, flexible, and contextual. Therefore, educators, academics, and institutions must maintain the quality, relevance, and depth of students' understanding in the digital era.

Fragmentation of Islamic Education Materials and the Influence of Social Media Content Formats

The development of social media has created new patterns in the distribution and consumption of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials, characterized by message fragmentation. PAI materials no longer appear as a unified and continuous discourse but are dispersed into content

pieces consumed according to users' preferences on digital timelines. This fragmentation relates to the nature of social media, which demands concise, compact, and accessible content, so the complexity of Islamic teachings is often simplified to fit duration limits, visual space, and platform logic.

From a media studies perspective, digital content formats shape the meaning of PAI materials. Social media encourages visual symbols, short quotations, infographics, and persuasive narratives that capture attention quickly. As a result, PAI materials more often appear as normative, motivational, and practical messages rather than argumentative and systematic scholarly discussions. This pattern influences access to materials, which tends to be rapid, selective, and discontinuous, leading to partial and contextual understanding.

Within the epistemological framework of Islamic Education, fragmentation raises concerns about continuity of meaning in religious teachings. Islam, as an interconnected system, risks being understood in isolation when materials are presented in segmented content without adequate methodological context. Research shows that fragmentation of PAI materials on timelines contributes to variations in religious understanding, as multiple interpretations emerge simultaneously without clear filtering mechanisms.

In Islamic education, this condition challenges traditional learning models that emphasize gradual and in-depth processes. Social media introduces instant learning patterns in which audiences engage with materials sporadically. This shift affects the values of patience and thoroughness in seeking knowledge, making learning more practical but less profound. Nevertheless, fragmentation also expands the reach of da'wah and religious education. Concise, visual, and interactive formats allow PAI materials to reach broader audiences, including younger generations and groups previously less engaged in formal learning. When properly guided, fragmentation functions as an entry point to more comprehensive learning through follow-up content and additional references.

Digital content formats promote learning based on short segments. Engagement studies indicate that this format increases accessibility but may reduce depth of understanding without further learning processes (Manu et al., 2021). Research on digital PAI confirms that fragmentation is an inherent characteristic of religious learning on social media (Purba & Ramanda, 2025). Problems emerge when fragmentation lacks contextualization, as materials detached from social, historical, and scholarly contexts may lead to textual and less adaptive interpretations (Ismail, 2020).

Fragmentation also affects religious discourse in digital public spaces. Discussions often occur through brief comments, emotional responses, or fragmented opinions rather than reflective and argumentative dialogue (Arifin, 2021). The dominance of visual formats on timelines shapes new preferences in accessing PAI materials and contributes to declining interest in classical Islamic literature and in-depth studies.

In digital culture, fragmentation reflects changes in how Muslims interact with religious teachings. Religious practices become more personal, situational, and flexible according to individual digital experiences (Kusuma, 2022). Therefore, fragmentation of PAI materials should be understood as both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge appears when depth of understanding weakens, while the opportunity arises when timelines serve as an initial gateway to foster interest and guide audiences toward more structured learning (Latief, 2020).

Overall, social media content formats play a central role in fragmenting PAI materials. This transformation calls for new approaches in Islamic education so message simplification does not eliminate substance, and fragmentation expands reach and engagement while maintaining quality, context, and depth of religious understanding.

Contestation of Pedagogical Authority in Islamic Religious Education Practices

The emergence of social media as a primary space for delivering Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials has reshaped the configuration of pedagogical authority that was previously stable. Authority is no longer centered solely on formal institutions such as Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, majelis taklim, or religious organizations but is distributed among actors producing and disseminating PAI content in digital spaces (Burhani, 2020). From a sociology of religion perspective, pedagogical authority is typically constructed through scholarly legitimacy, social recognition, and structural position. Social media shifts this mechanism by introducing indicators such as popularity, follower count, and interaction intensity as sources of symbolic legitimacy.

Digital transformation has altered the structure of pedagogical authority. Studies on religion and the internet show that digital spaces create mediated religious practices in which legitimacy is shaped not only by institutions but also by interaction and audience recognition (Evolvi, 2022). The integration of technology in Islamic education expands learning access through online platforms while requiring content verification and supervision to maintain alignment with Islamic scholarly principles (Das et al., 2025).

Research on digital religious authority confirms that legitimacy is no longer institution-based alone but is also formed through audience interaction and recognition (Berger & Golan, 2024). Pedagogical authority in digital spaces is therefore negotiative and performative. Contestation emerges through diverse PAI presenters with varying educational backgrounds, affiliations, and orientations. Social media allows individuals without formal authority to become references when they build audiences and trust through consistent, communicative content. Consequently, credibility is often measured by communication skills and content appeal rather than scholarly depth (Fitriani, 2020).

Technology integration in Islamic education requires technical, pedagogical, and normative approaches. Research in the Journal International Inspire Education Technology shows that technology use expands learning access through e-learning, applications, and online platforms while encouraging digital literacy and critical thinking. The study also stresses content verification so digital transformation remains aligned with Islamic teachings (Das et al., 2025). In religious education communication studies, this condition produces symbolic competition among digital actors, each constructing authority through communication style, personal narrative, and visual representation of religious values.

The egalitarian character of social media strengthens authority contestation. Without clear hierarchy, PAI content appears equally on timelines, allowing audiences to determine credibility. However, egalitarianism does not guarantee quality. Studies indicate that popularity does not necessarily correlate with pedagogical competence or scholarly capacity, potentially creating epistemologically fragile authority (Huda, 2019). In Indonesia, digital PAI authority contestation is also linked to ideological dynamics and religious identity, positioning social media as an arena of influence among religious education groups (Mubarok, 2021).

Contestation often appears as exclusive truth claims in which actors assert the most authentic interpretation while delegitimizing alternatives. In digital media, contestation involves not only substance but also aesthetics and emotion. Visualization, popular language, storytelling, and audiovisual formats become key in constructing presenter legitimacy. Pedagogical authority is therefore negotiated through continuous interaction between presenters and audiences. This challenges formal and informal education because fragmented authority may shift knowledge transmission traditions emphasizing methodology, sanad, and academic ethics toward popularity and algorithmic logic (Anwar, 2020).

Nevertheless, social media is also used by ulama, educators, and Islamic institutions as an adaptive strategy to maintain and reconstruct pedagogical authority. Adapting to digital media helps authority remain relevant and reach new audiences (Maarif, 2021). Thus, digital PAI authority contestation represents ongoing negotiation between traditional authority and new actors using technology as a legitimacy source.

From a critical perspective, contestation on digital timelines reflects transformations in symbolic power structures within Muslim societies. Social media distributes religious education discourse to broader actors, though not evenly. This situation requires stronger religious and digital literacy. Without critical capacity, audiences risk accepting authority based on emotional appeal or popularity (Wibowo, 2021).

Overall, contestation of pedagogical authority in digital religious education demonstrates new dynamics in the relationship between religion, education, and technology. Social media functions not only as a dissemination tool but also as an arena for forming, legitimizing, and competing for pedagogical authority, requiring critical reflection and adaptive strategies from religious education actors.

Social and Scientific Implications of the Transformation of Islamic Religious Education on Social Media

The transformation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) delivery through social media carries significant social and scholarly implications for the religious practices of Indonesian Muslim communities. Social media reshapes access to religious content while influencing social interaction, religious identity formation, and intergroup relations in a plural society (Hasan, 2020). Islamic knowledge is no longer conveyed exclusively through formal spaces such as Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, or majelis taklim but appears within open, interactive, layered digital public spaces, encouraging religious practices increasingly connected to personal experience, everyday life, and digital interaction.

A major social implication is the strengthening of experience-based religiosity and self-expression. Social media positions individuals not only as recipients of PAI materials but also as actors who interpret, respond to, and reproduce content within their life contexts. This dynamic makes religiosity more open, participatory, and performative while creating new spaces for articulating personal and social piety. It also fosters more diverse and contextual representations of religiosity.

In Indonesia's plural society, digital PAI transformation also influences intergroup relations. Social media functions as an arena where multiple religious interpretations meet, potentially generating interaction, symbolic tension, and discursive conflict among groups with

different educational orientations (Abdullah, 2019). Patterns of religious reference shift as communities draw not only on local figures and formal institutions but also on digital presenters perceived as relevant and communicative.

Digital education literature indicates that technology integration produces structural implications for education, including the redefinition of learning strategies and expansion of research objects (Hashim et al., 2022). In PAI, this transformation expands access and participation while requiring stronger digital and religious literacy (Nurrahma et al., 2024). From a scholarly perspective, digital PAI challenges classical Islamic studies paradigms that position texts, institutions, and scholars as central knowledge producers. Social media extends knowledge production and distribution into fluid, dynamic, and fragmented digital spaces (Samsudin & Putri, 2023).

Studies on digital education transformation similarly highlight structural changes in learning strategies and research scope (Timotheou et al., 2023). In PAI, these changes broaden learning access and participation while demanding interdisciplinary approaches and educator readiness to apply digital pedagogy, as training influences teachers' attitudes and technological integration (Seprianti, Misbah, et al., 2024). The development of digital Islamic Religious Education (PAI) also requires an interdisciplinary approach and educators' readiness to utilize digital pedagogy, as digital pedagogy training has been proven to influence teachers' attitudes and readiness to integrate technology into learning (Pongsakdi et al., 2021).

Islamic education reform in the global era underscores curriculum and strategy adaptation in response to social change, technological development, and digital culture (Hajar, 2024). These scholarly implications appear in shifting objects of contemporary Islamic studies, where digital PAI practices, social media content, and online interaction serve as important data for understanding modern religiosity. Social media thus functions not only as a communication channel but also as a space of social and epistemic experimentation in Islamic research. This development requires interdisciplinary perspectives spanning communication, sociology, anthropology, educational psychology, and digital media studies (Fauzan, 2021). enabling more holistic methodologies and integration between traditional Islamic theory and digital culture.

Within Islamic education, digital PAI transformation encourages redefined learning strategies. Social media operates as an alternative learning environment shaping how younger generations understand and internalize Islamic teachings. Without clear pedagogical frameworks, however, it may reinforce instant and partial learning patterns, making it necessary for curricula and methods to connect digital practices with systematic Islamic scholarly traditions (Halim, 2019)

Another implication concerns the validity and authority of PAI content. Digital da'wah requires critical frameworks to evaluate source credibility, production processes, and mechanisms of message legitimization on social media (Munir, 2021). Culturally, social media also shapes new aesthetics of Islamic expression in which symbols, visuals, and popular narratives influence perceptions of piety, religiosity, and presenter authority. These changes directly affect PAI learning practices, which become increasingly dialogical as audiences move from passive recipients to active participants in meaning production and negotiation (Mulyana, 2019). Over time, digital PAI transformation may shape Muslim generations that are more contextual, adaptive, critical, and selective in choosing religious references amid abundant digital content.

These implications require the strategic presence of religious institutions and academics in digital spaces, since their absence risks widening the gap between Islamic scholarly traditions and contemporary religious practice (Latief, 2020). Strengthening religious and digital literacy simultaneously becomes essential to ensure positive contributions to religious life and Islamic scholarship. Overall, the social and scholarly implications of digital PAI transformation indicate structural, long-term change. Social media has become an integral element of the religious education ecosystem, demanding critical, reflective, and strategic adaptation from stakeholders (Ridho, 2022). This transformation represents not only technological change but also social, epistemic, and pedagogical reorganization within the religious life of Indonesian Muslim communities.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that social media not only alters the modes of delivery and production of religious content but also reconfigures the epistemic foundations of Islamic learning, including the structure of knowledge, patterns of authority, and modes of engagement. The emergence of fragmented, short-form, and user-generated content indicates a transition from systematic and hierarchical knowledge transmission toward more fluid and context-driven forms of learning. While this transformation expands access and inclusivity, it simultaneously challenges the depth, coherence, and credibility of religious understanding. Therefore, the findings highlight the need to reconceptualize Islamic Religious Education by integrating digital pedagogical strategies with strong epistemological foundations, ensuring that the flexibility of digital platforms does not compromise the integrity of Islamic scholarly traditions.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, it relies solely on secondary data through a systematic literature review, which may limit the depth of empirical validation. Second, the selection of literature is restricted to specific databases (Google Scholar, Scopus, and Garuda) and publications in English and Indonesian, potentially excluding relevant studies from other regions and languages. Third, publication bias may occur, as the study primarily includes peer-reviewed sources that tend to report significant findings. Despite these limitations, the study provides a comprehensive conceptual understanding of the transformation of PAI materials in digital environments.

Author Contribution

A.M. conceptualized the study, designed the research framework, and contributed to the data analysis and manuscript writing. W.W. led the data collection process and assisted in the manuscript revision. S. contributed to the interpretation of the findings and supported the analysis of the data. F. was responsible for the data coding and literature review. All authors contributed to the final revision and approval of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Declaration of Use of AI in Scientific Writing

The authors used ChatGPT 5.2 to improve language quality and readability. The author takes full responsibility for the content, interpretation, and conclusions presented in this article.

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